



Character, Conduct and the Sexual Contract:
Representations of Women in Works by Karl Gutzkow, Theodor Mundt,
Fanny Lewald and Ida Hahn-Hahn.

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Dedicated to my parents
Janos and Franciska Veber
with love

Könnte dieses Geschlecht doch noch einmal nach einer Frucht greifen, noch einmal Zorn erregen,
sich einmal noch entscheiden für seine Erde! Ein andres Erwachen, eine andere Scham erleben!

...

Es könnten andre Erkenntnisse sein, die einem wurden

Ingeborg Bachmann, "Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha."

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I use the following abbreviations:

Karl Gutzkow, *Wally, die Zweiflerin*: (W).

Theodor Mundt, *Madonna. Unterhaltungen mit einer Heiligen*. (M).

Theodor Mundt, *Charlotte Stieglitz: ein Denkmal*: (D).

Fanny Lewald, *Jenny*: (J).

Fanny Lewald, *Eine Lebensfrage*: (L).

Ida Hahn-Hahn, *Aus der Gesellschaft*: (AG).

Ida Hahn-Hahn, *Gräfin Faustine*: (GF).

Abstract.

In its focus on texts by two authors of the banned Young German group of male writers and two of their female contemporaries, this thesis is a contribution to scholarship on the politics of gender and sexuality in the latter part of the volatile Pre-March period in Germany. The banning of Young Germany and their works on the grounds of alleged blasphemy, immorality, and undermining the pillars of society provides the backdrop for my comparative discussion of the representation of female sexuality and subjectivity, love, marriage, and codes of conduct in novels by these writers. I compare and contrast each writer's contestation or support of normative constructs of woman and the feminine, love and marriage. These normative constructs specified the moral nature of both the private sphere and of woman, and supported the ideological separation of the public and private spheres. They became increasingly significant as a stabilising mechanism deployed to ensure the maintenance of social morality.

On the basis of an analysis of Fichte's "Fundamentals of Family Law" through Carole Pateman's concept of the sexual contract I show that that normative constructs of the ideal woman and the ideology of the separate spheres reinforce and are reinforced by the sexual contract that determines women's (sexual) subordination to men through the judicial mechanism of marriage. My assessment of the individual literary texts discusses their challenge to the norms established and supported by these three conceptual frameworks.

My analysis of Fichte's "Family Law" demonstrates that this contract has an impact not only on the socially sanctioned form of heterosexual relationship, but also on the socially sanctioned form of subjectivity and sexuality of women in particular. When placed alongside literary fictions of female development, the 'character' and 'plot' devised for the ideal woman and her life by Fichte's "Family Law" allows evaluation of the extent to which a literary

fiction troubles or subverts normative expectations of womanhood and the social and sexual performances required of women.

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for loan and photocopying.

Maria Veber

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Introduction.

In its focus on texts by two authors of the banned Young German group of male writers and two of their female contemporaries, this thesis is a contribution to scholarship on the politics of gender and sexuality in the later Vormärz period in Germany (1835-45). The banning in 1835 of Young Germany and their works on the grounds of alleged blasphemy, immorality, and the intention to undermine the pillars of society provides a backdrop for my comparative discussion of character, conduct, and the sexual contract in novels by Karl Gutzkow, Theodor Mundt, Fanny Lewald and Ida Hahn-Hahn.¹

I look at these writers' literary representations of female figures in terms of models of ideal female subjectivity and sexuality, and definitions of acceptable conduct according to social moral convention. This allows an assessment of each writer's contestation or support of normative constructs of the female character and normative codes of conduct through their literary representations. Such constructs of gender, which were developed in many discourses in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, frequently emphasised the inherent morality of woman and of her sphere.² This process of defining women, their nature and their social function, occurred as part of the process of defining the new civil society and the new bourgeois citizen.³ Linked with the private familial sphere, the normative female

¹For a detailed history of the "Bundestagsbeschluss" and edicts issued in other states, see Heinrich Hubert Houben, *Jungdeutscher Sturm und Drang*, 1911 (Hildesheim: Olms, 1974) 42-96. See also Johannes Proelß, *Das junge Deutschland: Ein Buch deutscher Geistesgeschichte* (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1892) 611-753.

²Karin Hausen's early pathbreaking survey article on the polarised gender models has since been followed by many increasingly sophisticated analyses of the discursive constitution of gender from the late eighteenth century and into the nineteenth. Some, such as Honegger's tour de force which focusses on philosophy, medicine and natural science, pay particular attention to the power relations inherent in such constructs, and also provide women's views. (Karin Hausen, "Die Polarisierung der 'Geschlechtscharaktere' - Eine Spiegelung der Dissoziation von Erwerbs- und Familienleben," *Sozialgeschichte der Familie in der Neuzeit Europas: Neue Forschungen* ed. Werner Conze (Stuttgart: Klett, 1976) 363-393; Claudia Honegger, *Die Ordnung der Geschlechter: Die Wissenschaften vom Menschen und das Weib, 1750-1850* (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, 1991). See also essays in Ute Frevert, ed., *Bürgerinnen und Bürger: Geschlechterverhältnisse im 19. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, 1988).

³For an account of this process that analyses the significance of sexual practice, its definition and regulation, see Isabel V. Hull's extensive study, *Sexuality, State, and Civil Society in Germany, 1700-1815* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1996). See also her article "'Sexualität' und bürgerliche Gesellschaft," Frevert, *Bürgerinnen* 49-66.

ideal supported the ideological separation of the public and private spheres, and became increasingly significant as a stabilising mechanism deployed to ensure the maintenance of social morality in early to mid-nineteenth-century Germany.⁴

My discussion of this deployment of constructs of ideal womanhood and the ideology of the separate public and private spheres draws on the concept of the sexual contract developed by political philosopher Carole Pateman in her study, *The Sexual Contract*.⁵ In this analysis of classic contract theory, Pateman suggests that the social contract, which is understood as governing relations between individuals in civil society, in fact "creates" what Adrienne Rich has termed "the law of male sex-right."⁶ Pateman's discussion of the social contract proposes that it is conceptually underpinned by the sexual contract, which determines relations between the sexes. The sexual contract finds its legal expression in the marriage contract. According to Pateman, formulations of the marriage contract in classic contract theory cement women's subjugation to men and their invisibility in civil society. By definition, women are thus invisible in the public sphere. Pateman shows that the sexual contract depends on and enforces the separation of the private and public spheres, supporting women's consignment to the private familial sphere, while allowing men free passage in both:

The original contract creates the modern social whole of patriarchal civil society. Men pass back and forth between the private and public spheres and the writ of the law of male sex-right runs in both realms. Civil society is bifurcated but the unity of the social order is maintained, in large part, through the structure of patriarchal relations.⁷

Pateman's reading of the order which determines the sexual contract is unambiguous: the sexual contract is the dominant model of relationship between women and men. In an extension of Pateman's thesis, I propose that the sexual contract not only defines male/female relations but also provides the essential understanding for normative constructs of the ideal woman and her conduct. This expanded understanding of the functioning of the sexual contract provides

⁴Ute Gerhard, *Verhältnisse und Verhinderungen: Frauenarbeit, Familie und Rechte der Frauen im 19. Jahrhundert: Mit Dokumenten* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1978) 168f.

⁵Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Cambridge: Polity, 1988).

⁶Pateman, *Contract* 2. Rich's term is derived from "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence," *Signs* 5.4 (1980): 645.

⁷Pateman, *Contract* 12.

the basis for my assessment of the ways in which the individual literary texts contest the norms established and supported by normative models of character and conduct, and the ideology of separate public and private spheres.

My understanding of the term sexual contract thus differs from that of Nancy Armstrong in her influential study *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, where it is used synonymously with "sexual exchange."⁸ This sexual exchange is based on the polarised feminine and masculine gender stereotypes and reinforces the identification of women with the private and men with the public sphere. While Armstrong explores the socio-economic implications of this form of sexual exchange and argues that it permits female agency, she does not consider the implications of the sexualisation and subordination of women within this paradigm, or the conceptual model underlying it. In contrast, my emphasis follows that of Pateman in stressing the all-pervasive nature of the sexual contract that underpins the basic model of relations between women and men in civil society. My focus is thus on the unequal power relations it cements between the sexes, and the conceptual social structure it supports, while I extend Pateman's reading to argue that it is the sexual contract which also determines normative behavioural models.

I thus look at the determinative impact of the sexual contract in mid-nineteenth-century Germany through its support of normative models of subjectivity and sexuality on the one hand, and codes of conduct that enforce behaviour appropriate to these normative models of character on the other, as well as its support of the conceptual separation of the public and private spheres. Socially and culturally enforced normative ideals were based on the constructs of gender that gained in significance from the late eighteenth century and were

⁸This is most clearly evident in her discussion of "The Sexual Contract as Narrative Paradigm." She states, for example: "In opening *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen identifies herself by invoking a model of sexual exchange to which she could not have personally subscribed: "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife." This assertion establishes historically specific relations between Austen's work and a readership. She situates herself as a writer with knowledge of sexual relations and the intention, however ironic, of demonstrating the truth of the sexual contract." Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford UP, 1987) here, p. 42.

well-established by the mid-nineteenth.⁹ Normative codes of conduct were set out in pedagogical texts.¹⁰ They were, however, also determined by social moral convention and enforced through the agency of public opinion which thus also contributed to defining socially and morally acceptable behaviour.

This functioning of public opinion has not been explored systematically in any scholarship of which I am aware. My presentation of public opinion as a regulatory authority determining the acceptable parameters of women's behaviour and sexual practice is based on the evidence provided in the texts I examine and is an extension of scholarship on public opinion in the nineteenth century.¹¹ My literary analyses establish that there are microcosms of public opinion that are class-specific and that provide regulatory commentary on women's behaviour in their social milieu of family, friends, and acquaintances. Each novel I examine presents a different microcosm. I also look at ways in which the individual microcosms are linked with larger regulatory bodies. I investigate the regulatory agency of public opinion and convention, and their reciprocal relationship with the moral authority of the church and the

⁹See Ute Frevert's discussion of the liberal professor and politician Carl Welcker's 1847 lexicon article "Geschlechtsverhältnisse." "Einleitung," Frevert, *Bürgerinnen*, 11-16.

¹⁰The single most influential such text in Germany was Joachim Heinrich Campe's *Väterlicher Rath für meine Tochter: Ein Gegenstück zum Theophrast: Der erwachsenen weiblichen Jugend gewidmet*, (Braunschweig: Verlag der Schulbuchhandlung, 1789). Campe's text underwent ten printings by 1832, a figure which does not include illegal reprints. It was the most "important" and the most "representative" text on this topic at the time on the basis of citations in pedagogical literature of the period. See Elisabeth Blochmann, *Das "Frauenzimmer" und die "Gelehrsamkeit": Eine Studie über die Anfänge des Mädchenschulwesens in Deutschland* (Heidelberg: Quell, 1966) 35. Helga Meise's discussion of disciplinary aspects of Campe's pedagogy focusses particularly on his proscription of women reading and writing. See Helga Meise, *Die Unschuld und die Schrift: Deutsche Frauenromane im 18. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Guttandin, 1983). For an examination of the conceptual bases of normative gender models in pedagogical texts, see also Dagmar Grenz, *Mädchenliteratur: Von den moralisch-belehrenden Schriften im 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Herausbildung der Backfischliteratur im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1981).

The following essays look at links between gendered models of behaviour and codes of conduct enforced by pedagogical manuals in England: Nancy Armstrong, "The rise of the domestic woman," and Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, "The literature of conduct, the conduct of literature, and the politics of desire: an introduction." Both are in: *The Ideology of Conduct: Essays on Literature and the History of Sexuality*, eds. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (New York: Methuen, 1987), 96-141 and 1-24 respectively.

¹¹I refer especially to Reinhart Koselleck's analysis of Rousseau's social contract in *Kritik und Krise: Eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt* (1959. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 3rd ed., 1979), and Ruth-Ellen Joeres' discussion of the regulatory agency of public opinion on women's behaviour in the nineteenth century in *Respectability and Deviance: Nineteenth Century German Women Writers and the Ambiguity of Representation* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1998).

secular authority of the state, both of which enforce certain kinds of (sexual) behaviour through their regulation of marriage and divorce practice. I thus explore the interaction of numerous regulatory systems that defined codes of conduct based on gendered models of normative behaviour: pedagogical guidelines, public opinion, social moral convention, religious doctrine, and the law.

I do this by reading the literary texts against another text which was enormously influential through the nineteenth century and which provided the conceptual basis for marriage and divorce law in Germany in this period, namely Johann Gottlieb Fichte's "Fundamentals of Family Law" ("Grundriß des Familienrechts" 1796).¹² The wide-ranging influence of this text of philosophical jurisprudence has been attested by many scholars who discuss, for example, its impact on the German Romantics and on texts of popular philosophy immediately after its publication.¹³ Moreover, its normative status is confirmed by its influence on law reform in the area of marriage and divorce law in the nineteenth century.¹⁴ My analysis of Fichte's text demonstrates that it provides an exemplary formulation not only of the sexual contract as elucidated by Pateman, but also of the extended functioning I am proposing. As well as supporting the ideology of separate spheres, Fichte's presentation of a model of female subjectivity is paradigmatic for the female gender ideal prevalent from the late eighteenth century and through the nineteenth.¹⁵

¹²Johann Gottlieb Fichte, "Grundriss des Familienrechts." (Als erster Anhang des Naturrechts) Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Werke 1797-1798. Gesamtausgabe der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, ed., Reinhard Lauth and Hans Gliwitzky together with Richard Schottky (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann (Holzboog), 1970, I,4. 95-149). In future I shall refer to the "Grundriß des Familienrechts" as "Family Law."

¹³According to Becker-Cantarino, Fichte's philosophy had enormous influence on the Romantics from Novalis to Eichendorff, and they attended his lectures on natural law at the University of Jena. (Barbara Becker-Cantarino, *Schriftstellerinnen der Romantik: Epoche - Werke - Wirkung* (München: Beck, 2000) 49). Kluckhohn refers to the Romantics' attack on "Fichtes Eheauffassung und die ihr zugrunde liegende einseitige Auffassung der Frau." He surveys works of popular moral philosophy which attacked Fichte as well as those which popularised his ideas. Kluckhohn emphasises that Fichte's impact went beyond that of the narrow circle of philosophers and the legal fraternity. (Paul Kluckhohn, *Die Auffassung der Liebe in der Literatur des 18. Jahrhunderts und in der deutschen Romantik* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1922) 331-336, quotation, 331)

¹⁴Heinrich Dörner, *Industrialisierung und Familienrecht: Die Auswirkungen des sozialen Wandels dargestellt an den Familienmodellen des ALR, BGB und des französischen Code Civil* (Berlin: Duncker, 1974); 78-85; Gerhard, *Verhältnisse* 143-45.

¹⁵Isabel Hull attests to the paradigmatic status of Fichte's ideas about ideal women, female sexuality and subjectivity at the time. (Hull, *Sexuality* 314). Claudia Honegger's

Fichte's definition of the ideal woman explicates her psychosexual nature, and is the linchpin of his conceptualisation of marital love, which in turn forms the foundation for his definition of marriage, the family, and the private sphere. In its functionalisation of women on the grounds of their sexuality, and in its representation of female subjectivity as well as the parameters of ideal female conduct, Fichte's "Family Law" provides a clear explication of the impact of the sexual contract on women's social status. My analysis shows how the sexual contract, as it is expressed in the "Family Law," determines both the socially sanctioned form of heterosexual relationship, and also the socially sanctioned form of subjectivity and sexuality of women in particular. In this sense my analysis is contextualised by observations made by Frevert on the impact of the "bürgerliche Meisterdenker" who include Fichte in their number.¹⁶ It is also an addition to aspects of Hull's analysis of the gestatory period of bourgeois society. In a discussion of "The Sexual Self-Image of Civil Society" which examines the link between conceptualisations of the sexual drive and bourgeois citizenship, Hull asserts that the process of "discovering the nature of manhood largely organized the discussion of sexual behaviour, but it was carried on in the guise of ratiocination about women or "woman."¹⁷ She finds that "speculation about women was merely a function of the more fundamental task of defining men."¹⁸ However, in the course of this process women were also defined, their social position prescribed, and their developmental possibilities circumscribed. In my discussion of literary works by Karl Gutzkow, Theodor Mundt, Ida Hahn-Hahn and Fanny Lewald, I place the 'character' and 'plot' devised for the ideal woman and her life by Fichte's "Family Law," and thus by the sexual contract, alongside literary fictions of female development.¹⁹ This allows a differentiated evaluation of the extent to which a literary fiction troubles or subverts normative expectations of womanhood and the social

contextualisation of Fichte's "Family Law" in terms of other writings of the time, shows that Fichte's ideas corresponded to those of his contemporaries (89, 101), but that he was also the sole thinker to focus on the sexual act (186-87).

¹⁶Ute Frevert, "Bürgerliche Meisterdenker und das Geschlechterverhältnis: Konzepte, Erfahrungen, Visionen an der Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert," Frevert, *Bürgerinnen* 17-48.

¹⁷Hull, *Sexuality* 225.

¹⁸Hull, *Sexuality* 225.

¹⁹This is a reference to Elizabeth Abel, Marianne Hirsch, Elizabeth Langland, eds., *The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development* (Hanover: UP of New England, 1983).

and sexual performances required of women in the nineteenth century.

In addition, Fichte's text elucidates the significance of extrajudicial regulatory mechanisms which support the implementation of the sexual contract in society, and stand alongside judicial regulatory mechanisms implemented through the law. Such extrajudicial mechanisms include public opinion and social moral convention, which both support the (sexual) subordination of women to men that is embedded in the sexual contract. They function to enforce gendered moral codes in areas of sexual practice such as marriage, as well as adultery, prostitution, and other forms of extramarital relationship. In its explication of this functioning, the "Family Law" presents both the normative ideal and its reverse. It makes explicit the double standard implemented in social judgements of deviations from ideal forms of sexual practice by women and men. My analysis shows how the regulatory capacity of public opinion and social moral convention as well as the rule of law, as expressed through Fichte's text, underpin the sexual contract.

The representation in Fichte's text of the regulation of non-ideal as well as ideal modes of sexual practice through the disciplinary mechanisms of social convention and public opinion, are areas that to my knowledge have not yet been discussed in feminist or other Fichte scholarship. Feminist readings of the "Family Law" have with few exceptions focussed on the representation of ideal female sexuality and subjectivity and the ideal - marital - relationship between the sexes delineated in the first section of the "Family Law."²⁰ The

²⁰Heidemarie Bennet, *Galanterie und Verachtung: Eine philosophiegeschichtliche Untersuchung zur Stellung der Frau in Gesellschaft und Kultur* (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, 1985); Barbara Duden, "Das schöne Eigentum: Zur Herausbildung des bürgerlichen Frauenbildes an der Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert," *Kursbuch* 47 (1977): 125-140; Ute Frevert, "Meisterdenker" 17-48; Gerhard *Verhältnisse*; Hausen; Honegger; Karen Kenkel, "The Personal and the Philosophical in Fichte's Theory of Sexual Difference," *Impure Reason: Dialectic of Enlightenment in Germany*, ed., Daniel W. Wilson and Robert C. Holub (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1993) 278-297. Exceptions are Hull - see discussion below (Hull, *Sexuality* especially 317-323) and Becker-Cantarino. Becker-Cantarino notes some strategies women adopted in order to circumvent the externally imposed disciplinary mechanisms reinforced by texts such as Fichte's: "Women authors' self-representation and literary activity were shaped by gender censorship that they were able to subvert only superficially by such means as public disclaimers, accommodation to male-defined standards, and anonymous or pseudonymous publication." (Bärbel Becker-Cantarino, "Gender Censorship: On Literary Production in German Romanticism," *Women in German Yearbook* 11, ed., Sara Friedrichsmeyer and Patricia Herminhouse (Lincoln, U of Nebraska P, 1995) 81-97, quotation 81). See also Becker-Cantarino, *Schriftstellerinnen*, 49-55, especially 53-55.

discussion of disciplinary mechanisms and their reinforcement by public opinion in the present thesis therefore provides a new perspective on Fichte's text.

Finally, through its explicit linking of women and their (sexual) morality with the moral nature of marriage, the family and bourgeois civil society, Fichte's text may be used to explicate the nexus of morality, social stability and politics that enabled the Biedermeier authorities in their censorship bans to link the moral corruption allegedly on display in Gutzkow's *Wally, die Zweiflerin* and Mundt's *Madonna* with social destabilisation.²¹ The censorship ban of *Madonna* on 30 April 1835 refers to it as an example of literature, "die in hohem Grade sittenverderblich und also mittelbar auch politisch gefährlich zu wirken droht."²² The terms of the definitive ban of the Federal Diet, the "Bundestagsbeschuß" of 10 December 1835, further define Young German popular literature as having the threefold aim, "die christliche Religion auf die frechste Weise anzugreifen, die bestehenden sozialen Verhältnisse herabzuwürdigen und alle Zucht und Sittlichkeit zu zerstören."²³

The destabilising effect these writers' literary interventions were perceived to have in the religious, social and political domains was demonstrated not only by the series of censorship edicts that preceded and followed Metternich's ban.²⁴ It was attested to by Gutzkow's trial in Mannheim for allegedly blasphemous passages in *Wally, die Zweiflerin* and his subsequent internment.²⁵ It was further underlined by the revoking of Mundt's professorship at the

²¹Citations of the texts are to the following editions: Karl Gutzkow, *Wally, die Zweiflerin: Studienausgabe mit Dokumenten zum zeitgenössischen Streit*, ed., and afterword Günter Heintz (2nd. rev., ed., Stuttgart: Reclam, 1983). Theodor Mundt, *Madonna: Unterhaltungen mit einer Heiligen* (Leipzig, Gebrüder Reichenbach, 1835. Frankfurt a.M.: Athenäum, 1973). Further references to these texts will be to *Wally* and *Madonna* respectively.

²²Ludwig Geiger, *Das Junge Deutschland und die preußische Censur: Nach ungedruckten archivalischen Quellen* (Berlin: Paetel, 1900) 75. The description of Casanova is specifically mentioned, "der gewissermaßen als Heiliger dieser neuen Religion hingestellt wird, sowie die Heldin des Romans, die eine in früher Jugend in die Tiefe des Verderbens, in die verzehrende Glut geistig-sinnlicher Lust eingeführtes und mit Bewußtsein darin sich ergebendes Mädchen die Heilige ist, die der Titel nennt." (76) The censors also note the heroine's participation in the "Szenen nächtlicher Unzucht," and her prayers following this event and several references to religion are mentioned as proof of Mundt's cavalier attitude towards Christianity (75-76). See also Otto Draeger, *Theodor Mundt und seine Beziehungen zum Jungen Deutschland* (New York: Johnson, 1909) 63, fn. 2.

²³Houben, *Sturm* 63.

²⁴See fn. 1 above.

²⁵The gravity of the offence is underlined by the fact that the prosecutor in the Mannheim trial demanded a "Zuchthausstrafe" rather than a "Gefängnisstrafe" for Gutzkow. For details of the Mannheim proceedings, see Houben, *Sturm* 503-520; Dr. H[einrich] E[berhard]

University of Berlin just before it was formally granted, because the Vice-Chancellor considered his novel, *Madonna: Unterhaltungen mit einer Heiligen*, provocative.²⁶ The wording of the censorship decrees and the terms in which Gutzkow's blasphemy trial was conducted, taken together with the public debate that ensued upon the publication of Gutzkow's *Wally*, and reactions to Mundt's *Madonna*, all demonstrate ways in which their literary representations of women, religion and sexuality were perceived to violate existing secular and religious laws, and moral conventions regarding the conduct of sexual relationships between women and men.²⁷ The scandal provoked by Gutzkow's and Mundt's texts, and the terms of their banning, show that these writers' literary interventions threatened the structures supporting the sexual contract. It is in this sense that the literary analyses in the present study are to be understood as occurring against the backdrop of the censorship bans imposed upon the Young German writers and their works, as I stated at the beginning of this introduction. I would now like to contextualise the present undertaking more precisely in terms of previous literary scholarship.

The most direct antecedents for my project of a comparative analysis of works by Young German writers and women writers who were their contemporaries are three studies by Gulde (1931), Möhrmann (1977) and Burchardt-Dose (1979).²⁸ These three works,

G[ottlob] Paulus, ed., *Des Großherzoglichen Badischen Hofgerichts zu Mannheim vollständig motiviertes Urteil über die in dem Roman: Wally, die Zweiflerin, angeklagten Preßvergehen nebst zwei rechtfertigenden Beilagen und dem Epilog des Herausgebers: Aktenstücke und Bemerkungen* (Heidelberg: Groos, 1836).

²⁶Mundt was locked out of the lecture theatre where he was due to give a public lecture which would confirm his status as a habilitated "Dozent." Steffens, the Vice-Chancellor, had just been shown Mundt's *Madonna*, which contained views the former deemed could not be properly represented by a member of that university. As a result Mundt's permission to lecture was revoked on political grounds. See Draeger's fully documented account (47-57). See also Geiger, *Censur* 68-69. and Houben, *Sturm* 44-45.

²⁷Houben's two vast volumes based on extensive documentary research are the best sources of information on the primary materials: *Gutzkow-Funde: Beiträge zur Literatur- und Kulturgeschichte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 1901 (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1978); *Sturm*. For documentation of reactions to Gutzkow's writing and *Wally* in particular, as well as reactions to "das Junge Deutschland," see Alfred Estermann, ed., *Politische Avantgarde 1830-1840: Eine Dokumentation zum "Jungen Deutschland"*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt a.M.: Athenäum, 1972).

²⁸Hildegard Gulde, *Studien zum jungdeutschen Frauenroman* (Weilheim-Teck: J. Glenger'sche Buchdruckerei, 1931); Renate Möhrmann, *Die andere Frau; Emanzipationsansätze deutscher Schriftstellerinnen im Vorfeld der Achtundvierziger-Revolution* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1977); Hannelore Burchardt-Dose, *Das Junge Deutschland und die Familie: Zum literarischen Engagement in der Restaurationsepoche* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1979).

which provide the first scholarly location in literary studies for the present thesis, contextualise their discussion of the women writers in relation to the Young German group and alleged Young German goals. Gulde and Möhrmann focus on nineteenth-century women writers, including Lewald and Hahn-Hahn, and read their texts in terms of Young German literary and political interests as well as the latter group's fiction. In contrast, Burchardt-Dose's study provides detailed readings of Young German texts, only briefly surveying selected works by Lewald and Hahn-Hahn in order to establish their non-membership of Young Germany. My study of Gutzkow, Mundt, Lewald and Hahn-Hahn is the first to provide a detailed comparative analysis of novels by authors of both sexes. Although I view the censorship ban as relevant for my study because it demonstrates that the dominance of the sexual contract was perceived to be threatened by the writers' interventions, as mentioned above, I do not assess the women writers' works in terms of Gutzkow's and Mundt's or alleged Young German aims. Indeed, my analyses demonstrate that each writer presents female figures who engage with the sexual contract in fundamentally different ways.

The terms of reference for the studies by Gulde, Möhrmann and Burchardt-Dose are also relevant. Gulde's and Möhrmann's evocation of commonalities between the women writers and the Young Germans is based on thematic links such as "Religionskritik, neue[r] Moral (Ehemoral) und sozialpolitische[n] Neuerungen,"²⁹ (Gulde) and interest in women's emancipation, marriage reform and a critique of the sexual double standard (Möhrmann). Gulde and Möhrmann cite themes that have become popularly synonymous with Young German writing, whether each individual writer named as Young German actually supported these or not.³⁰ Burchardt-Dose differs in that she establishes an extensive list of thematic, stylistic,

²⁹Gulde 4.

³⁰Margaret Ryan Paulsell and Lynne Tatlock critically assess Young German commitment to women's emancipation in Paulsell, "The Relationship of "Young Germany" to Questions of Women's Rights," diss., U of Michigan, 1976 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1976. 7627566); Tatlock, "The Young Germans in Praise of Famous Women: Ambivalent Advocates," *German Life and Letters* 39.3 (1986): 193-209.

Wülfing refers to the seeds sown by Hengstenberg in 1835 when he asserts that though the Young Germans were not a homogenous group they were nevertheless united in their demands for "freie[r] Liebe." Wülfing asserts that this, together with the assertion that the Young Germans propagated women's emancipation and Saint Simonian ideas have been overemphasised by Young German scholars such as Schinrerer, Royen, Pustau, Schönfeld.

and other criteria for Young German works which include the specification that the author must have been subject to a censorship ban.³¹

Gulde's Investigation of the "jungdeutscher Frauenroman" is preceded by a caveat stating that the characteristics of Young German literature await precise definition,³² and by the assertion that the Young Germans cannot be separated from the Romantics, since Schlegel's *Lucinde*, Schleiermacher's *Vertraute Briefe an die Lucinde*, *Wally* and *Madonna* are "in ihren Grundzügen gleich."³³ While she classifies Lewald as a writer of "Tendenzromane" and thus the most Young German of the woman writers,³⁴ she also concludes that Lewald's work belongs to the genre of "Reformliteratur," an anomaly that is not examined further.³⁵ Hahn-Hahn's politically conservative views and focus on the internal life of the individual earn her only qualified membership in the Young German category.³⁶ Gulde's concluding remarks identify a fundamental difference between the women writers and the Young Germans, stating that the women writers promote an understanding of heterosexual relations which are viable for women, and that their treatment of marriage is more sophisticated than that of the male Young German writers, who are more interested in sexual freedom expressed as the emancipation of the flesh.³⁷

Möhrmann's path-breaking study of "the other woman" focusses on women's emancipation, both in socio-political terms, and in terms of emancipating the psyche. She describes both authors and characters as Young German, using the term to valorise women's writing and the women writers. This strategy bespeaks Möhrmann's twofold political concern, that of raising

Wulf Wülfing, *Schlagworte des Jungen Deutschland: Mit einer Einführung in die Schlagwortforschung* (Berlin: Schmidt, 1982) 254.

³¹Burchardt-Dose 304-307.

³²Gulde 4.

³³Gulde 2f, quotation p. 3. Gulde's classification reflects the categorisation of the literary periods current at the time, since Germanist scholarship did not distinguish between the Romantics and the Early Romantics until the early 1980s.

³⁴Gulde 37.

³⁵Gulde 49. This adumbrates the tension Schneider identifies and then resolves in her later monograph when she identifies Lewald as being essentially a reformer. See Gabriele Schneider, *Vom Zeitroman zum "stylisierten" Roman: Die Erzählerin Fanny Lewald* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1993).

³⁶Gulde 70.

³⁷Gulde 82.

the women writers' works from literary obscurity by admitting them into the already established literary canon, while at the same time foregrounding their political impetus as valid in the field of letters. Möhrmann does not problematise Young Germany's marginal position in the literary canon, although she does acknowledge the existence of a dichotomising hierarchy: "... Fehltritte schlichen sich um so leichter ein, als es hier nicht um poetische Gipfelleistungen ging, sondern um übelbeleidete Tendenzpoesie ..."³⁸ She also neatly sidesteps the debate in Young German scholarship about whether Young Germany could be classified as a literary group, or whether it was effectively constituted by the censorship decree.³⁹

Möhrmann does not provide a formal definition of Young German interests, but rather foregrounds the fact that both older and more recent mainstream scholarship on Young Germany has not considered the entitlement of women writers to be classified as Young German.⁴⁰ She describes Lewald as having followed "die gleichen Intentionen wie die Jungdeutschen" but without having been accorded Young German status,⁴¹ and refers to the figure of Jenny (*Jenny* 1843) as the first literary representation of "den Typus der jungdeutschen Frau."⁴² Hahn-Hahn's character Aurora (*Zwei Frauen* 1845) receives similar accreditation.⁴³ Möhrmann highlights Hahn-Hahn's attacks on the religious establishment⁴⁴

³⁸Möhrmann 7. By insisting on the fact that German letters does acknowledge the existence of Young German writing, despite the latter's marginal status, Möhrmann highlights the invisibility of women's writing in the 1970s. (This contrasts with Köster's emphasis on the extra-canonical status of Young German writing in *Literarischer Radikalismus: Zeitbewußtsein und Geschichtsphilosophie in der Entwicklung vom Jungen Deutschland zur Hegelschen Linken* (Frankfurt a.M.: Athenäum, 1972), VIff.

³⁹Early viewpoints on this debate are Geiger's (*Censur, Das Junge Deutschland: Studien und Mitteilungen* (Berlin: Paetel, 1907)) and Houben's (*Sturm*) promotion of Young Germany as a literary group. Proelß asserts the opposite. More recently, Helmut Koopmann and Walter Dietze provide examples of the opposing views. Koopmann maintains that these writers never constituted a literary school but rather saw themselves as being, and in fact were part of a broader movement. (*Das Junge Deutschland: Analyse seines Selbstverständnisses* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1970), X). Dietze on the other hand argues for the understanding of "das Junge Deutschland" as a literary school. Walter Dietze, *Junges Deutschland und deutsche Klassik: Zur Ästhetik und Literaturtheorie des Vormärz* (Berlin: Rütten, 1962, 2nd rev. ed.) 73.

⁴⁰Möhrmann 7-8.

⁴¹Möhrmann 7-8, quotation p.7.

⁴²Möhrmann 135.

⁴³Möhrmann 117.

⁴⁴Möhrmann highlights Walter Dietze's comment that Hahn-Hahn's attacks on the church were far stronger than those made by the Young Germans (86). Dietze tempers his statement

and her trenchant critique of polarised gender roles, describing the latter as the most decisive yet "im Jungdeutschen Roman."⁴⁵ Möhrmann's appropriation and usage of Young German as a positive attribute leads her to propose that Jenny's negotiation of her religious crisis, when compared with Wally's inability to survive hers (Gutzkow *Wally* 1835), shows that Jenny is "die eigentliche Zweiflerin und damit der Typus der jungdeutschen Frau."⁴⁶ Möhrmann's deployment of the term Young German is thus part of a clever strategy to legitimate and valorise women writers of the Vormärz.

Burchardt-Dose's review of Hahn-Hahn and Lewald occurs in the context of a study which establishes that, on the basis of stylistic as well as thematic commonalities, Gutzkow, Mundt, Laube, Kühne and Wienberg constitute a cohesive literary group and are thus to be considered as Young Germany in the narrower sense. She includes the women writers in a discussion of works by "Erfolgsautoren der Restaurationsepoche" to show why none qualify as members of the Young German group.⁴⁷ Burchardt-Dose finds that Hahn-Hahn's almost exclusive focus on love and marriage,⁴⁸ coupled with political and religious critique that is politically irrelevant or supports the status quo,⁴⁹ disqualifies her from membership. Burchardt-Dose also asserts that Lewald's *Eine Lebensfrage* "enthält all die Momente" that separate Lewald's "Frauenromane" from Young German fiction. One of the grounds given is that the theme of this novel "gehört wieder der Privatsphäre an" and is presented "ohne Einbeziehung der gesellschaftlichen Implikationen."⁵⁰ Burchardt-Dose's exclusion of Lewald's early novella *Der dritte Stand* (1845) from discussion is especially noteworthy, since its socio-political critique led to its being censored. This was only revoked once the sex of the author became known. (*ML*, III, 162-169) Burchardt-Dose's assessment of the apolitical nature of Lewald's fiction, and the inability of her conceptual apparatus to deal with Lewald's early novella demonstrate the reductiveness of an analysis that does not admit the political relevance of the

by adding that as a member of the nobility she could afford to do so, in contrast to the Young Germans, who belonged to a lower caste (299).

⁴⁵Möhrmann 96.

⁴⁶Möhrmann 137.

⁴⁷Burchardt-Dose 279-307. For Hahn-Hahn see 293-297, Lewald 298-304.

⁴⁸Burchardt-Dose 294.

⁴⁹Burchardt-Dose 295.

⁵⁰Burchardt-Dose 302.

private or gender as a category of analysis.

Other studies of the authors examined in this thesis are either comparative studies of Young German writers or of nineteenth-century women writers, or monographs on the individual authors. These proliferated in the first flowering of literary scholarship on the Young German writers and their female contemporaries in the 1920s and 1930s. Such studies look at the representation of women and love in Young German works or specifically in Gutzkow's works.⁵¹ Discussions of the women writers as a group look at love, marriage, and/or emancipation, with a primary comparative focus on George Sand, and a secondary comparative focus on the male Young German writers.⁵² Monographs on Lewald and discussion of Hahn-Hahn's pre-conversion novels also look at the writers' treatment of love, marriage and women's emancipation. Lewald is often treated as the German George Sand,⁵³ while discussions of Hahn-Hahn's works emphasise her individualism or her Romantic antecedents.⁵⁴ On the whole, there is a fairly clear division between early twentieth century studies and more recent scholarship. With the notable exception of Keim and Steinhauer, the early studies tend to provide plot summaries but little or no critical analysis,⁵⁵ at times also

⁵¹Erna von Pustau, *Die Stellung der Frau im Leben und im Roman der Jungdeutschen*, diss., U Frankfurt, 1928, (Berlin: Malik, 1928); Eduard Royen, *Die Auffassung der Liebe im Jungen Deutschland*, diss., Westfälische Wilhelms-U zu Münster i. Westfalen, 1926; Otto Paul Schinnerer, "Woman in the Life and Work of Gutzkow," diss., Columbia U 1924; Margarete Schönfeld, *Gutzkows Frauengestalten: Ein Kapitel aus der literarhistorischen Anthropologie des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Germanische Studien 133, 1933 (Nendeln: Kraus, 1967).

⁵²Charlotte Keim, "Der Einfluß George Sands auf den deutschen Roman: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Frauenromans in den 30er und 40er Jahren des 19. Jahrhunderts," diss., Ruprecht-Karls U zu Heidelberg, 1924; Heidi Sallenbach, *George Sand und der deutsche Emanzipationsroman* (Zürich: Kommerzdruck, 1942).

⁵³Grete Schlüppmann, "Fanny Lewalds Stellung zur sozialen Frage," diss., U Münster 1921; Ruth Segerbarth, "Fanny Lewald und ihre Auffassung von Liebe und Ehe," diss., U München, 1922; Marieluse Steinhauer, "Fanny Lewald, die deutsche George Sand: Ein Kapitel aus der Geschichte des Frauenromans im 19. Jahrhundert," diss., Friedrich-Wilhelms-U Berlin, 1937; Marta Weber, *Fanny Lewald*, diss., U Zürich, 1921 (Erlenbach-Zürich: Rentsch, 1921).

⁵⁴Lucie Guntli, *Goethezeit und Katholizismus im Werk Ida Hahn-Hahns: Ein Beitrag zur Geistesgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Münster i. Westf.: Helios, 1931); Katrien van Munster, *Die junge Ida Gräfin Hahn-Hahn*, diss., (Graz: Stiasny's Söhne, 1929); Erna Ines Schmid-Jürgens, *Ida Gräfin Hahn-Hahn* diss., U Berlin 1933, Germanische Studien 144 (Nendeln: Kraus, 1967); Adolf Töpker, *Beziehungen Ida Hahn-Hahns zum Menschentum der deutschen Romantik*, diss., Westfälische Wilhelms-U, Münster, 1937 (Bochum-Langendreer: Poppinghaus, 1937).

⁵⁵Keim's and Steinhauer's early dissertations provide critical textual analyses with insights that are valid for the present investigation. (Keim, 1924; Steinhauer, 1937). An exception in more contemporary scholarship is provided by numerous articles written by Hanna Lewis.

failing to define the terms of their investigation.⁵⁶ This 'first wave' of research was cut short by World War II,⁵⁷ and is in some instances negatively marked by the racist eugenicist politics of the Third Reich.⁵⁸

Germanist literary scholarship did not return to these areas until the generation of 1968 focussed anew on the Young Germans, producing a spate of marxist studies of the Young German interrogation of the nexus of literature and politics.⁵⁹ Feminist scholars of this generation, who were aligned with or influenced by second wave feminism in Germany and the United States, expanded the nexus of literature and politics to include gender, providing readings of the texts as literary works, and using gender as a category of analysis.⁶⁰ Such

These offer little beyond plot summaries, and do not provide an extension of critical Lewald scholarship at the time of their publication. See entries by Hanna B. Lewis in the bibliography.

⁵⁶E.g. Töpker explores Hahn-Hahn's romanticism without at any point defining what he means by this term or any other categories. (Töpker 1937)

⁵⁷Paul Kluckhohn's 1922 study contains references to material, especially works on popular philosophy, that has since been lost. *Die Auffassung der Liebe in der Literatur des 18. Jahrhunderts und in der deutschen Romantik*, 1922 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1966). C.f. Julia Bobsin, *Von der Werther-Krise zur Lucinde-Liebe: Studien zur deutschen Erzählliteratur 1770-1800* (Niemeyer: Tübingen, 1994) 13. Kluckhohn's change of circumstances means that a research trend which he fostered and which led to studies such as that of Eduard Royen's (1926), was truncated. Eduard Royen, *Die Auffassung der Liebe im Jungen Deutschland*, diss., Westfälische Wilhelms-U zu Münster i. Westfalen, 1926.

⁵⁸Both Marta Weber's and Steinhauer's studies are marked by anti-semitic statements. Although Weber's "strongly anti-Semitic tone" has been noted in Lewald scholarship (Stocksieker di Maio), Steinhauer's have gone unremarked. Steinhauer 67-68. Stocksieker di Maio cites the following as exemplary for the tone of her other statements: "Let one example from Weber suffice ... "Von welcher Bedeutung dies jüdische Cliquenwesen bei dem angesehenen literarischen Namen Fanny Lewalds und Ihres Gatten [...] war, können wir heute, wo der jüdische Druck nicht nur auf den politischen und sozialen Verhältnissen lastet, sondern auch Kunst und Literatur zu verderben droht, am besten ermessen." (Weber 117, cited by Stocksieker di Maio 274)

⁵⁹See Helmut Koopmann, *Das Junge Deutschland: Analyse seines Selbstverständnisses* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1970); Köster 1972; Köster, whose first study focusses primarily on the writers' literary-political philosophies, returns to treat the literary works in more detail: *Literatur und Gesellschaft in Deutschland 1830-1848: Die Dichtung am Ende der Kunstperiode* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1984). Walter Dietze's earlier Marxist study, written in the German Democratic Republic, is also a core study (Dietze). See also essay collection in Gert Mattenklott and Klaus R. Scherpe, eds., *Demokratisch-revolutionäre Literatur in Deutschland: Vormärz*, Literatur im historischen Prozeß 3/2 (Kronberg/Ts: Scriptor, 1974).

⁶⁰German feminist literary studies did not conceptualise its readings in this way to begin with, and has more recently adopted the English term gender to circumvent the fact that German uses the same word for sex and gender. See Inge Stephan's review of the implementation of this category in German feminist criticism in "Gender: Eine nützliche Kategorie für die Literaturwissenschaft," *Zeitschrift für Germanistik*, Neue Folge 1 (1999): 22-35.

studies began with the landmark volume of essays edited by Susan L. Cocalis and Kay Goodman, *Beyond the Eternal Feminine* (1982).⁶¹ This contains the editors' agenda-setting introduction and Marsha Meyer's insightful comparative reading of Gutzkow's *Wally* and Mundt's *Madonna*, the first from a feminist perspective.⁶² Möhrmann's *Die andere Frau*, discussed above, signalled the beginnings of the feminist enterprise of extending the Germanist literary canon to include lesser-known and forgotten works by women writers.⁶³ In this vein, the second scholarly contextualisation of the present thesis is that of feminist literary studies that provide inspirational models of textual analysis, and here I draw on German nineteenth-century feminist studies as well as textual studies from other literary disciplines, particularly English and French.⁶⁴

The third scholarly contextualisation of this thesis in literary studies is specific to the authors I examine. It is that of critical scholarship on Gutzkow, Mundt, Lewald and Hahn-Hahn, especially the many recent studies that are thematically related or relevant to the

⁶¹Susan L. Cocalis and Kay Goodman, eds., *Beyond the Eternal Feminine: Critical Essays on Women and German Literature*, Stuttgarter Arbeiten zur Germanistik 98, ed., Ulrich Müller et al. (Stuttgart: Akademischer Verlag, 1982).

⁶²Susan L. Cocalis and Kay Goodman, Introduction, "The Eternal Feminine is Leading Us On," Cocalis and Goodman 1-45. Marsha Meyer, "The Depictions of Women in Gutzkow's *Wally*, *die Zweiflerin* and Mundt's *Madonna*," Cocalis and Goodman 135-159.

⁶³See also the companion volume edited by Möhrmann: *Frauenemanzipation im deutschen Vormärz: Texte und Dokumente* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1978). See also the review article by Ruth-Ellen Joeres, "German Women in Text and Context of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: A Review Essay of Feminist Criticism," *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1986) vol. 11, 232-263.

⁶⁴In this vein, particularly significant literary studies for the present investigation are Abel, Langland and Hirsch's work on the female Bildungsroman, Christine Lehmann's discussion of the novel of seduction, Nancy Miller's work on the French nineteenth-century novel, and Ruth-Ellen Joeres' investigations of nineteenth-century German women writers. Abel, Hirsch, Langland, eds., *The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development* (Hanover: UP of New England, 1983); Christine Lehmann, *Das Modell Clarissa: Liebe, Verführung, Sexualität und Tod der Romanheldinnen des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1991); Nancy K. Miller, *The Heroine's Text: Readings in the French and English Novel, 1722-1782* (New York: Columbia UP, 1980); ---, *Subject to Change: Reading Feminist Writing* (New York: Columbia UP, 1988); Ruth-Ellen Joeres, *Respectability and Deviance: Nineteenth-Century German Women Writers and the Ambiguity of Representation* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1998). In her recent review of nineteenth century feminist German Studies and assessment of its current state Joeres pays tribute to feminist literary studies in French and English, acknowledging their shaping influence, and at the same time highlighting the value of intercultural literary studies and also of interdisciplinary work. See "Scattered Thoughts on Current Feminist Literary Critical Work in Nineteenth-Century German Studies," *Women In German Yearbook* 17, ed. Patricia Hemminghouse and Susanne Zantop (Lincoln, U of Nebraska P, 2001) 225-244, here 229-30.

present project in that they examine the representation of female characters in literary works by these authors.⁶⁵ These range from the 1970s to the present, from Sammons' readings of *Wally* and *Madonna* as literary narratives,⁶⁶ to more recent feminist, (feminist) poststructuralist and psychoanalytic studies from the late twentieth century.⁶⁷ Recent doctoral dissertations from non-feminist perspectives have also provided a valuable resource and inspiration for further critical analysis.⁶⁸ These will be acknowledged individually in the relevant section of the thesis.

My analysis of the literary texts in terms of an exposition of the sexual contract allows for differentiated assessment of contestatory acts by literary figures who are themselves constituted according to its terms. Any challenge to the sexual contract is thus by definition ultimately a challenge to the self, either in terms of the constitution of identity, or one's social position, or both. My inclusion of Mundt's (auto-)biographical text *Charlotte Stieglitz: Ein Denkmal* establishes a link between literary figures and a textual representation of a real woman, looking at the effects of the sexual contract in the constitution of Charlotte's identity and her social destiny as they are presented in her own writing as well as in Mundt's textual memorial.

⁶⁵For this reason I do not consider studies such as the following: Olaf Briese, *Der Anspruch des Subjekts: Zum Unsterblichkeitsgedanken im Jungen Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Verlag für Wissenschaft und Forschung, 1995); Tereoka Takanori, *Stil und Stildiskurs im Jungen Deutschland* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe Heinrich Heine Verlag, 1993).

⁶⁶Jeffrey L. Sammons, *Six Essays on the Young German Novel* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1975).

⁶⁷The following studies have been particularly valuable in shaping my literary analyses: Jeanine Blackwell, "Bildungsroman mit Dame: The Heroine in the German Bildungsroman from 1770 to 1900," diss., U. of Indiana, 1982 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1982, 8307995); Gerlinde Maria Geiger, *Die befreite Psyche: Emanzipationsansätze im Frühwerk Ida Hahn-Hahns (1838-1848)* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1986); Jay Geller, "Contact with Persistent Others: The Representation of Woman in Friedrich Schlegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, and Karl Gutzkow," diss., Department of Religion, Duke U, 1985. (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1985, 8610305); Marilyn Chapin Massey, "Wally the Sceptic: A Suppressed Feminist Novel," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 35.1-2 (1979-80): 49-55; Irene Stocksieler di Maio, "Jewish Emancipation and Integration: Fanny Lewald's Narrative Strategies," *Autoren damals und heute: literaturgeschichtliche Beispiele veränderter Wirkungshorizonte*, ed. Gerhard P. Knapp. *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur neueren Germanistik* 31-33, 1990/91 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1991) 273-301; Mark Webber, "Mundt's *Madonna* and Schiller's "Spaziergang." *The City in History and Literature*," *Germano-Slavica* 2.2 (1976): 77-86.

⁶⁸See especially Gabriele Schneider; Gert Vonhoff, *Vom bürgerlichen Individuum zur sozialen Frage: Romane von Karl Gutzkow* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1994).

In all the works examined, the female figures successfully interrogate or subvert one or a number of aspects of the sexual contract. However, the texts' exposition of the different ways in which the female figures deal with the threat their challenge poses to their identity reveals the all-encompassing nature of the sexual contract. The texts thereby emphasise the degree to which women's destiny is determined by the sexual contract. At some point on her developmental trajectory, each female figure recognises the limitations placed on her challenge, and must decide what to do. Whether her fate is suicide, death, or a relinquishing of her challenge in order to retain a place in society, or whether her fate remains unclear, the female figure's contestation of the sexual contract results in a fundamental change to her identity. My discussion of the literary texts provides insight into the all-pervasive effects of the sexual contract in determining these women's identity, their sexuality, and their ultimate fate. It also focusses on the textual strategies deployed in the narratives to reveal how they provide a commentary on these effects, and thus a judgement of the sexual contract as it acts on women.

Part One.

In the following section I present the model of the sexual contract that provides the underpinning for my analysis of works by Gutzkow, Mundt, Lewald and Hahn-Hahn. I shall summarise relevant aspects of Pateman's argumentation from *The Sexual Contract*, then analyse Fichte's "Family Law" as an expression of the sexual contract according to the expanded understanding of the term that I proposed in my introduction.

As Pateman's terminology and analysis indicate, the "story" of the sexual contract is a fiction within the equally fictional accounts of classic theories of the social contract.¹ Similarly, Fichte's "Family Law" is a product based in the fictions of the German discourse of Enlightenment natural law. Gerhard points out that this discourse was a hybrid which fused jurisprudence with the anthropology of the time. While its method was determined by that of the "newly developing" natural sciences,

[d]as Modell, an dem das 'Naturgesetz' der Gesellschaft in immer neuen Varianten entwickelt wurde, war der Gesellschaftsvertrag, der den Übergang von den natürlichen zu gesellschaftlichen, 'zivilen' Verhältnissen bezeichnete, aber nicht als historisches Faktum, sondern als 'Lehrfabel widerspruchsfreier Rechtsbegründung'.²

I reiterate Pateman's and Gerhard's emphasis on the fictional status of this politico-philosophical discourse and its underpinnings in order firstly to contextualise the *Naturrecht* and thus Fichte's "Family Law" in terms of their generic status and the discourses that shape their argument. My intention is secondly to show that the fictional constructs of normative female subjectivity and sexuality are developed in a work that is always already a fiction, but one with normative impact in both the socio-political and cultural spheres.

The two dominant fictions which provide the conceptual foundation of theories of Enlightenment natural law are thus that of the social contract, and that of alleged laws of nature. Each of these fictions is in turn constituted by other fictions which vary according to historical context and need. This is emphasised by Karl-Heinz Ilting in a survey article on

¹Pateman, *Contract* 1-3.

²Ute Gerhard, *Gleichheit ohne Angleichung: Frauen im Recht* (München: Beck, 1990) 28-37, quotation, 28. The theorisation of a twofold progression, from a natural to a civilised condition, is fundamental to classical contract theory. C.f. Carole Pateman, *The Problem of Political Obligation: A Critical Analysis of Liberal Theory* (Chichester: Wiley, 1979) 150.

"Naturrecht," where he refers to the contingent nature of theories of natural law as enabling fictions, that is, their capacity to be put into service. Ilting states that theories of natural law are developed according to a pre-given system of legal norms which themselves are considered to constitute the law of nature, and are binding in any situation. He stresses, however, that the controversial question, "ob es ein universal verbindliches Naturrecht überhaupt gibt und welche Normen es gegebenenfalls enthält," remains unclarified.³ Each respective system of natural law must therefore derive its authoritative status through argument.⁴ He also emphasises the adaptability of natural law to particular needs driven by specific socio-political and historical circumstances, and its function in codifying social norms.⁵ My discussion of Fichte's "Family Law" shows how this text deploys the discourse of Enlightenment natural law to particular cultural and socio-political ends. Moreover, I show that Fichte's text is even more of a hybrid than suggested by Gerhard's comments about the constituent discourses of Enlightenment natural law, as it attempts to fuse the latter discourses with the unwritten discourse of bourgeois morality and its policing.

The way this fusion is achieved is relevant to the discussion of the two-fold impetus of Fichte's "Family Law" in its focus on female subjectivity and sexuality on the one hand, and its project of shaping the morality of the nascent bourgeois middle-class society on the other.

As Hull points out:

Fichte's sexual theories ... make completely explicit the sexual (not gender) ground for political rights. ... [T]hey were quite representative of the assumptions of liberal progressives of his day, which is why the rights and legal maxims that Fichte derived from (or legitimated through) these [sexual MV] ideas remained so constant into the twentieth century. Ute Gerhard is quite right to call Fichte the 'chief ideologue of bourgeois patriarchy,' whose achievement it was to have anticipated and clearly expressed the founding opinions of liberal society and its 'family fathers.'⁶

Recent feminist Fichte scholarship highlights the degree to which the personal was political for Fichte and the other "bürgerliche Meisterdenker,"⁷ and argues that as well as being a

³Karl-Heinz Ilting, "Naturrecht," Brunner, Conze, and Koselleck, eds., *Geschichtliche IV*: 245-313, 245.

⁴Ilting, "Naturrecht" 245.

⁵Ilting, "Naturrecht" 245.

⁶Hull, 1996, 314.

⁷Ute Frevert formulates this in general terms in "Bürgerliche Meisterdenker und das Geschlechterverhältnis: Konzepte, Erfahrungen, Visionen an der Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert," Frevert, *Bürgerinnen* 17-48, here p. 19.

document shaping future practice, Fichte's "Family Law" also reflects the practice of his contemporaries.⁸ My analysis further shows how on both a literal as well as on the more abstract conceptual level, the sexual contract supported and was supported by the discourse of natural law, bourgeois morality, and the preferred social practice of the time as expressed in Fichte's text.

1.1. Carole Pateman's Sexual Contract.

Pateman's account of the premises of classic contract theory yields an abstract model for the way in which female subject status in civil society and thus women's social status is conceptualised in accounts of the social contract. She highlights absences in the theory, giving an account of their significance. Pateman's analysis of definitions of marriage and the status of women in classic contract theory includes discussion of Kant's and Hegel's writing.⁹ Although she does not discuss Fichte, her conceptualisation of the sexual contract provides insight into his premises, his mode of argumentation, and the contradictions in the "Family Law." Pateman's account of the symbolic significance of the contract in attesting to the individual's subject status in social contract theory is relevant in this context. Within this theory women's limited capacity to enter into contracts in civil society defines the nature of their participation in society. Pateman's definition of the multiple meanings of the term civil society and the implications for women's subject status further emphasises the marginalised status contract theory ascribes to women in the modern state, and consequently, their limited participation in its foundational structures. Her analysis provides the conceptual

Kenkel's discussion of ways in which Fichte's relationship with his wife Johanne might have underpinned or reinforced the views articulated in the "Family Law" concludes that Johanne "exaggerates her passivity and Fichte's power over her in order to obtain concessions. Fichte's marriage reproduces his theoretical conception of marital relations insofar as Johanne positions herself as self-sacrificing in order to exercise influence within the household" (293). With reference to the critical assessments of Fichte by scholars such as Bäumer, Gerhard, Honegger and Schröder, Hull asserts that "[b]y boldly reformulating the silent assumptions of many of his contemporaries into a system of logical determinism, Fichte became a lightning rod for later critics of these assumptions, who found Fichte's work outlandish, which it may be, and idiosyncratic, which it was not" (Hull, *Sexuality* 314).

⁸Hull, *Sexuality* 323.

⁹Pateman, *Contract* 168-173; 173-182 respectively.

underpinnings of the phenomenon identified by Sigrid Weigel in her assertion that "in der männlichen Ordnung" women are "zugleich beteiligt und ausgegrenzt."¹⁰

Pateman argues that discussions of patriarchal civil society in classic contract theory focus on one sphere only:

The story of the social contract is treated as an account of the creation of the public sphere of civil freedom. The other, private, sphere is not seen as politically relevant. Marriage and the marriage contract are, therefore, also deemed politically irrelevant. To ignore the marriage contract is to ignore half the original contract. In the classic texts, ..., the sexual contract is displaced onto the marriage contract and, as a result, remains invisible.¹¹

Her identification of the perceived political irrelevance of the private sphere and the marriage contract has consequences for the social and political status of women, which Pateman draws out. In shifting the focus, her discussion highlights the centrality in classic contract theory of "[t]he construction of the difference between the sexes as the difference between freedom and subjection."¹² She presents the abstract level on which the politico-philosophical theories of the social contract connect women with the private sphere, and elucidates the concrete consequences of the negation of women as autonomous political subjects and their concomitant elimination from the public sphere of civil society.

I turn first to Pateman's discussion of the marriage contract, and then to her discussion of the relationship of the public sphere of civil society to that of the private sphere. Her discussion of the marriage contract focusses on the central paradox of this contract within a society that premises individual subject status on the capacity to enter freely into contracts. She emphasises that within the social contract men are constructed as individual subjects who can enter into contracts, while women are constructed as "the subject of the contract" [emphasis added, M.V.], and are not accredited with the status of individuals in law.¹³ According to the "original story" of the social contract as Pateman tells it, women cannot be party to the original agreement which is the social contract, and they are barred from

¹⁰"Der schielende Blick: Thesen zur Geschichte weiblicher Schreibpraxis," *Die verborgene Frau*, 83-137, quotation 85.

¹¹Pateman, *Contract* 3f.

¹²Pateman, *Contract* 6.

¹³Part of Pateman's stated intention in *The Sexual Contract* is to "show how the exclusion of women from the central category of the 'individual' has been given social and legal expression and how the exclusion has structured the contracts" she examines (6).

entering into any contracts in civil society except the marriage contract. Their entry into this latter contract, which is the legal expression of the sexual contract, is, however, mandatory. The sexual contract thus determines the nature of women's participation in civil society, which is defined according to sex or sexual difference: that is, sex defines social status.

Pateman's brief summary of the "story" of the original contract as told by the classic theorists elaborates the significance of sexual difference as follows:

The device of the state of nature is used to explain why, given the characteristics of the inhabitants of the natural condition, entry into the contract is a rational act. The crucial point that is omitted is that the inhabitants are sexually differentiated and, for all the classic writers (except Hobbes), a difference in rationality follows from natural sexual difference. Commentaries on the texts gloss over the fact that the classic theorists construct a patriarchal account of masculinity and femininity, of what it is to be men and women. Only masculine beings are endowed with the attributes and capacities necessary to enter into contracts, the most important of which is ownership of property in the person; only men, that is to say, are individuals.¹⁴

Pateman highlights the fundamental contradiction in the conceptualisation of women's participation in the social contract in classical contract theory by means of rhetorical questions that aim to elicit the determining logic of a reasoning that on the one hand conceptualises women as being unable to enter into the founding social contract on the grounds of their alternative form of rationality, yet on the other hand specifies women's mandatory participation in the one contract, namely the marriage contract:

How can beings who lack the capacities to make contracts nevertheless be supposed always to enter into this [i.e. the marriage M.V.] contract? Why, moreover, do all the classic theorists ... insist that, in civil society, women not only can, but must enter into the marriage contract?¹⁵

Pateman suggests that the logic of the founding social contract itself provides the reason for women's mandatory participation in the marriage contract. According to this logic, all parts of the society must be constituted by means of a contract, the latter being emblematic of the freedom of their constitution:

The reason that women enter into the marriage contract in the classic stories, and must do so ..., is that, if universal freedom is to be presented as the principle of civil

¹⁴Pateman, *Contract* 5f.

¹⁵Pateman, *Contract* 6.

society, all individuals, including women, must enter into contracts; no one can be left out. In civil society, individual freedom is exhibited through contract.¹⁶

Women can thus only be incorporated into society by entering into some form of contract. Once they have entered into the marriage contract, however, their participation and incorporation may then be rendered invisible, as demonstrated by Pateman. Fichte's text, as shown in the analysis below, exemplifies this practice.

The sexual contract thus cements women's ambiguous status in civil society as constituted according to the terms of the social contract. Pateman's identification of the triple ambiguity of the term civil society shows how this multiple ambiguity further underscores the already ambiguous social status of women. According to Pateman, the term civil society can refer to "the contractual order that follows the pre-modern order of status."¹⁷ It can also refer to the order that "replaces the state of nature; and yet again, 'civil' also refers to one of the spheres, the public sphere, of civil society."¹⁸ The latter shift in meaning, from a reference to the entirety of civil society, to only a part of it, is read by Pateman as a shift that obscures the status of nature as a term which is latently present in civil society. On this basis she argues that, paradoxically, civil(ised) culture succeeds in incorporating the nature that it allegedly overcomes through constituting itself according to the social contract.¹⁹

According to Pateman "[t]he two spheres of civil society are at once separate and inseparable. The public realm cannot be fully understood in the absence of the private sphere, and, similarly, the meaning of the original contract is misinterpreted without both, mutually dependent, halves of the story."²⁰ Pateman emphasises that her focus on the mutual

¹⁶Pateman, *Contract* 112.

¹⁷Pateman, *Contract* 10.

¹⁸Pateman, *Contract* 10.

¹⁹Moira Gatens analyses the conceptual dimension of the birth of the modern body politic and the human subject in the seventeenth century in similar terms, looking at woman's incorporation into the body politic as nature. "Towards a Feminist Philosophy of the Body," *Crossing Boundaries: Feminisms and the Critique of Knowledges*, ed., Barbara Caine, E.A. Grosz, Marie de Lepervanche, (Sydney: Allen, 1988) 59-70. See also Gatens' use of the metaphor of ingestion to describe women's invisibility and the process of women's incorporation into the modern state as representatives of nature. "Corporeal Representation in/ and the Body Politic," *Cartographies*, ed., Rosalyn Diprose and Robyn Ferrell (Sydney: Allen, 1991) 79-87.

²⁰Pateman, *Contract* 4.

Interaction of both spheres, and her particular interest in the private sphere is relatively new in the scholarship of political philosophy:

Questions are rarely asked about the political significance of the existence of two spheres, or about how both spheres are brought into being. The origin of the public sphere is no mystery. The social contract brings the public world of civil law, civil freedom and equality, contract and the individual into being. What is the (conjectural) history of the origin of the private sphere?²¹

Pateman's reading of the social contract theorists in answer to this question asserts that civil society in its sense of the civil state opposes the natural condition, yet at the same time, civil society within the state also contains an opposing element which represents nature or what is natural, namely the private sphere. She argues that the bifurcation of civil society into two separate spheres results from the sexual contract. Further, she demonstrates how this bifurcation and the triple ambiguity of the term 'civil' serve to uphold patriarchal male sex-right and thus male rule over women. Her reasoning is cited extensively here as it provides an important underpinning to the analysis below of Fichte's procedure in the "Family Law:"

To understand any classic theorist's picture of either the natural condition or the civil state, both must be considered together. 'Natural' and 'civil' are at once opposed to each other and mutually dependent. The two terms gain their meaning from their relationship to each other; what is 'natural' excludes what is 'civil' and vice versa. To draw attention to the mutual dependence of the state of nature/civil society does not explain why, after the original pact, the term 'civil' shifts and is used to refer not to the whole of 'civil society' but to one of its parts. To explain the shift, a double opposition and dependence between 'natural' and 'civil' must be taken into account. Once the original contract is entered into, the relevant dichotomy is between the private sphere and the civil, public sphere - a dichotomy that reflects the order of sexual difference in the natural condition, which is also a political difference. Women have no part in the original contract, but they are not left behind in the state of nature - that would defeat the purpose of the sexual contract! *Women are incorporated into a sphere that both is and is not in civil society.* The private sphere is part of civil society but is separated from the 'civil' sphere. The antinomy private/public is another expression of natural/civil and women/men. The private, womanly sphere (natural) and the public, masculine sphere (civil) are opposed but gain their meaning from each other, and the meaning of the civil freedom of public life is thrown into relief when counterposed to the natural subjection that characterizes the private realm ... [emphasis added, MV].²²

Women and nature are thus always present as the silent term in the social contract, necessary but unacknowledged, incorporated in such a way that their presence is obscured and

²¹Pateman, *Contract* 11.

²²Pateman, *Contract* 11.

their significance obliterated, defined as without status according to the terms of civil society. This process is enabled by the ellision of the sexual contract in the marriage contract and in turn by that of the marriage contract in the social contract.

On the basis of Pateman's discussion it is possible to extrapolate the extent to which women's sex defines their place in civil society as civilised and domesticated nature placed under the jurisdiction of men,²³ as it highlights the contradiction inherent in provisions for women to be able to make the rational decision to enter into the marriage contract while they are at the same time conceptualised as the embodiment of irrational nature, as occurs in Fichte's text. Providing an articulation of what remains unspoken in juridical discourse regarding the social status of women, Pateman's analysis reveals the unwritten premises of the marriage contract, and in a broader sense, of the social contract that underpins and governs relations between individuals in modern civil society. The conditions of women's entry into the marriage contract require that they make a rational decision to enter into it, and that they be granted subject status the moment they do this. Upon its completion, however, they relinquish this status, to become one with their husband, who represents them in civil society from that point onwards.²⁴ The marriage contract, which women enter into in the brief moment of rationality allowed them for this purpose, is based on the unwritten and unacknowledged sexual contract, and determines the nature of women's participation in civil society.

Pateman's elaboration of the sexual contract makes the strategic impulse governing Fichte's often apparently bizarre claims evident, and underlines the degree to which his claims, premises and argument are in keeping with the spirit of his time.

1.2. Fichte's "Family Law" and the sexual contract.

²³C.f. Sigrid Weigel, *Topographien der Geschlechter: Kulturgeschichtliche Studien zur Literatur*, (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1990) 118-142. See especially 140-142: "Die Kolonisierung der weiblichen Natur." See also Gatens, "Corporeal Representation" and "Towards a Feminist Philosophy of the Body."

²⁴Fichte makes this explicit (see discussion below), whereas Pateman's analysis shows that the sexual contract is masked in Kant's and Hegel's definitions of the marriage contract. See Pateman, *Contract* 168-182, especially 169-171, 181.

Fichte's "Family Law" explicates the fiction of the social contract by providing descriptions of civil(ised) society as well as alluding to a conjectured original natural state. Its argumentation attempts to fuse the fiction of the social contract with the requirements of the discourse of Enlightenment reason and equality and those of an overarching "Plan der Natur." In addition, even while asserting the separation of church and state by claiming the state has no jurisdiction in moral matters, the "Family Law" establishes the extrajudicial authority of public opinion and its regulation of mores and conventions. Finally, Fichte's own twist on the normative anthropology of the sexes focusses on sexual desire and specific details of sexual behaviour, particularly with respect to the marital sexual relationship.²⁵ The latter focus means that the "Family Law" in fact sets out the requirements of the sexual contract, both in its definition of marriage as based in the sex act, and its definition of the requirement of female self-subjugation to the husband in explicitly sexual terms. Fichte in fact provides a clear articulation of much which Pateman argues is absent and implied in classic contract theory, and his presentation of the "story of the sexual contract" shows it is "about," as Pateman states, "(hetero)sexual relations and women as embodied sexual beings." The "Family Law" thus elaborates on the outlines of the story that Pateman sketches in the following statement:

The story helps us understand the mechanisms through which men claim right of sexual access to women's bodies and claim right of command over the use of women's bodies. Moreover, heterosexual relations are not confined to private life. The most

²⁵C.f. Honegger 186. Hull distinguishes Fichte's contribution to definitions of the relationship between women and men as "The Explicit Sexual Model," in contrast to those of Kant and Hippiel, described respectively as "The Implicit Sexual Model" and "The Model of Sexual Irrelevancy." (Hull, *Sexuality* 314, 301, 323) To argue that Fichte's gender anthropology relied on stereotypes that were already outdated in his time misses the point. C.f. Heidemarie Bennet, *Galanterie und Verachtung: Eine philosophiegeschichtliche Untersuchung zur Stellung der Frau in Gesellschaft und Kultur* (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, 1985) 115, and Hannelore Schröder, *Die Rechtslosigkeit der Frau im Rechtsstaat: Dargestellt am Allgemeinen Preußischen Landrecht, am Bürgerlichen Gesetzbuch und an J.G. Fichtes Grundlage des Naturrechts*, (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, 1979) 138-40. Rather, as Frevert comments, in this period there was "ein besonderes Bedürfnis, den Geschlechterdualismus festzuschreiben, zu legitimieren und mit zeitgemäßen Modifikationen zu versehen. [original emphasis MV]" (Frevert, "Meisterdenker" 17-48, here 43, fn. 27). C.f. assessments of Fichte's views on marriage. Claudia Honegger comments: "Das Merkwürdige an Fichtes Text ist aber vielleicht gerade die "Normalität" derartiger Verschrobenheiten in jener Zeit." This is in response to Gertrud Bäumer's statement: "Es gibt nichts Unzarteres, Verschrobeneres und in seiner schulmeisterlichen Gravität und Überzeugtheit Komischeres, als Fichtes Weisheit über die Ehe, enthalten in den Anhängen zum Naturrecht." (Honegger 253, fn. 334.)

dramatic aspect of patriarchal right is that men demand that women's bodies are for sale as commodities in the capitalist market; prostitution is a major capitalist industry.²⁶

Fichte's fictional Ideal woman represents a cooptation, instrumentalisation and political functionalisation of the feminine. It also embodies the kind of female subjectivity and sexuality necessary to uphold and indeed be a cooperative participant in the sexual contract. The tolerance of prostitution expressed in the "Family Law" further underscores the work's status as an expression of the sexual contract.

My discussion of the "Family Law" focusses on the first three sections of the text, the "Deduktion der Ehe," "Das Eherecht," and "Folgerungen auf das gegenseitige Rechtsverhältniß beider Geschlechter überhaupt im Staate."²⁷ These three sections treat female subjectivity and sexuality, the status of women in civil society, and the marriage relationship. They also establish Fichte's legacy to German philosophical jurisprudence and the law in their formulation of what has become known as the "doppelte[r] Charakter" of marriage, namely its status as an institution of the state, while it is at the same time conceptualised as a private contract that does not admit state intervention.²⁸ This concept of the dual nature of marriage and its moral status influenced legal practice through the early nineteenth century,²⁹ and informed Friedrich Carl von Savigny's view of "die sittliche Erhebung des weiblichen Geschlechts" in marriage.³⁰ As Minister of Justice, Savigny was responsible, in 1842, for the controversial proposals for the more restrictive reformulation of the regulation of marriage and divorce by the Prussian Reform Code.³¹ This had been requested by King

²⁶Pateman, *Contract* 17.

²⁷The fourth and final section, which concerns the status of children, is not directly relevant to the present discussion.

²⁸Gerhard, *Verhältnisse* 155. C.f. Dörner 82-83.

²⁹This is evident in the Revisor's commentary on legal practice and his suggested reforms of the marriage and divorce laws of the ALR. His is the only such commentary on legal practice in this period. See extracts in Gerhard: "(Revisor), Gesetz-Revision-Pensum XV. Motive zu dem vom Revisor vorgelegten Entwurf des Tit. 1, Th. II des Allgemeinen Landrechts. Berlin 1830." Gerhard, *Verhältnisse* 156 and 396-442.

³⁰Friedrich Carl von Savigny, "Darstellung der in den Preußischen Gesetzen über die Ehescheidung unternommenen Reform." Savigny's views and quotation, Gerhard, *Verhältnisse* 174.

³¹Preußisches Allgemeines Landrecht, or ALR, 1794. Further references will be to the acronym ALR.

Friedrich Wilhelm IV who wished to restore the sanctity of marriage and the family by reducing the divorce rate.³² Savigny's definition of "d[ie] Natur der Ehe als Institution" finds that divorce is a threat to "die höhere sittliche Stellung des weiblichen Geschlechts, den auf dem Familienleben ruhendem Segen [sowie] die sichere Übertragung unseres ganzen Besitzthums sittlicher Gesinnung auf die nachwachsende Generation." (1844)³³ Such statements rely on the moralised and sexually sanitised normative ideal of female character and conduct developed by Fichte to support the dual status of marriage and its moralisation.

In the course of asserting the normative status of particular forms of ideal being and behaviour, the "Family Law" provides a battery of disciplinary mechanisms that may be deployed to ensure the dominance of the ideal. These are, on the one hand, legal disciplinary mechanisms externally imposed through the implementation of marriage and divorce law. On the other, they are extrajudicial disciplinary mechanisms that are both internally and externally imposed. The internally imposed extrajudicial mechanisms are "Liebe" and "(natürliche) Schamhaftigkeit." These are then enforced through the externally imposed disciplinary regulatory authority of public opinion, or "öffentliche Meinung," and mores and conventions, or "Sitten" and "Konventionen."

Some concepts introduced by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* underpin my discussion of the working of internally and externally imposed extrajudicial disciplinary mechanisms in the "Family Law."³⁴ These are the mechanism of panoptic power and the principle of

³²The king ordered that this be done by "die "den Lehren des Christentums widersprechenden Grundsätze" zu entfernen und "würdigere Formen für das Eheprozeßverfahren" zu finden." The reforms failed, as a result of opposition from bourgeois liberals as well as radicals. The debate generated prompted Lewald's *Eine Lebensfrage*. Gerhard *Verhältnisse* 169.

³³Savigny, "Darstellung" cited in Gerhard *Verhältnisse* 171-72, quotation 172.

³⁴Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, trans., Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin, 1977) 222. While Norbert Elias's two volume study *Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation*, proposes the concept of a "Schema der Selbstzwänge" imposed on the bourgeois in the workplace, it does not explore the period under discussion here. He states that this involved a regime of specifically sexual self-discipline, but also states that he cannot examine "[d]ie Verbindungslinien zwischen der spezifischen Modellierung des Triebhaushalts und dem Gesellschaftsaufbau des 19. Jahrhunderts" Similarly, he states that his research on the "Umgestaltung der sexuellen Impulse" and the "verstärkte[n] Schamentwicklung in der Beziehung von Mann und Frau" in the course of the development of bourgeois society proved too voluminous for inclusion in his study. Norbert Elias, *Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation: soziogenetische und psychogenetische Untersuchungen*, 2 vols. (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1976) 1: 255 and 2: 401 respectively.

"enclosure." In discussing the change in juridico-political structures which accompanied the bourgeoisie's rise to political dominance in the course of the eighteenth century, Foucault remarks that the "Enlightenment," which discovered the liberties, also invented the disciplines." He describes these as "a sort of counter-law," mechanisms which operate outside the juridical system to enforce other social norms.³⁵ Foucault's account of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, a model prison designed in the early 1790s, provides a psychopolitical paradigm for the dissemination of disciplinary power in society through the exercising of a kind of surveillance that is subsequently transformed into self-surveillance. His discussion in *Discipline and Punish* shows how this form of disciplinary power becomes intensified and refined in its transformation from an external force to one which is internalised and reproduced by the person subjected to it.³⁶

Foucault describes the Panopticon as a circular structure with a central tower containing an observer. The periphery contains single cells for prisoners, which are all open to view from the central tower. The tower can be seen at all times by the prisoners, but they cannot know when they are being observed, and consequently must exercise the self-discipline to behave as though they are under continuous observation.³⁷ This arrangement ensures that power is always visible but unverifiable: the exercise of power and authority becomes more diffuse but no less powerful and effective, as its workings are internalised, and the inmates are disciplined into a state in which they conduct their own surveillance.³⁸ This is precisely the process delineated in Fichte's text, which shows how women are required to become unquestioning instruments of the moral and sexual disciplinary requirements enforced by bourgeois moral authority.

³⁵Foucault, *Discipline* 222-23.

³⁶Foucault, *Discipline*. See "Panopticism" section 195-228.

³⁷"Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that ensures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action" Foucault, *Discipline* 201.

³⁸"The efficiency of power, its constraining force have, in a sense passed over to the other side - to the side of its surface of application. He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection." Foucault, *Discipline* 202-03.

Foucault's discussion of the notion of "enclosure" in *Discipline and Punish* also allows insight into the ideological framework of the separation of public and private spheres in bourgeois society and the placement of women in the private sphere.³⁹ While the corollary of the ideology of the separation of spheres is the sequestration of women in the house, this was clearly impractical on a physical level, and thus needed to be effected on a psychic level. My discussion of the third section of the "Family Law" shows how the primitive requirement of the physical "enclosure" of women in the private sphere is superseded to produce women's self-directed psychic enclosure in this sphere. This requires the exercise of self-discipline, but is also reinforced by externally imposed disciplinary mechanisms.

Fichte's "Family Law" is exemplary in its attempt to discipline both the body and psyche of women, and impose controls on female sexual desire. Through the control of all the female body's gestures according to moral, "natural" and legal guidelines, this body becomes a signifier denoting subjugation to the disciplinary authority, whether this be that of the bourgeois morality promulgated by the authority of the law or that presented by the purveyors and enforcers of public opinion.

Of the two internally-imposed psychic disciplinary mechanisms developed by Fichte, "Liebe" regulates the voluntary self-subjugation of women to men within marriage, their lack of (sexual) desire, and their tolerance of a husband's adultery. Women's moral worth ("Würde") is assessed in terms of their adherence to this definition of love, and in turn determines their social status and acceptance within their own social sphere.⁴⁰ The mechanism of "(natürliche) Schamhaftigkeit" regulates women's self-censorship with regard not only to sexual desire and activity, but indeed any activity a woman may undertake in the

³⁹"Discipline sometimes requires *enclosure*, the specification of a place heterogeneous to all others and closed in upon itself." "But the principle of 'enclosure' is neither constant, nor indispensable, nor sufficient in disciplinary machinery." Foucault, *Discipline* 141 and 143 respectively. Foucault also refers to "[r]eligious groups and charity organisations" which "had long played the role of 'disciplining' the population. One also sees the spread of disciplinary procedures, not in the form of enclosed institutions, but as centres of observation disseminated throughout society. Foucault, *Discipline* 212.

⁴⁰Hull looks at the harnessing of honour in her discussion of "The Cameralist Theory of Civil Society." This includes theoreticians of natural law such as Pufendorf, Thomasius, and Wolff, as well as Bavarian civil servants. Hull writes that by harnessing honour, "one mobilized the powerful internal mechanisms by which social groups already regulated themselves." Hull, *Sexuality* 155-197, quotation 169.

public sphere on her own behalf.⁴¹ The assertions of scholars claiming that Fichte subscribed to Enlightenment principles in figuring unmarried women to be as free and independent as men, and as able to conduct their own legal affairs,⁴² disregard the emphasis placed on extrajudicial regulatory mechanisms and the power they are accorded within the text.⁴³ As Bennet notes: "Im Vertrauen auf die Effektivität internalisierter Unterdrückungsmechanismen kann Fichte großzügig die bürgerliche Gleichberechtigung der Frau einräumen."⁴⁴ In advocating the application of these internal disciplinary mechanisms Fichte's text subverts the principles of equality and individual freedom it proclaims. It pays lip service to the principles enshrined by the social contract's fiction of equality while also ensuring the fulfilment of the requirements of the sexual contract.

The disciplinary mechanisms serve to inscribe rules of psychic and physical containment onto the female psyche, onto a woman's body, and in the spaces she might occupy in both the private sphere and the public sphere of civil society. They thus specify the ideal woman's subjectivity and her social destiny firstly by delineating the kind of character and conduct women had to continually demonstrate in order to retain moral probity and social respect. Secondly, they define options available to women in terms of both individual self-development and their relationships with men. Thirdly, they determine not only the social spaces that women may enter, but also the manner of their entry. As will emerge in the course of the

⁴¹Again, Hull's discussion of cameralist theory notes the movement from externally to internally imposed regulation, and links sex, shame as an internal "urge," and morality in citing Wolff's ideas on how to "strengthen the self-regulation of citizen/subjects." She states: "As Wolff observed, "Generally there is always more to be gained when one is disposed to something by an internal urge [*Trieb*], than when one is merely held to it against oneself by external coercion." Fostering the correct internal urge might be accomplished by public moral (*sittliche*) education, which would produce "more honest and skillful people," and, the cameralists hoped, chaste ones: "Shame in girls and youths is an excellent dam against the growing passion of lust," Jung-Stilling remarked when writing on education." (Hull, *Sexuality* 168)

⁴²Frevert, "Meisterdenker" 24. See discussion below.

⁴³Hull's discussion of Fichte's determination of the limits placed on a woman's capacity to accept civil office comes closest to recognising the disjunction created by Fichte's assertion of women's freedom to enjoy the benefits accorded by their supposedly equal status in the eyes of the law, and the directly contradictory action of the disciplinary mechanisms noted above. These discourage women from acting as autonomous subjects regardless of their marital status, a disinclination supposedly arising as an act of free will. Hull, *Sexuality* 323.

⁴⁴Bennet 119. Bennet analyses women's self-directed subordination to their husband in marriage, referring to the disciplinary status of Fichte's categories of love, female worth, and virtue (127).

discussion, Fichte's text provides for a complex conceptualisation of the sexual codification of bodies and spaces that supersedes the simple equation of women with the private and men with the public sphere.

1.2.1. "Deduktion der Ehe."⁴⁵

The structural marginalisation of the "Family Law" as the first appendix of Fichte's *Naturrecht* and thus not explicitly a part of the main body of the text, highlights the ambiguous status of the subjects of this appendix: women, marriage, and the family. The text's adherence to principles of the sexual contract as delineated by Pateman, and the dual status of marriage, are further confirmed by a prefatory "Anmerkung" which specifies that, although marriage has juridical status, its philosophical derivation in the "Deduktion" does not:⁴⁶

Die Ehe ist gar nicht bloß eine juridische Gesellschaft wie etwa der Staat; sie ist eine natürliche und moralische Gesellschaft.

Die folgende Diskussion ist sonach nicht juridisch; aber sie ist in einer Rechtslehre notwendig, um eine Einsicht in die hinterher aufzustellenden juridischen Sätze zu erhalten. (I, 95)

However, this allegedly non-judicial "Deduktion" is also the acknowledged "Erster Abschnitt" of the text and thus a part of the body of the "Family Law." These multiple contradictions reinforce the ambiguities inherent in the formulation of the dual status of marriage as a natural and moral society as well as one constituted according to the law. Some scholarship credits Fichte with creating an exemplary and indeed revolutionary model of marriage as an autonomous sphere, overlooking the fact that the definition of the obviously utilitarian nature of marriage as codified in the ALR might change, but the redefinition merely functionalises marriage anew,⁴⁷ with women remaining in the service of men.⁴⁸ The

⁴⁵In future I shall refer to this as the "Deduktion."

⁴⁶Bennett remarks that the "Sonderstatus des Familienrechts," in which "Fichte die Privatsphäre im Unterschied zu allen übrigen gesellschaftlichen Domänen nicht juristisch definiert, sondern die hier bestehenden Verhältnisse nach Naturnotwendigkeiten arrangiert sieht," is made manifest "schon durch seine Platzierung im Anhang der eigentlichen Staatslehre." (125)

⁴⁷Dörner argues that the fact that Fichte's "nahezu revolutionäres Ehemodell" provided the basis for the first spate of revision of the marriage laws in the ALR, demonstrates the extent to which "die sittliche Eheauffassung und die mit ihr verbundenen Wertvorstellungen" determined the views of the civil servants and jurists who thus appeared to align themselves

factor that renders marriage immune to state intervention is its postulated inherent morality, and the weight of responsibility for this morality is borne by the category of the ideal woman. This non-juridical construct is brought into being in the "Deduktion" and then used as the basis for juridical statements in the following sections.

The central problem in the "Deduktion" is presented by the need to reconcile the morality of marriage, which is based on woman's moral and asexual nature, with the imperative that it be sealed by the act of sexual intercourse. Fichte defines marriage as follows:

Die Ehe ist eine durch den Geschlechtstrieb begründete *vollkommene Vereinigung* zweier Personen beiderlei Geschlechts, die ihr eigener Zweck ist.

Sie ist durch den Geschlechtstrieb in beiden Geschlechtern *begründet*, für den forschenden Philosophen; aber es ist nicht notwendig, daß irgendeine unter den beiden Personen, die eine Ehe schließen wollen, dieses sich gestehe. Das Weib kann es sich nie, es kann sich nur Liebe gestehen. (I, §8, 104)

The emphasis on the significance of the sexual act as the foundation for marriage is clarified by Pateman, who states that:

The story of the sexual contract explains why a signature, or even a speech act, is insufficient for a valid marriage. The act that is required, the act that seals the contract, is (significantly) called *the sex act*. Not until a husband has exercised his conjugal right is the marriage contract complete.⁴⁹

This feature of the marriage contract, that the signatures are in fact the sexual act as written by the body, is one to which Fichte devotes much space in the course of the "Deduktion." While the bourgeois moral code compels Fichte to expound the fiction that women can never admit

with educated bourgeois liberals (81). Gerhard contests this statement, asserting that "[d]ie 'Lehre vom primär natürlich-sittlichen Charakter der Ehe und Familie in der Rechtswissenschaft bis hin zum BGB' ist ... keineswegs Ausdruck einer neuen 'Realität der verinnerlichten Familienbeziehungen', wie H. Dörner meint. Die von ihm als 'Siegeszug' beschriebenen Neuerungen im Familienrecht, die eindeutig die Frauen benachteiligen, sind vielmehr das Werk eines sich neu etablierenden, bürgerlichen Patriarchalismus. Die abgenutzte Phrase von der Verinnerlichung und Intimisierung der Familienbeziehungen klingt in Anbetracht der ... familienrechtlichen Fakten wie Hohn." (*Verhältnisse* 177)

⁴⁸Gerhard reviews the status of women and the definition of marriage in the Prussian Reform Code (Preußisches Allgemeines Landrecht or ALR) and in revisions and attempted revisions of the code through the nineteenth century. (*Verhältnisse* 154-179) See also Dörner for a general overview, and the critical reviews of women's status in the different legal codes valid in Germany from the eighteenth century and through the nineteenth by Marianne Weber, *Ehefrau und Mutter in der Rechtsentwicklung*, 1907 (Aalen: Scientia, 1971), and Schröder, *Rechtslosigkeit*.

⁴⁹Pateman, *Contract* 164

sexual desire or even possession of a sexual urge ("Geschlechtstrieb"),⁵⁰ the mandatory requirement of the social/sexual contract is that marriage be sealed by the corporeal signatory process. The "Family Law" explicitly defines this process as the voluntary and reasoned physical and psychic (self-)subjugation of a woman to her husband. Fichte's challenge is to formulate this self-subjugation as arising from woman's desire to please her husband and instrumentalise herself as an object of his pleasure, through which she derives her own "satisfaction."⁵¹ It involves not only re-channelling woman's desire so that it becomes the desire to fulfil the desire of another, but also so that it masks the ideal woman's consciousness of her own (sexual) desire. This is achieved by redefining her "Geschlechtstrieb" as "Liebe." Hull argues that Fichte's project was that of "trying to prevent a female drive from limiting the male subject."⁵² The way Fichte does this is to eliminate any characteristics in woman which would allow her agency on her own behalf, as such behaviour is characteristic of the male principle and men. Fichte's arguments establishing gender-specific forms of the sexual urge, love and reason, and his formulation of female agency as that of voluntary and reasoned self-subjugation to men occur to this end.

Fichte's argumentation is characterised by circular and hermetic reasoning, and results in multiple contradictions as it attempts to fuse and reconcile the requirements of the discourse of Enlightenment equality and reason with the contradictory requirements of the sexual contract, natural law and the bourgeois moral code, which all argue for the secondary and

⁵⁰I will translate the German term "Trieb" as 'urge,' in order to clearly separate the term from the Freudian usage of "drive." C.f. Hull, *Sexuality* 168.

⁵¹C.f. Barbara Duden, "Das schöne Eigentum: Zur Herausbildung des bürgerlichen Frauenbildes an der Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert," *Kursbuch* 47 (1977): 125-140, 137. I use the term "woman" to refer to the fictional construct, contrasting with the terms women or a woman, which refer to living beings.

⁵²Hull asserts: "It is important to emphasize that Fichte never denied that women possessed a natural sexual drive. Fichte did not make women passionless, he made them un[self]conscious. He refashioned and redirected their passion. Fichte's discussion of corrupted women, including those who engaged in sex to satisfy their own sexual desire, shows clearly that he admitted women did indeed have sexual desire. The conclusion that he tried to prevent was that female sexual desire should be raised to the level of independence from male subjectivity." Hull, *Sexuality* 318. While I agree with this assessment of Fichte's motivation, my discussion emphasises that his strategy results in two contradictory assertions about the female drive. His category of marital love requires that the ideal woman is without (sexual) desire even while he states that women do possess and act on sexual desire. This contradicts Bennet's assertion that "der Frau erotisches Empfinden abgesprochen wird." (128)

subordinate position of woman to man. My focus on his account of the female sexual urge and its conversion into love provides a key for my interpretation of what occurs in the literary texts I discuss below when the female protagonist falls in love. In other words, the literary texts provide an account of the impact of the sexual contract on women, their psyche and their identity.

Fichte recasts woman's "Geschlechtstrieb" as the *active* desire of love, which can only be felt by women. (I, §3, 97f) He thereby characterises the physical aspect of sexual relations as a moral act which is devoid of any sexual meaning for the woman while at the same time enabling her to exercise agency, thus demonstrating that she is in possession of reason and retaining her "Würde der Vernunft" (I, §4, 100). Her drive is redefined as the desire to please her husband and become the instrument of his desire:

Sie behauptet ihre Würde, ohnerachtet sie Mittel wird, dadurch, daß sie sich freiwillig, zufolge eines edlen Naturtriebes, des der *Liebe*, zum Mittel macht.

Liebe ist also die Gestalt, unter welcher der Geschlechtstrieb im Weibe sich zeigt. (I, §4, 100)

The corollary of this equation of the "Geschlechtstrieb" and "Liebe" is the conflation of "Natur" and "Vernunft:" "Liebe ist der innigste Vereinigungspunkt der Natur, und der Vernunft." (I, §4, 100) The principle of selfless self-subjugation as a product of the combination of "Liebe" and "Vernunft," and the concomitant moralisation of the sexual relationship enable women to overcome their ordinary subordinate status in the natural condition and become man's moral equal. The ideal woman is thus conceptualised as an active agent seeking to satisfy her own desire, one that entails her absolute psychic subjection to her husband:

Die Ruhe des Weibes hängt davon ab, daß sie ihrem Gatten ganz unterworfen sey, und keinen andern Willen habe, als den seinigen. ... [D]er Stolz ihrer Liebe besteht darin, daß sie unterworfen sey, und es scheine, und selbst es nicht anders wisse, als daß sie es ist. (I, §7, 103)

A woman's moral worth is contingent on this absolute subjection and loss of subjecthood:

Das Weib gibt, indem sie sich zum Mittel der Befriedigung des Mannes macht, ihre Persönlichkeit; sie erhält dasselbe, und ihre ganze Würde dadurch wieder, daß sie es aus Liebe für diesen einen gethan habe. (I, §5, 101)

I return to the significance of this aspect of the woman's absolute subjugation to the will of the male in the name of love in my discussion of the literary texts below.

While Kluckhohn emphasises the significance in philosophical discourse of Fichte's declaration that love was the basis for marriage, stating that Fichte brought an end to the "Diskussion um den Zweck der Ehe, die das ganze 18. Jahrhundert erfüllt hatte,"⁵³ he nevertheless concludes that Fichte reasserted "das alte patriarchalische Eheideal."⁵⁴ Bennet takes this further in her trenchant criticism of Fichte's reconceptualisation of marriage, asserting that "[t]rotz der sittlichen Aufwertung der Geschlechterrelation refeudalisiert Fichte das Eheverhältnis, insofern er die Frau zum Rechtsobjekt, quasi zum Eigentum des Mannes herabwürdigt." She also shows that Fichte departs from his usual conceptual framework in his deduction of woman's special form of subjectivity, emphasising the dehumanisation inherent in his definition.⁵⁵

In his insistence on the woman's "absolute subjection" Fichte remains firmly in the tradition of natural law from the beginning of the Enlightenment. Despite the fact that the possession of reason supposedly provided the basis for a new equality, in fact women were never considered as candidates for the equal partnership which theoretically at least formed the basis for the social contract.⁵⁶ Like Pateman, Gerhard emphasises that theories of natural law cement women's subordination, their explicit disenfranchisement and exclusion from civil society in the Enlightenment state through marriage law.⁵⁷ Gerhard adds that as biblical authority was not recognised by the new rationality, and as marriage had to be conceptualised as a contract between equal partners which was freely entered into:

Die dennoch im gleichen Atemzug begründete Vorherrschaft des Ehemannes, das "imperium conjugale," entsteht dadurch, daß die Frau sich durch den Ehevertrag freiwillig der Hausherrschaft eines Mannes unterwirft.⁵⁸

⁵³Paul Kluckhohn, *Die Auffassung der Liebe in der Literatur des 18. Jahrhunderts und in der deutschen Romantik*, 1922 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1966) 326.

⁵⁴Kluckhohn 329-30.

⁵⁵Bennet 126-127.

⁵⁶Gerhard, *Gleichheit* 29-30.

⁵⁷Gerhard, *Gleichheit* 30.

⁵⁸Gerhard, *Gleichheit* 30.

An additional aspect of significance for the textual analyses below is Fichte's provision of two contradictory accounts of the "Geschlechtstrieb" in woman. Before his account of the conversion of the sexual urge into love, he states that "der Geschlechtstrieb dieses zweiten Geschlechts" is part of the "Plan der Natur" (I, §3, 97), thus indicating that in the natural condition women do possess a "Geschlechtstrieb." This is confirmed by the statement:

Im Weibe *erhielt* der Geschlechtstrieb eine moralische Gestalt, weil er *in seiner natürlichen* die Moralität derselben ganz aufgehoben hätte. [emphasis added MV]" (I, §4, 100)

This contradicts the claim that "Nur dem Weibe ist die Liebe, der edelste aller Naturtriebe, angeboren" (I, §4, 100).

While a "Geschlechtstrieb" that is not "Liebe" thus appears to exist in a pre-moral natural state in woman before it is transformed into "Liebe," Fichte also presents it as always already existing in its morally acceptable form. One of Fichte's two definitions of the female sexual urge acknowledges that the natural instinct is moralised during the postulated transition from the natural condition to civil(ised) society. The other insists on what Bovenschen has described as a phantasy that prescribes

dem Weiblichen, dem schönen Geschlecht," die Rolle zu, zu sein, was es (angeblich) immer schon ist, nämlich unbewußte Harmonie, die dem vernunftbegabten Mann zum lustvollen Bild werden kann: *Bild* einer verlorenen, unzerstörten Ganzheit *und* Bild einer von ihm kraft seines Verstandes und seiner Arbeit zu gestaltenden Zukunft.⁵⁹

Women, as the embodiment of the feminine, represent the unified harmonious self and an eternal sameness of being which is identified with the state of nature. They are designated, by Fichte, as by Schiller and other German idealist thinkers, as the "Symbol eines fraglosen und unirritierbaren Verhältnisses zur Natur."⁶⁰ This scenario evokes not only a seamless transition from the natural state into civil(ised) society, a transition which thereby is not one, but also defines woman as immutable and therefore static, a being incapable of change or development.

⁵⁹This is taken from her commentary on Schiller's "Anmut und Würde." Silvia Bovenschen, *Die imaginierte Weiblichkeit: Exemplarische Untersuchungen zu kulturgeschichtlichen und literarischen Präsentationsformen des Weiblichen* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1980) 248-49.

⁶⁰Bovenschen 250.

Fichte's double and contradictory account of the female sexual urge can perhaps be viewed as a product of a process similar to that which produced the triple ambiguity in the term "civil" society discussed above. When women and nature are incorporated into society the natural must first be civilised in a taming process,⁶¹ after which the civilised form is proclaimed to be the natural manifestation. However, both the natural and the civilised forms remain in play, as demonstrated by Fichte's distinction between the married and the unmarried woman. He states that the latter correctly desires the love of a man, "und um dies zu erregen, will sie die Aufmerksamkeit des männlichen Geschlechts auf sich ziehen. Dies ist Natureinrichtung; und bei dem unverheiratheten Weib ganz untadelhaft (III, §34, 131). Each of the two contradictory definitions of the sexual urge is conceived as socially necessary.

Love transforms a woman from somebody who is conceptualised as possessing an independent identity and sexual desire, to someone who relinquishes this selfhood to become one with her husband, and whose psyche thereafter is constituted by this act of self-subjugation and by her husband's desire, all in the name of love.⁶² A logical corollary of this process is that the ideal woman can only love once, since her person and personality is constituted through that of her husband in their marital love relationship.⁶³

This process is enacted time and time again in novels by Lewald and Hahn-Hahn in the moment that the heroine admits her love to the (liberal and educated) beloved. It is also the process required of the heroine by the powerful bourgeois male beloved in Hahn-Hahn's novels,⁶⁴ and by many powerful as well as not-so-powerful males in the novels of Lewald under consideration in this text.⁶⁵ In contrast, powerful aristocratic males in texts by both

⁶¹C.f. Weigel, *Topographien* 140-142: "Die Kolonisierung der weiblichen Natur."

⁶²Bennett argues that Fichte's conceptualisation of interaction between women and men differs starkly from his philosophical conceptualisation of that between men. Bennett 122-24, quotation 122. Fichte's conceptualisation of the interaction between women and men in a love relationship thus differs radically from the idea of an exchange between equals entertained, however briefly, by the young Hegel. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, "Love," trans., T.M. Knox, in Hegel, *Early Theological Writings* trans., T.M. Knox, Fragments transl., and Intro., Richard Kroner (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1971) 302-308, 306.

⁶³Kluckhohn makes this point, but only with reference to the widowed male. Kluckhohn 336. It is, however, only relevant for the ideal male or female.

⁶⁴i.e. Otto in *Aus der Gesellschaft*. Mario Mengen in *Gräfin Faustine* holds to this bourgeois requirement.

⁶⁵C.f. both Reinhard and Eduard in *Jenny*. See discussion below.

authors do not always require such self-abnegation on the part of the beloved.⁶⁶ The differing requirements among the male characters stem for the most part from the difference in estate, which suggests that aristocratic males were not perceived by these authors to require women's self-abnegation in the name of love in the same way as bourgeois males did. This would imply that the relationship Fichte defines is equally determinative for normative bourgeois masculinity and for femininity, for the constitution of the bourgeois male identity of the head of the household and for the constitution of the female identity of the bourgeois wife.⁶⁷

The other aspect of interest for the textual analyses is Fichte's acknowledgement of two different kinds of sexual desire and practice for both women and men when he specifies that: "Im unverdorbenen Weibe" äußert sich kein Geschlechtstrieb, und wohnt kein Geschlechtstrieb, sondern nur Liebe ... [emphasis added M.V.]" (I, §4, 100f). The sexual agency of women implied in this statement is confirmed by Fichte's references to women who commit adultery out of love and to the sexual agency of prostitutes. Women are thus defined as either pure or corrupt according to whether they suppress or actively exercise their "Geschlechtstrieb."

In contrast, men's originary "Geschlechtstrieb" is only transformed into "Liebe" through the loving tutelage of a wife.⁶⁸ In the period before marriage a man may seek sexual satisfaction, yielding to the natural inclination of his "Geschlechtstrieb" without

⁶⁶C.f. Andlau in *Gräfin Faustine* and Graf Walter in *Jenny*.

⁶⁷Just as the Hausvater in legal codifications up to the eighteenth century was granted absolute power over the body of his wife, as in the directions of the ALR that he determine the length of time his wife breastfeed their child (Weber 339; Dörner 30; Gerhard *Verhältnisse* 88; Reinhart Koselleck, "Die Auflösung des Hauses als ständischer Herrschaftseinheit: Anmerkungen zum Rechtswandel von Haus, Familie und Gesinde in Preußen zwischen der Französischen Revolution und 1848," ed., Neithard Bulst et al, *Familie zwischen Tradition und Moderne: Studien zur Geschichte der Familie in Deutschland und Frankreich vom 16. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert* (Vandenhoeck: Göttingen, 1981) 113), so the power of the male head of the household is not diminished in more modern codifications, and indeed, is conceptualised by Fichte as reaching into the female psyche. Karen Hausen comments that the "Hausvater-Autorität" was reasserted in the BGB of 1900. See "... eine Ulme für das schwankende Efeu: Ehepaare im deutschen Bildungsbürgertum: Ideale und Wirklichkeit im späten 18. und 19. Jahrhundert," Frevert, *Bürgerinnen* 85-117, 96.

⁶⁸"Im Manne ist *ursprünglich* nicht Liebe, sondern Geschlechtstrieb; sie ist überhaupt in ihm kein ursprünglicher, sondern nur ein *mitgeteilter, abgeleiteter*, erst durch Verbindung mit einem liebenden Weibe *entwickelter* Trieb [emphasis added, MV]." (I, §4, 100)

compromising his honour. The male is thus socialised into the ability to love, but at the same time, his expression of love is merely an expression of his self-discipline, as the male "Geschlechtstrieb" may revert to its originary form at any time.⁶⁹ The transformation of the male "Geschlechtstrieb" into "Liebe" thus serves to distinguish two kinds of sexual desire and practice in the male: the satisfaction of sexual desire which is not love outside marriage, and the tempered expression of love in the marital sexual relationship. The positive social sanction given to the former is made clear in Fichte's discussion of prostitution and adultery.

The "Deduktion" thus provides an account of the moral nature of marriage and the ideal woman's absolute self-subjugation to her husband in this relationship through the internally-imposed disciplinary mechanism of love, which ensures woman's compliance with the terms of the sexual contract. Fichte's definition of marriage as sealed by the sex act, his explication of the heterosexual relationship as guaranteeing the husband the body of his wife, and his explication of the wife's loss of autonomy and subject status in civil society and the state all confirm the status of the "Family Law" as an expression of the sexual contract. At a more subtle level the existence of two kinds of sexual urge in even the ideal woman provides an explication of the cooptation of woman and nature by the sexual contract in its peculiarly bourgeois embodiment in the "Family Law." Although Fichte concedes that the single ideal woman may act on sexual desire and present herself as a sexual person, the married woman may not exhibit sexual or any other kind of agency in her relationship with men. Such behaviour would allow women to enter the sphere of male agency, rationality, and power. The fictions from the "Deduktion" thus provide the basic principles and normative models for the legal sections of the "Familienrecht" and thus for legal practice.

1.2.II. Sex within and outside marriage: Fichte's "Das Eherecht."

"Das Eherecht," the second section of the "Family Law," further develops the dual status of marriage. Whereas the "Deduktion" emphasises the extrajudicial and moral aspects of

⁶⁹"Wer in der Verbindung mit einem liebenden Weib diese Befriedigung [of the "Geschlechtstrieb" M.V.] allein sich noch zum Zweck machen könnte, wäre ein roher Mensch ..." (I, §3, 99).

marriage, and sets out its regulation through internally imposed extrajudicial disciplinary mechanisms, the second section focusses on the legal status of marriage. It sets out the limits of state intervention in the marital relationship, while at the same time demonstrating that this relies on the disciplinary effects of mechanisms such as "Liebe" on the one hand, and the externally imposed disciplinary regime of public opinion on the other. These extrajudicial mechanisms supplement the legal regulation of sexual behaviour, their covert agency ensuring that the requirements of the sexual contract are fulfilled. This covert agency conceals the sexual double standard that applies in the regulation of sexual practice.

The exposition of marriage law in the second section includes the discussion of divorce, adultery and prostitution, during which Fichte distinguishes between moral transgressions under the jurisdiction of the church and those punishable by law. While asserting that the state has no authority to adjudicate in the case of moral transgressions, and that this is properly done by the church, Fichte's delineation of the authoritative stature of public opinion nevertheless establishes its regulatory authority in such matters. My discussion of his presentation of public opinion, and the associated extrajudicial mechanisms of custom and convention, demonstrates that in Fichte's text such extrajudicial regulatory authority is instrumentalised by his state.

The second section shows that the wife's self-directed subordination to the husband serves as the foundation for the private nature of marriage. It also provides the basis for its immunity from state regulation, since Fichte's state views the couple as being "innigst vereinigt." There is thus no reason to suppose that

zwischen ihnen ein Rechtsstreit entstehen könnte. Sonach hat der Staat über das Verhältniß beider Ehegatten gegen einander gar keine Gesetze zu geben, weil ihr ganzes Verhältniß gar kein juridisches, sondern ein natürliches und moralisches Verhältniß der Herzen ist. (II, §15, 113)

Accordingly, the state simply has the responsibility of ensuring that the marriage is entered into willingly by both parties. The duty of the state is, in Fichte's words, to ensure that a woman cannot be forced to marry. However, if she does wish to do so, the state then has the duty to support her decision to subject herself, and guarantee that she be allowed to do so (II,

§13, 110). Fichte is equally emphatic in stating that once she enters into this "natural" and "moral" relationship she is "vernichtet" (II, §16,113).

Hull notes that "Fichte went to extraordinary pains to ensure that their [i.e. women's MV] decision to enter marriage be made freely." She states further that "Fichte's vehemence ... is due partly to the need to legitimate women's annihilation by making it a willed activity; partly, however, to Fichte's need to mask a fundamental contradiction in his system."⁷⁰ Women's "voluntary" entry into the "natural" relationship of marriage and the consequences arising from marriage in Fichte's text corresponds exactly to the sequence of events Pateman delineates as belonging to women's incorporation into the sexual contract. Fichte's text demonstrates not only that women are incorporated into civil society through the act of marriage, but that their civil person is in fact "annihilated" in the process. The formulations of the "Family Law" show that married women have no legal status in civil society and no recourse to the law as independent individuals. Once married, the woman is subsumed under the marital unit represented by the husband.⁷¹

The definition of the dual status of marriage and of love as an enabling mechanism for the subjugation of women by men was taken up by the Revisor in his commentary and suggestions for the reform of the marriage law of the ALR. In discussing the need for formulating laws that confirmed a husband's right to represent his wife "in allen Angelegenheiten des bürgerlichen Lebens,"⁷² the Revisor confirms that the subordination of a woman to her husband is "gar nicht gesetzlich zu gebieten."⁷³ His reasoning is as follows:

Denn sie ist eine natürliche aus dem Wesen der Ehe von selbst nothwendig entspringende, welche der Gesetzgeber als ein vor allen Gesetzen vorher gegebenes

⁷⁰Both quotations Hull, *Sexuality* 319. Hull adds: "For insofar as female morality is "natural," as Fichte insisted it was, it is also perforce determined, unfree, and therefore not moral at all, since only truly free acts are moral. The strong undertow in Fichte's system pulling women into will-less inactivity needs to be overcome if women are to be exemplars of moral behaviour, and, indeed, if they are to be considered human. Therefore it was supremely important for Fichte (and others) to represent women's civil status as not merely natural, but also voluntary, as "love" was voluntary." Hull, *Sexuality* 319.

⁷¹Despite the fiction that both partners are equal, only the husband may act in the interests of the couple in public life: "Dem Staate scheinen beide nur Eine Person; was eins thut, im gemeinschaftlichen Eigenthume, ist stets so gut, als ob das andere es zugleich mit thäte. Alle öffentliche [sic] juridische [sic] Handlungen aber besorgt allein der Mann." (II, §17, 114)

⁷²Revisor, Gerhard *Verhältnisse* 407.

⁷³Revisor, Gerhard *Verhältnisse* 406.

Faktum schon vorfindet. Sie zum Objekt eines Zwangsrechts zu machen ist aber auch unrichtig; denn sie beruht lediglich auf dem freien durch die eheliche Liebe bedingten Willen der Frau.

Juristisch folgt daraus nur so viel, daß diese Unterordnung überall wo eine Ehe geschlossen wird, vorausgesetzt werden muß, und daß also in bürgerlichen Angelegenheiten Niemand mit der Frau unmittelbar und allein verhandeln kann, indem sie zufolge ihres eignen durch Anerkennung der Ehe vom Staat garantirten Willens die Ausübung aller ihrer Gerechtsame dem Mann übertragen hat.

Diese juristische Folge jener keineswegs juristischen Unterwerfung, wird vor allen Dingen festgesetzt werden müssen.⁷⁴

Women's divestment of any legal rights and their consequent disappearance from the *civil* state has as its corollary the completed separation of the public and private spheres. The polarisation of the public and private spheres within civil society which results, and in particular the conceptualisation of marriage and the family as a space free of state regulation has been the subject of much scholarship which looks at the ideology and texts supporting this construct of the private sphere of intimacy.⁷⁵ As emphasised by Joeres in *Respectability and Deviance*, the ideology of the spheres "involved a system of both ideological and real barriers,"⁷⁶ and was a potent force in nineteenth-century Germany even if the boundaries of what constituted the public and the private sphere respectively were delineated somewhat differently by different political philosophers,⁷⁷ and even if such boundaries, however defined, were arguably subject to repeated and successful contestation by women writers.⁷⁸

Joeres argues that

to assert that the public/private split was never really there may well ignore the powerful ideology of that split, which existed even if the practice of it never entirely worked. Theory inevitably affects practice, just as practice is integral to theory: the nineteenth century ideology of spheres influenced actual behaviour, certainly in the

⁷⁴Revisor, Gerhard *Verhältnisse* 406-07, see also discussion 161.

⁷⁵Jürgen Habermas' model of the public and private spheres, and his concept of the "intimate sphere" were extremely influential for many years, providing a basic framework for discussion. See *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1983, 14th ed.) 65. See Hull for discussion of the inadequacies in his discussion of "the relation of public to private" and her discussion of the consequences of his lack of attention to gender specific differences. Hull *Sexuality* 205-207. Of the wealth of scholarship on the family in nineteenth-century Germany, Gerhard's survey has been most useful for the present context. Her review of writing on the myth and the ideology of the bourgeois family and other family forms, and her discussion of the legal position of women and the family in the nineteenth century deconstruct the myth of intimacy and the private sphere free of external intervention. Gerhard *Verhältnisse*.

⁷⁶Joeres, *Respectability* 266.

⁷⁷Joeres, *Respectability* 266-67.

⁷⁸Joeres, *Respectability* 260-67.

case of middle-class German women who in most instances ... were confined and chose to confine themselves (Ideologically and otherwise) to the home."⁷⁹

As Joeres writes, the ideology of separate spheres "forms a basic underpinning to much of what German women wrote in the nineteenth century."⁸⁰

The question of female conduct was largely one of morality and its policing. As presented in the "Familienrecht," morally correct behaviour arises from women's internalisation of their double duty as moral guardians of society and, when married, as guardians of the marriage relationship at all cost. Moral issues are raised in the second section with regard to divorce, adultery, prostitution, concubinage, and instances in which a woman consents to extramarital sex out of love and on the promise of marriage. As mentioned above, Fichte maintains that the state cannot regulate in the area of morality and that this is the jurisdiction of the church. Nevertheless an alternative regulating authority which claims jurisdiction over such matters is acknowledged in the text, namely, "das gemeine Urtheil," a form of public opinion. Fichte thus not only insists on the separation of church and state, as required by natural law doctrine,⁸¹ but also demonstrates that bourgeois society provides its own authoritative moral discourse through the determinative agency of public opinion, thus asserting its independence from the church's regulating power in moral issues as well as from the state. I now turn to Fichte's presentation of such mechanisms in his discussion of the extrajudicial as well as the legal regulation of divorce in the case of adultery, and of prostitution.

Fichte's discussion of female adultery and of women who engage in prostitution or concubinage exposes the fictionality of his assertion of female asexuality, and, more significantly, also serves to indicate ways in which conventional morality was supported and policed by "unwritten laws" pertaining to extramarital modes of sexual conduct. His discussion of adultery appeals to commonly-held views and public opinion, as a wife is called upon to forgive her husband for the sake of the marriage, and the support of convention and general opinion cited in support of such an act, even though theoretically both partners have an equal right to divorce (II, §25, 122):

⁷⁹Joeres, *Respectability* 262.

⁸⁰Joeres, *Respectability* 266.

⁸¹Gerhard, *Verhältnisse* 30.

[D]er Ehebruch des Mannes vernichtet nicht nothwendig das eheliche Verhältniß, so wie der des Weibes es nothwendig vernichtet ... Die Frau kann verzeihen: und die würdige edle Frau wird es sicher. (II, §20, 117)

This statement establishes a moral double standard in specifying that only the woman's adultery has the capacity to destroy the marital relationship, while at the same time emphasising the disciplinary function of the concept of a woman's moral worth.

Fichte also evokes public opinion ("das gemeine Urteil") in this context:

Das [i.e. the desirability of the wife's forgiveness MV] zeigt sich auch im gemeinen Urtheile. Eine Frau, die die Unordnung ihres Mannes weiß, und erträgt, wird nicht verachtet; im Gegentheil, je sanfter und weiser sie sich dabei betrügt, desto mehr wird sie geachtet. Man setzt sogar voraus, daß sie nicht rechtliche Hülfe suchen solle. Woher diese tief in der menschlichen Seele liegende Meinung? Etwa bloß aus unsrer Gesetzgebung [sic] und bloß bei uns Männern? Sie ist ja bei den Weibern, die über diese Gesetzgebung klagen, gleichfalls. Sie gründet sich auch auf die angezeigten Grundverschiedenheiten der beiden Geschlechter. (II, §20, 117)

Two kinds of public sphere thus intrude upon the privacy of the marital relationship. The first is the broader public sphere as an agent of moral authority which in Fichte's text includes the authority of the church, as demonstrated above. The second is what could be described as the immediate public sphere which is constituted by the couple's social circle. Women have no authority in this first sphere, while the second allows them to exercise moral authority outside the home. It is this latter form of public sphere which appears as a significant force in the novels examined in the present thesis. It functions to regulate behaviour, enforce mores, and constitute women's social identity. It thus provides the context in which rituals of socialisation such as courtship and marriage take place, and as such acknowledges precisely the same moral authorities as does the "Family Law," that is, the church, public opinion, and social moral convention.

Fichte's discussion of the consequences of adultery for the marital relationship distinguishes sharply between male and female adultery, and the effort he recommends a wife take to preserve a marriage upon her husband's transgression is entirely absent in the reverse case.⁸² A man who tolerates his wife's adultery sacrifices his honour, and Fichte calls

⁸²Elias refers to "die gesellschaftliche Meinung" in the nineteenth century which although strongly censuring extra-marital relations on the part of both sexes, views a man's adultery with greater tolerance than a woman's, but his discussion of public opinion does not provide any greater depth. He emphasises that such affairs are relegated to the sphere of the secret

on the combined weight of the church and public opinion as well as conjuring up the spectre of the cuckold to support this claim:

[D]er Mann kann die Ehebrecherin nicht behalten, ohne sich selbst herabzuwürdigen. (Dies hat sich *in der allgemeinen Empfindung aller nur ein wenig gebildeten Nationen* gezeigt. Allenthalben wurde der Mann, der die Ausschweifungen seiner Frau duldet, verachtet, und Mann hat ihn mit einem besonderen Spottnamen belegt. Dies kommt daher, daß ein solcher Mann gegen die Ehre sündigt, sich unedel und niederträchtig zeigt.) (II, §19, 116)

Selbst die Kirche hat keine Ehre davon, dem Manne der Ehebrecherin zureden, und ihn zur Verzeihung zu ermahnen. Denn dieselbe kann nichts unehrbares und unmoralisches, wie die Fortsetzung des Beisammenlebens in diesem Falle offenbar seyn würde, anrathen. [emphasis added MV] (II, §29, 124)

In linking male forgiveness of a wife's adultery to his honour Fichte deploys public opinion to police the boundaries of masculinity: a man who would forgive his wife is at risk of being feminised, losing his manhood and his social status. The definition of gender roles in Fichte's text thus supports adultery in the case of men while proscribing it in the case of women.

Women are given the exclusive responsibility for maintaining and sustaining the morality of the marital relationship and its public face. In the case of sexual transgressions, whether they be committed by the husband or the wife, only the woman's moral standing is affected, as a woman's honour is based on her sexual probity.⁸³ Only the wife thus has the capacity to destroy the marriage. Her social standing is put at risk, whether she herself transgresses by engaging in adulterous behaviour, or whether her husband does, and she refuses to "forgive" him.

Fichte attributes authoritative status to the opinions that sanction this practice through appeals to a reservoir of allegedly commonly held opinions such as the "gemeine[s] Urtheil," "diese tief in der menschlichen Seele liegende Meinung," or the "allgemeine[n] Empfindung aller nur ein wenig gebildeten Nationen." These authoritative forces are cited in support of the opinions expressed in the text regarding moral matters, an area in which Fichte's state allegedly has no jurisdiction. In appealing to the support of allegedly commonly held opinions, and thus assuming a regulatory capacity in areas in which Fichte specifies that the state

and unspoken, thus indicating the degree of restraint and self-discipline to be exercised by the individual. Elias *Prozeß* 1: 255-56.

⁸³Ute Frevert asserts the prevalence of this view from the late 18th century. See "Mann und Weib, und Weib und Mann:" *Geschlechter-Differenzen in der Moderne* (München: Beck, 1995) 188, 202-212.

cannot adjudicate, Fichte may be seen to be taking recourse to an entity recognised by Rousseau in *Der Gesellschaftsvertrag*.⁸⁴ This entity belongs to the fourth category of laws, "die wichtigste von allen" that serve to organise the relationships of the body politic:

Es sind die Gesetze, die nicht in Erz und Marmor, sondern in die Herzen der Staatsbürger eingegraben werden; die den eigentlichen Kern der Staatsverfassung ausmachen; die ... an die Stelle der Macht der öffentlichen Gewalt unmerklich die Macht der Gewohnheit setzen. Ich spreche von den Sitten, den Gewohnheiten und vor allem von der öffentlichen Meinung.⁸⁵

The import of these unwritten laws, Rousseau's "Sitten," "Gewohnheiten," and "öffentliche[n] Meinung," strongly corresponds to that of Fichte's categories of the "gemeine[s] Urtheil," "diese tief in der menschlichen Seele liegende Meinung," or "allgemeine[n] Empfindung."

The status and construction of public opinion in the *Gesellschaftsvertrag* as discussed by Reinhart Koselleck in *Kritik und Krise* suggests that public opinion is subject to manipulation, and that power is exercised ultimately by the legislator, who hides behind the veil of public opinion. Koselleck argues that in the late eighteenth century the bourgeoisie took advantage of the separation of "Moral und Politik" that provided the basis of the absolutist state, defining morality and deploying it as a political category as a means of confirming its independence from the absolutist state and establishing its own jurisdiction.⁸⁶ Koselleck defines the result, as expressed in Rousseau's *Gesellschaftsvertrag*, as an "ideologische Diktatur der Tugend."⁸⁷ He also asserts that: "Bei Rousseau wird es offenbar, daß das Geheimnis der Aufklärung, ihre Macht zu verschleiern, zum Prinzip des Politischen geworden ist."⁸⁸

⁸⁴Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Der Gesellschaftsvertrag*, trans., Hermann Dönhardt and Werner Bahner, intro., Werner Bahner (Leipzig: Reclam, 1981, 2nd ed.) I use the German translation to emphasise the similarity of Rousseau's and Fichte's terms.

⁸⁵Rousseau 84-85.

⁸⁶Reinhart Koselleck, *Kritik und Krise: Eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt*, 1959 (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1979, 3rd ed.) especially 49-157, here 48. My focus here is exclusively on Koselleck's account of the deployment of bourgeois morality in the emergent new order. In the present framework I cannot enter into debate about the conditions under which this occurred or the relationship between the bourgeois and the nobility or the absolutist state and its civil servants. Hull's perspective in her voluminous study *Sexuality, State and Civil Society* suggests a greater degree of cooperation between the two groups than does Koselleck's *Preußen zwischen Reform und Revolution: Allgemeines Landrecht, Verwaltung und soziale Bewegung von 1751-1848*, *Industrielle Welt* 7 (Stuttgart: Klett, 1975, 2nd. rev. ed.).

⁸⁷Koselleck, *Kritik* 139.

⁸⁸Koselleck, *Kritik* 138.

In Koselleck's reading of this twofold process, the rule of the absolutist monarch is to be replaced by that of the "Herrschaft des Allgemeinwillens," requiring the combined fiction that all individuals who comprise the general will are equal, and that they determine public opinion. In this context, "[d]ie wichtigste Aufgabe des neuen Gesetzgebers, von der alles andere abhängt, besteht darin, die Autorität durch die Macht der Öffentlichkeit zu ersetzen."⁸⁹ However, the power of public opinion is relativised through the clever manipulative tactics of the "Chef" or "new legislator," who himself emerges as its author.⁹⁰ Koselleck comments that:

Die postulierte Identität von moralischer Freiheit und politischem Zwang, mit der Rousseau die Übel des absolutistischen Systems zu beseitigen hoffte, erweist sich als die ideologische Diktatur der Tugend, deren Herrschaft hinter der Maske des Allgemeinwillens verschwindet.⁹¹

The actual workings of power are hidden, and those upon whom power is exercised are manipulated into believing they themselves are the rulers. In the *Gesellschaftsvertrag* public opinion is stylised as an emergent authority, but Koselleck's analysis emphasises its status as a tool that may be deployed by legislators.

In the light of Koselleck's reading, Rousseau's text constructs public opinion not only as a significant arbiter of social mores, but also as a powerful political instrument that can be used by the legislator to enforce his rule while masking the workings of his own power. As is demonstrated in instances cited of public opinion in Fichte's "Family Law," in that text the latter is similarly constructed as a powerful arbiter of mores with specific reference to the alleged power and complicity of women as enforcers. As the above discussion has shown, Fichte's text allots women the role of policing opinions already deemed to be existent and generally held, rather than granting them the right to determine the content of these mores. In Fichte's text as in Rousseau's, the hidden power is exercised by the "new legislator:" Fichte cites public opinion as the authoritative voice of women and ordinary citizens in order to enforce mores which are accorded great value within the text, and in order to manipulate

⁸⁹Koselleck, *Kritik* 139.

⁹⁰Koselleck, *Kritik* 139.

⁹¹Koselleck, *Kritik* 139.

women into acting according to the interests of the institution of marriage as established in the text.

Nipperdey's account of an exchange between Friedrich von Savigny and Thibaut, a Heidelberg lawyer, also focusses on the manipulation of the law by Enlightenment legislators who claim simply to be enforcing mores and conventions embraced within civil society. In a polemical document in this exchange entitled "Vom Beruf unserer Zeit für Gesetzgebung" (1814), Savigny "opponierte ... gegen den Hochmut der Aufklärung, ja gegen jedes Setzen und Machen des Rechts durch einen Gesetzgeber, gegen Kodifikation und Staat."⁹² Savigny, founder of the "historische Rechtsschule," advocated the implementation of the Roman law tradition rather than the establishment of a new national legal code,⁹³ and argued that:

Das Recht ist sozusagen unverfügbar, verwurzelt in der Kontinuität von Gewohnheit, Sitte, Praxis, die sich organisch weiterentwickeln, es ist lebendig, eigentümlich, gewachsen, ursprünglich, altertümlich, ehrwürdig, volkstümlich, es ist getragen von der gemeinsamen Überzeugung des Volkes, dem Gefühl innerer Notwendigkeit, welches allen Gedanken an zufällige und willkürliche Entstehung ausschließt.⁹⁴

Nipperdey's ironic commentary states that according to this view, the law is not set out in statutes but through tradition, and the "Volk" identified with the latter:

Das Volk nun aber wird, erstaunliche Wendung, repräsentiert von den Juristen; die Gelehrten und Richter sind es, die das Recht bewahren und organisch fortbilden, nicht der Staat und nicht das Volk unmittelbar, sondern sie haben das Monopol, sie klären, reinigen die Gewohnheit. Und die Tradition ist nun, wiederum erstaunlich, das römische Recht.⁹⁵

In regulating women's behaviour and thus enforcing a particular normative ideal, Fichte's state deploys allegedly generally held views in censuring women who demur in the case of their husband's adultery, or in casting out those whose behaviour would call his normative construct into question. It also protects the honour of a woman who in an act of "Liebe" to a man she believes will marry her, the only instance in which Fichte's state tolerates a woman's extra-marital sexuality:

⁹²Nipperdey 511.

⁹³Nipperdey 510-511.

⁹⁴Nipperdey 511.

⁹⁵Nipperdey 511. As in the case of Rousseau and Savigny, Fichte in the "Familienrecht" may be seen to be setting a particular agenda in place by citing as definitive the opinion of unverifiable authorities.

Unterwerfung aus Liebe bedeutet die Ehe. Es ist sonach zwischen diesen beiden Personen ... eine Ehe wirklich vollzogen, auch ohne ausdrückliches Eheversprechen. (II, §23, 119)

In this case the state "guarantees" her honour, as long as she is not "dafür bekannt ..., sich jedem hinzugeben." (II, §23, 119) The couple is considered married in the eyes of the state, and is required to marry formally.⁹⁶

For women in a much more fundamental way than for men, sex within marriage is thus the only legitimate form of sexual expression, and it belongs within the private sphere. However, according to the rules of Fichte's sexual contract, the asexuality of the ideal woman dictates that she derives no enjoyment from marital sexual intercourse, and cannot express the desire for such contact. Frevert's discussion of the norms apparent in Wilhelmine bourgeois society confirms that this ideal was indeed naturalised by the end of the nineteenth century. She states that:

It is impossible to know how strictly people actually observed the bourgeois code of sexual morality. Irrespective of their experiences in the conjugal bed, middle-class women presented themselves to the outside world as disinterested in sex, and looked down on women who transgressed the mores of bourgeois sexual behaviour.⁹⁷

Fichte's discussion of the legal status of women who engage in prostitution and concubinage reveals that his state indeed tolerates these activities and such women, but only while they do not seek legal recognition of their status, and thus only while neither they nor their activities have a publicly acknowledged existence. The prostitute who declares her "trade" as her only means of subsistence "must," according to Fichte, be expelled from the state, which has the right to regard her as mad.⁹⁸ As confirmed by studies which examine the equation of a woman's "anomalous" behaviour with madness, so-called normal feminine/female behaviour implies conforming to a particular conception of femininity which supports normative social

⁹⁶If there are reasons why the marriage would not be satisfactory, such as class differences, or if the man feels an "unüberwindliche Abneigung" towards the woman, then they may divorce after they have married, and the woman is thereby granted the status of a divorced woman. (II, §23, 119-20, quotation 120)

⁹⁷Ute Frevert, *Women in German History: From Bourgeois Emancipation to Sexual Liberation*, trans., Stuart McKinnon-Evans in association with Terry Bond and Barbara Norden (Oxford: Berg, 1988) trans., of *Frauen-Geschichte zwischen bürgerlicher Verbesserung und Neuer Weiblichkeit* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1986) 131-135, quotation, 134.

⁹⁸"Wenn nun eine Weibsperson dem Staate jenen Nahrungszweig angäbe, so hätte er das Recht sie für wahnsinnig zu halten." (II, §23, 120)

structures.⁹⁹ Fichte's model of the mad prostitute occurs in the context of his constitution of an ideal model of femininity with some claim to normative status, and his argument is directed toward establishing her madness as a juridical fact which would invalidate anything she has to say. By labelling this woman as mad, silencing and expelling her, the state rids itself of this blatant provocation and threat to the status quo. The status of the prostitute is thus highly ambiguous. Like the illicit sexual relations she represents, she is confined to what may be termed a grey zone, an area which is not admitted into the bounds of legality and which officially does not exist, but which is nevertheless a closely defined absence.

Thus, through its acknowledgement of the contingent nature of male "Liebe," and its acknowledgement and conditional toleration of female sexual activity, Fichte's "Family Law" reveals its tacit acceptance of non-ideal sexual practices. As a consequence, such illicit sexual practices are as much a part of his model of bourgeois society as the ideal, normative, and acknowledged sexual practice legitimised through the legal institution of marriage. Fichte's discussion of the the marriage contract on the one hand, and prostitution and other forms of extra-marital practice on the other, demonstrates his support of the sexual contract which mandates that women are not only subordinate to men, but also always sexually available to them.

I.2.III. Sex and space: the negative sexualisation of women's activity in the public sphere in Fichte's "Folgerungen auf das gegenseitige Rechtsverhältniß beider Geschlechter überhaupt im Staate."

Whereas the first and second sections of the "Family Law" define the ideal woman's role in the private sphere in terms of the marital relationship, and focus primarily on her character, the third section of the "Family Law" defines the ideal woman's role in the public sphere and focusses primarily on her conduct. The title of the third section, "Folgerungen auf das gegenseitige Rechtsverhältniß beider Geschlechter überhaupt im Staate," makes explicit

⁹⁹Phyllis Chesler, *Women and Madness* (New York: Avon, 1972); Jill Julius Matthews, *Good and Mad Women: the Historical Construction of Femininity in 20th Century Australia* (Sydney: Allen, 1984).

the link between the first two sections and the third, and thus between female character and conduct. The third section further explicates the ramifications of the terms of the sexual contract for women, showing how the definition of women as belonging to the private sphere affects judgements of their conduct in the public sphere.

Fichte argues for women's absolute exclusion from participation in any facet of civil society on their own behalf. As in the first section of the "Family Law," he introduces internally imposed disciplinary mechanisms which enforce women's "voluntary" self-subjugation to the behavioural code he proposes, and links non-compliance to a loss of "Würde." The third section stipulates that women are allowed to appear in public only in a representational familial role and as an adjunct to a male, for example as wife, mother, daughter. Fichte's discussion includes women's access to education as well as activities such as female authorship, public speaking, and scholarly activity, becoming a civil servant and conducting one's own legal affairs. In each case, woman's "nature," her special form of reason, or both, disqualify her from the activity. Woman's "nature" is defined by an alleged "natürliche Schamhaftigkeit" and, if married, her "love" for her husband. Both are linked to women's "Würde." "Natural modesty" is thus an internally imposed disciplinary mechanism that functions as an adjunct to the mechanism of "love" derived in the first section of the "Family Law." Thus Fichte also proposes that "natural modesty" might lead widows, divorced women or older unmarried women to request a male guardian to handle their legal affairs. This evokes the legal category of "Geschlechtsvormundschaft" which only applied to married women in the ALR. In Fichte's usage this, too, becomes an extrajudicial disciplinary mechanism. Fichte thus covertly introduces women's "voluntary" self-subjection to the rule of the sexual contract which does not recognise women as autonomous subjects within civil society except for the purposes of entry into the marriage contract.

Women who behave contrary to Fichte's definition of modesty, or who otherwise overstep the boundaries of ideal behaviour, are sexualised. Such sexualisation stigmatises them, aligning them with corrupt women who are by definition fallen. This means of dealing with transgressive women emphasises that although the "Family Law" allows women to leave the

house, they always remain defined by the private sphere. Fichte's determination of the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable forms of female activity in the public sphere in this section delineates the boundaries of normative femininity and masculinity more precisely. It further confirms the separation of the public and private spheres, and woman's social positioning in the latter.

My discussion focusses firstly on how this is theorised in Fichte's text. I then consider the implications of Fichte's sexualisation of particular kinds of activity by bourgeois women in the public sphere. This has an impact on the sexual codification of women's bodies on the one hand, and the spaces of the public and the private spheres on the other. The sexual codification of bodies and spaces in Fichte's text provides an explanation for the sexualisation of bourgeois women who appear in certain public spaces or who venture forth in public without a chaperone. Fichte's text provides the conceptual underpinning of this containment of women from the late eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth.¹⁰⁰

Theweleit's suggestive if sweeping overview of the sexualisation of the public sphere in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries proposes that the nineteenth century is distinguished by "die verordnete Verheimlichung der Frauen gegenüber ihrer Veröffentlichung in der vergangenen Epoche."¹⁰¹ My analysis of Fichte's text modifies Theweleit's identification of such a campaign of open suppression of female sexuality, showing that there is a distinction between the bourgeois ideal and the real. The "Family Law" in its entirety reviews both legal

¹⁰⁰My discussion shows that Fichte's ideas were typical of their time and resonated far into the nineteenth century, as is shown in the following studies by Geltner, Haibusch and Grubitzsch in the important collection edited by Helga Grubitzsch, Hannelore Cyrus, Elke Haibusch, *Grenzgängerinnen: Revolutionäre Frauen im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert: Weibliche Wirklichkeit und männliche Phantasien* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1985). Ursula Geitner, "'Die eigentlichen Enragés ihres Geschlechts:' Aufklärung, Französische Revolution und Weiblichkeit," Grubitzsch, Cyrus, Haibusch, eds., 181-217; Elke Haibusch, "Der Zauberstab der Macht: 'Frau bleiben:' Strategien zur Verschleierung von Männerherrschaft und Geschlechterkampf im 19. Jahrhundert," Grubitzsch, Cyrus, Haibusch, eds., 219-255, 244; Carola Lipp, "Bräute, Mütter, Gefährtinnen: Frauen und politische Öffentlichkeit in der Revolution 1848," Grubitzsch, Cyrus, Haibusch, eds., 71-92.

¹⁰¹Theweleit 373-74. Theweleit looks at the changing discursive representation of bourgeois women and its relationship to their representative function in this sphere. His theses are suggestive, but would need to be substantiated by more reliable sources than Eduard Fuchs: Theweleit footnotes the arguments in this section of his text with references to Vol. 2 *Die galante Zeit* (München: Langen, 1911) vol. 2 of *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*. C.f. Theweleit 493-494.

and extra legal forms of sexual activity, and supports the positive sanctioning of both kinds of practice by the law and social moral convention. The following discussion demonstrates how Fichte's text codifies the public sphere as the site of tacitly permitted extra legal sexual activity, while at the same time providing the conceptual underpinnings for the removal of the ideal bourgeois woman from the public sphere unless she is chaperoned and acting as a representative of the private sphere.

The normative emphasis of the third section is evident in Fichte's assertion that: "Der Regel nach" a woman is either a virgin, in which case she is "unter der väterlichen Gewalt," or a married woman. In the latter case "hängt ihre eigene Würde daran, daß sie ihrem Manne ganz unterworfen sey und scheine" (III, §34, 129). His discussion of such deviations as widows, and divorced and unmarried women asserts initially that these women are "keinem Manne unterworfen" (III, §35, 132). Although he states that they thus have the right to conduct their own legal affairs, Fichte strongly advises that they place themselves under the tutelage of a guardian, invoking women's "natural" modesty and shyness to support the likelihood that his suggestion would be taken up:

Wollen sie sich aus natürlicher Schamhaftigkeit und Schüchternheit einen Vormund wählen, so muß ihnen das erlaubt seyn.... Wollen sie sich keinen Vormund wählen, so ist gar kein Rechtsgrund vorhanden, sie darzu zu zwingen. (III, §35, 132)

In thus stating that they are under no legal obligation to appoint a guardian, Fichte pays lip-service to the ALR and to the Enlightenment principles of equality and liberalism that in many ways informed this codification,¹⁰² and that are the espoused principles of the social contract. However, his invocation of "natural modesty" together with "natural shyness" counters his assertion that these women are independent. This evocation of ideal female qualities is clearly indicative of normative requirements for women. Fichte's suggestion maintains the rule of the

¹⁰²The ALR was in effect in Prussia, where Fichte was writing. Gerhard states that the ALR, composed according to liberal Enlightenment principles, was in many ways out of step with the jurisprudence of the time from its promulgation in 1794 onwards. (Gerhard, *Verhältnisse* 155-157). Although the category of "Geschlechtsvormundschaft" was nullified for unmarried women in the legal codes obtaining in the various German kingdoms and principalities during the 19th century, its principle remained valid for married women up to and including the promulgation of the BGB (Gerhard, *Gleichheit* 152-154). Gerhard points out that each codification asserted the dependence of married women on their husbands. (Gerhard, *Gleichheit* 145-148).

sexual contract which defines women only as sexual beings, and does not recognise their status as individuals in the state. Frevert's assessment thus fails to take into account Fichte's exposition of internally imposed disciplinary mechanisms when she states that "[a]ußerhalb der Ehe ... waren Frauen ebenso frei wie Männer und diesen gleich. Als Ledige konnten sie über Eigentum verfügen, erwerbstätig sein, politische Rechte besitzen und ausüben."¹⁰³

Fichte's suggestion that women might be "naturally" disinclined to conduct their own legal affairs evokes the legal category of "Geschlechtsvormundschaft," defined as "die vor Gericht notwendige Vertretung durch einen Mann, ihren Vater oder Ehemann."¹⁰⁴ Fichte reintroduces it as a mechanism to disenfranchise women by means of the internally imposed regulatory mechanism of "natürliche Schamhaftigkeit."¹⁰⁵ "Schamhaftigkeit" was inscribed into correct bourgeois female behaviour in the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, and broadly used as a mechanism for policing female sexual behaviour. In the late eighteenth century the term "Schamhaftigkeit" and related words such as "Scham" acquired special significance in pedagogical and other discourses which sought to determine women's sexual behaviour.¹⁰⁶ Garbe has shown that in Rousseau's writing and Schlegel's *Lucinde* "Schamhaftigkeit" and "Scham" are linked to women's "Wollust" and its control or voluntary suppression.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, Weigel asserts that "[d]er Konzeptualisierung des weiblichen

¹⁰³Frevert, "Meisterdenker" 24.

¹⁰⁴the category refers to the seventeenth century juridical exposition of women's incapacity to conduct their own legal affairs. Gerhard, *Verhältnisse* 183.

¹⁰⁵The endurance of Fichte's view that women should wish to voluntarily disenfranchise themselves is apparent in the following quotation from Wilhelm Theodor Kraut's early 19th century history of "Geschlechtsvormundschaft." He writes that while married women are under the guardianship of their husbands, "[b]ei unverheirateten volljährigen Frauenzimmern findet sich aber nirgends mehr eine gesetzliche Geschlechtsvormundschaft." He adds: "Es haben daher die volljährigen, unverheiratheten Weiber überall selbst die Verwaltung ihres Vermögens, wenn sie nicht etwa freiwillig den Vormund damit beauftragen." (W.T. Kraut, "Die Vormundschaft nach den Grundsätzen des deutschen Rechts 1835-1859," cited in Gerhard, *Verhältnisse*, 468-474, here 472 and 471) By the mid-nineteenth-century, the desirability for women to appoint a guardian for moral reasons would have been viewed as self-evident according to the bourgeois code of conduct. Fichte's "Family Law" explicates the steps which lead to this "natural" state of affairs.

¹⁰⁶Ursula Geitner, "Passio hysterica - Die alltägliche Sorge um sich selbst: Zum Zusammenhang von Literatur, Pathologie und Weiblichkeit im 18. Jh.," *Frauen - Weiblichkeit - Schrift* 130-144, 137.

¹⁰⁷Christine Garbe, "Fiktionen des weiblichen Begehrens: Eine Re-Vision der sexuellen Diskurse von J.-J. Rousseau und F. Schlegel," *Das Sexuelle, die Frauen und die Kunst*, Karin Rick, ed., konkursbuch 20 (Tübingen: konkursbuch Verlag Claudia Gehrke, [c. 1987]) 100-118.

Geschlechtscharakters mit den Begriffen Unschuld, Schamhaftigkeit, Anmut und Tugend ist die Eindämmung ebenso wie die Ausgrenzung weiblicher Sexualität eingeschrieben.¹⁰⁸ However, even at the time it was recognised that a certain degree of socialisation and therefore knowledge was necessary to implement this virtue.¹⁰⁹ Fichte's text thus reasserts the double bind imposed with the dictum of behaving with modesty, and reveals itself to be at one with the disciplinary enterprise associated with the social, sexual and moral education of women in the late eighteenth century. Women were committed to dissimulating, required to recognise what was censored in order to be able to display ignorance of it. Fichte's invocation of natural modesty in the context of a woman's legal affairs foreshadows his explicit sexualisation of women engaging in other activities in the public sphere on their own behalf.

Fichte's deployment of the concepts of "Geschlechtsvormundschaft" and "natürliche Schamhaftigkeit" emphasises the centrality of women's sexuality and his definition of women as dependent on men and inactive in the public sphere. The suggestion that a woman who does not appoint a man to conduct her legal affairs may be acting immodestly sexualises the woman who does not conform to normative gender guidelines. This occurs much more explicitly in Fichte's discussion of why women cannot speak in public, write other than didactic moral works for their own sex, or become scholars, and why married women cannot become civil servants. Although women's special, "natural" form of reason prevents them from being able to participate fully or achieve greatness in many of these activities, Fichte also asserts that women engage in such activities merely in order to seek the sexual attention of men. Such women

opfern dadurch die liebenswürdige Schamhaftigkeit ihres Geschlechts auf, welcher nichts widerlicher seyn kann, als zur Schau gestellt zu werden. Ruhmsucht und Eitelkeit ist für den Mann verächtlich, aber dem Weibe ist sie verderblich, sie rottet jene Schamhaftigkeit und jene hingebende Liebe für ihren Gatten aus, auf denen ihre ganze Würde beruht. (III, §34, 131)

¹⁰⁸Weigel, *Topographien* 129.

¹⁰⁹The late 18th century essayist Meister points this out, writing: "So wol überhaupt die Natur des menschlichen Herzens als auch Erfahrung und Geschichte beweisen, daß, gleichwie bei dem Kinde, also auch bey einem Volke in der Kindheit, weit weniger Schamhaftigkeit statt hat als bey erwachsenen, ausgebildeten Menschen. Wie sollten Geschöpfe sich schämen, die nach Senecas Ausdrücke ignorantia rerum innocentes sind?" Leonhard Meister, "Ueber die Schamhaftigkeit," *Fliegende Blätter größtentheils historischen und politischen Inhalts* (n.p.: Basel, 1783) 112-139, 112.

Fichte's sexual stigmatisation of their activity emphasises the threat that women's independent activity poses: it shows they are able to overcome the self-limiting disciplinary agency of both "natürliche Schamhaftigkeit" and "Liebe." His reduction of women to a function of their sexuality means that a woman appearing in public can only be interested in displaying herself sexually and thus in attracting male sexual attention.¹¹⁰ In this vein, the literary work of a woman who desires fame as a writer is "ein Werkzeug der Koketterie mehr." If a married woman were to achieve fame as a writer, this would encourage her independence, thereby weakening the marital relationship and threatening the marriage (III, §38, 136).

Women who participate in public debate maintain their "Würde" only if they act as their husband's representatives (III, §34, 130). If a woman's public activity can thus be interpreted in terms of her gender role, and is familiarly coded, it does not threaten the "natural" order Fichte is at pains to establish.¹¹¹ A woman may thus take her husband's place at a public meeting and even speak, as long as it is "als *Stimme ihres Mannes*." (III, §35, 132, original emphasis, MV) The corollary is, as Fichte states: "Als ihre eigene könnte sie dieselbe [i.e. the common voice of the couple MV] nicht vortragen, ohne sich dadurch von ihrem Mann abzutrennen." (III, §35, 132) Fichte thus reiterates that a woman's public activity cannot be self-directed, emphasising the subsumption of women's identity by that of her husband in the marital unit. In his concern to "prevent a female drive from limiting the male subject,"¹¹² Fichte instead limits the female subject. A woman's autonomous engagement in the activities described above involves her engaging in behaviour that is gendered male according to Fichte's definition of activity as the prerogative of the male and linked with his

¹¹⁰Such male attention is of course first transmitted through the gaze. See especially the analysis below of the female protagonist as the sexualised object of the male gaze in *Jenny*.

¹¹¹C.f. Carola Lipp's analysis of the sexual symbolism attached to the female body in her discussion of women's participation in the Hambacher Fest in 1832 or at various public meetings aimed at promoting nationalistic feeling. Lipp shows that women who appeared in public as a representative of the family such as wife, mother, betrothed, or sister, and engaged in activities that supported the men, were regarded positively, as they supported the social order based on the division of public and private and the concomitant division of gender roles. "Bräute, Mütter, Gefährtinnen: Frauen und politische Öffentlichkeit in der Revolution 1848," Grubitzsch, Cyrus, Haabus, eds., 71-92.

¹¹²Hull, *Sexuality* 318. See discussion above.

possession of reason. As well as questioning marital unity, such women thus threaten to dissolve gender boundaries and place male dominance at risk.¹¹³

In this third section, Fichte also returns to the idea of the "ganz verschiedenen Charakter der Vernunft" (III, §38, 135) of the two sexes derived in the first section. It provides the basis for his refutation of the "Schutzredner [sic] der Weiber," that is, Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel. According to Fichte, such defenders of women argue "daß man ihren Geist vernachlässige, sie hinterlistiger und neidischer Weise von den Quellen der Aufklärung entferne." (III, §38, 134)¹¹⁴ Fichte asserts that women "werden nemlich sehr natürlich nicht zur Verwaltung dessen erzogen, was sie nie verwalten sollen, sie werden nicht auf Schulen und Universitäten geschickt" (III, §38, 134). Education is thus irrelevant for the fulfilment of women's "natural" role in society. In addition, women's gender-specific form of reason is neither suitable for public duties, nor is it capable of adapting to such tasks. While men make decisions on the basis of rational deduction and argument, women's feelings provide them with "ein natürliches Unterscheidungsgefühl für das wahre, schickliche, gute," but they do not have any insight into the reasons for their judgements. In agreement with philosophers such as Kant and Hegel, Fichte finds that "der Mann muß sich erst vernünftig machen: aber das Weib ist schon von Natur vernünftig" (III, §38, 135).¹¹⁵

¹¹³C.f. Haabusch 224-251. Haabusch analyses the power relations inherent in the polarised constructions of gender. She states that the latter were instrumental in providing the "massive[r] ideologische[r] Gewalt, die die Legitimation für die Herrschaft des männlichen Geschlechts über das weibliche liefern mußte." Haabusch 222.

¹¹⁴Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel, *Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Weiber*, 1793 (Frankfurt a.M.: Syndikat, 1977). According to Hull, "Fichte contemptuously dismissed the call for greater civil rights for women (Hippel) as the product of mere immodest vanity." Hull, *Sexuality* 322. This statement also echoes Kant's ironic assessment of women's dressage and the gender specific nature of Enlightenment in the essay "Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung" (1784). See discussion below: II.1.iv.b. The letter to Antonie. Immanuel Kant, "Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?" *Schriften zur Anthropologie, Geschichtsphilosophie, Politik und Pädagogik* I, ed., Wilhelm Weischedel (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1977) 53-54.

¹¹⁵Kant distinguishes between "schönen Verstand" and "tiefen Verstand" in "Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen." I. Kant, "Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen," C.f. also Schiller's typification of the feminine as "das Naive," in contrast with masculine reason in "Über naive und sentimentalsche Dichtung." See analysis in Bovenschen 227ff. Like Schiller, Fichte finds that educated women in fact usually become "Pedantinnen" (III, §38, 135). The crassest association of women and nature occurs in Hegel's well-known comparison of women with plants. See discussion below: II.1.iv.b. The letter to Antonie. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts oder Naturrecht und Staatswissenschaft im Grundrisse* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1976)

Woman's "nature" also provides grounds for women's unsuitability for the civil service: "Denn sie ist bestimmt zu lieben, und die Liebe kommt ihr von selbst, und hängt nicht von ihrem freien Willen ab" (III, §37, 133). It would be against her "Natur" as well as her "Pflicht" to swear an oath of celibacy. Once married, her absolute allegiance must shift to her husband. Anything else would be "gegen ihre weibliche Würde," since "Natur" and "Moralität" require her subjection to her husband. Discussing Fichte's definition of woman's determination by love, Hull finds that:

Here Fichte comes closest to undermining his repeated contention that a woman's civil condition was the result of her own free moral choice and maintaining instead that it was determined by her sexual constitution. This contradiction testifies to the strong undertow in the direction of sexual-biological determinism running through Fichte's work, despite himself.¹¹⁶

Frevert similarly identifies an "Ungereimtheit" in Fichte's reasoning on the basis of his linking women's unsuitability as public servants to the "Status der verheirateten Frau."¹¹⁷ She states that this implies all women would thereby be bound to the familial sphere "durch deren besondere Natur und Liebes"trieb,"¹¹⁸ and concludes that: "Die Ledigen- oder Witwenexistenz erschien damit lediglich als trauriger, unbefriedigender und nicht verallgemeinerungsfähiger Ersatz, nicht aber als frei wählbare Alternative zur liebenden, aufopfernden, abhängigen Frau."¹¹⁹ This is precisely what Fichte argues in the third section, which attests to the deviance of unmarried women, since they are not sexually bound to any male. Fichte represents the unmarried state for women as an intermediate stage before they attach themselves to a male in marriage. In this period they would do well to acquire a male guardian to ensure that they do not supersede the boundaries of the feminine and thus the perimeters of the sexual contract.

319-20, §166, Zusatz. Like plants, women are incapable of transcending their state and are resistant to change. For analyses of representations of women by Kant and Hegel from the perspective of philosophy and political philosophy respectively, see Susan Moller Okin, *Women in Western Philosophical Thought* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1979) and Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Woman: Women in Social and Political Thought*, 1981 (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993).

¹¹⁶Hull, *Sexuality* 323.

¹¹⁷Frevert, "Meisterdenker" 24f.

¹¹⁸Frevert, "Meisterdenker" 25.

¹¹⁹Frevert, "Meisterdenker" 25.

In Fichte's account, women and the feminine are metonymically associated with passive sexual behaviour, passivity, and "natural" reason. Men and the masculine, on the other hand, are metonymically associated with sexual agency, activity, and reason. In terms of the paradigmatic example of exemplary female behaviour as defined by Fichte's doctrine of "Liebe," or self-subjugation, any female activity which crosses the boundaries circumscribed by that doctrine is logically an incursion by the feminine onto the territory of the masculine.¹²⁰ Such incursions later earned women such as Louise Aston, who took part in the 1848 campaigns in Schleswig-Holstein, the pejorative of "Mannweib."¹²¹ As attested by Elke Haibusch's analysis of an influential mid-nineteenth-century text of popular philosophy, Erdmann's *Psychologische Briefe* (1852), the gender stereotypes established in Fichte's "Grundriß des Familienrechts" that resonate in this description of Aston remained operative in this period. The gender roles outlined in Fichte's text indeed remained paradigmatic for male and female stereotypes and power relations between the sexes well into the mid-nineteenth century if not beyond.¹²²

Elke Haibusch's discussion of gender roles and the division of the public and private spheres looks at the relegation of bourgeois women to the private sphere and the definition of public places, whether streets or public squares, as taboo areas for these women.¹²³ Entry into them was defined as transgressive.¹²⁴ She argues that these zones were created through the erection of "Schambarrieren," which acted as a form of territorial demarcation designed to keep women in check and behaving according to prescribed gender roles under male control.¹²⁵ In this context women appearing in public without a chaperone were guilty of a

¹²⁰C.f. Haibusch 250.

¹²¹According to Haibusch, Louise Aston behaviour departed radically from the female tasks of healing and nursing the wounded men. Her accuser was Kathinka Zitz, president of the Mainz Women's Association (243).

¹²²Haibusch 224-251.

¹²³Haibusch 244.

¹²⁴Haibusch 243.

¹²⁵Haibusch adds: "Die territoriale Ausgrenzung der Frauen durch Errichtung von Schambarrieren kann auf jede Form von Öffentlichkeit übertragen werden, wie Tageszeitungen, Zeitschriften, politische Versammlungen etc. Um so klarer sind die emotionalen Reaktionen auf Frauen, die ohne Legitimation in der Öffentlichkeit auftreten und sich eventuell noch zu politischen Aktionen hinreißen lassen." (244)

"Verstoß gegen Anstand und sittliches Betragen."¹²⁶ This view is supported by Lewald in both *Jenny (J, 135ff)* and through numerous anecdotes she relates in her autobiography. Lewald recounts that people in her circle reacted negatively when she told them she would be living on her own without a maid, and thus also walking the streets unchaperoned (*ML III, 238*).

Ute Gerhard provides an account from the turn of the century from the nineteenth to the twentieth of unaccompanied women in public being arrested by police. Her story illustrates that women who could not obviously be identified as wives or mothers, and who appeared to be "at large" in the public sphere, were by default defined as sexually promiscuous.¹²⁷ The placement in Fichte's text of the prostitute in spatial opposition to the ideal wife and mother provides an additional explanation for the rationale which supported such assumptions about female morality, and allowed such arrests to be made. On the basis of Fichte's text it could be argued that the exclusion of unchaperoned bourgeois women from public places occurred precisely because the public sphere was the sphere which tolerated extra-legal sexual activity.

Fichte's insistence on women's confinement in the private sphere of familial intercourse echoed sentiments expressed in popular philosophical treatises, encyclopedia articles, and pedagogical discourse about women's place and its political function in supporting the separation of the public and private realms, while at the same time it also helped cement these in juridical discourse. His account of the internally imposed disciplinary mechanisms that women were required to exercise would indicate that his text had an even more significant shaping function than has perhaps been understood in previous scholarship. In fact Fichte's account of the internally and externally imposed disciplinary mechanisms tying women to the private sphere provides a template for the implementation of the principles of

¹²⁶Haarbusch 243.

¹²⁷Gerhard cites this in the context of discussing the international campaign against prostitution in this period. Not only were married women at risk through their husbands, but also they were at risk on the street, as overzealous police took them in. Gerhard writes: "offensichtlich (war) keine Frau in der Öffentlichkeit vor polizeilicher 'Sittenkontrolle' und zwangsweiser Untersuchung und Arretierung sicher In den Zeitschriften der Jahrhundertwende wird von unzähligen Vorfällen berichtet, in denen die Polizei irrtümlich oder vorsätzlich eine Frau ohne Begleitung als Dirne festgenommen und zur Zwangsuntersuchung abgeführt hatte." Gerhard *Verhältnisse* 1990, 128.

the sexual contract in German bourgeois society from the late eighteenth century onwards. It also provides the reasoning underlying the discouragement of women's participation in public life through education, professional engagement, or enfranchisement in Germany from this period onwards. Until the mid-nineteenth century women writers rarely acknowledged their authorship when they did publish, and those who did were frequently subjected to critical vilification because they had overstepped their gender boundaries.¹²⁸

Fichte's insistence on women's containment within the home is adumbrated and echoed in different ways in different discourses in the late eighteenth century and through the nineteenth. Campe's pedagogical text, *Väterlicher Rath für meine Tochter*, for instance, which predates Fichte's text, could be viewed as the manual for the theory set out in the "Family Law." It provides practical advice for women's self-abnegation, voluntary submission to their husbands, and confinement to the private sphere.¹²⁹ Campe states that it is women's responsibility to ensure a man's house is a "Wohnung des Friedens, der Freude und der Glückseligkeit." In his linking of the significance of relations of the private sphere with those of the public sphere, Campe states that "das öffentliche Wohl des Staates steht größtentheils in eurer [i.e. of women M.V.] Hand, hängt ... ganz von der Art und Weise ab, wie das weibliche Geschlecht seine natürliche und bürgerliche Bestimmung erfüllt."¹³⁰ Hegel later also focusses in the *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* on the moral nature of the private sphere and the need for women to provide harmony for the man to come home to and heal the "Entzweiung" which results from his labours in the public sphere.¹³¹

The need to recognise and indeed acknowledge the political function of women's duties in the home is the key theme of the sociological commentator Riehl's influential volume *Die Familie*,

¹²⁸C.f. Geiger's summary of reviews of Hahn-Hahn's works and her characterisation by her contemporaries presents a typical profile of reactions to women's writing in the period. Gerlinde Maria Geiger, *Die befreite Psyche: Emanzipationsansätze im Frühwerk Ida Hahn-Hahns (1838-1848)* (Frankfurt a.M.: Lang, 1986) 17-22. See also Patricia Herminghouse's discussion in "Women and the Literary Enterprise in Nineteenth-Century Germany," Joeres and Maynes, 78-93.

¹²⁹Joachim Heinrich Campe, *Väterlicher Rath für meine Tochter: Ein Gegenstück zum Theophron: Der erwachsenen weiblichen Jugend gewidmet* (Braunschweig: Verlag der Schulbuchhandlung, 1789).

¹³⁰Campe 15-16.

¹³¹Hegel, *Grundlinien* 318-19, §166.

which appeared in 1855, more than half a century after Campe's influential pedagogical work on the "weibliche Bestimmung."¹³² Riehl's criticism of women's "Hereinpfeuschen ... In die geistigen Berufe der Männer" and his claim that "eine Frau, welche sich einem öffentlichen Dienste widmet, der Familie entsage,"¹³³ recall Fichte's dismissal of women from the public sphere. Most particularly, Riehl's identification of the private sphere with women and virtue demonstrates the enduring resonance of Fichte's ideas well into the nineteenth century:

Alle Nationen, selbst die rohesten, haben wenigstens eine Ahnung davon, daß die häusliche Tugend zugleich die öffentliche Tugend des Weibes sey. Geschlechtliche Unsittlichkeit entwürdigt darum das Weib noch unendlich tiefer als den Mann; sie ist Hochverrath an der Familie. Folgerecht bestrafen selbst Nomaden und Wilde den Ehebruch der Frau schärfer als den vom Manne verübten. Er ist eines der wenigen Staatsverbrechen, welche die Frau ausüben kann.¹³⁴

Riehl's statement above develops Fichte's ideas to their logical conclusion.

1.3. Fichte's "Family Law" as an expression of the sexual contract.

The above discussion shows that Fichte's "Family Law" provides an exemplary formulation of the sexual contract in its definition of marriage and the separation of the public and private spheres. Fichte's conceptualisation of the ideal woman and her alignment with the private sphere both supports the sexual contract, and draws out its implications for female subjectivity and sexuality. Fichte defines women as functions of their sexuality, denying them autonomous subject status in civil society except for the one moment of their entry into the marriage contract.

Fichte's distinction between the moral and natural status of marriage and its juridical status allows him to incorporate women as/and nature into civil society, placing them under the jurisdiction of men as occurs in the sexual contract. Women's self-subordination to men is figured as a voluntary act through the introduction of internally imposed extrajudicial disciplinary mechanisms ("Liebe," "natürliche Schamhaftigkeit") and externally imposed extrajudicial regulatory authorities (public opinion, social moral convention). These

¹³²Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl, *Die Familie*, vol. 3 of *Die Naturgeschichte des Volkes als Grundlage einer deutschen Sozial-Politik*, 1854 (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1861).

¹³³Riehl 64, 69.

¹³⁴Riehl 112.

complement the judicial regulatory authority of marriage and divorce law, and represent Fichte's attempt to align the contradictory requirements of the sexual contract with Enlightenment principles of equality.

Fichte's alignment of women and their (sexual) virtue with the private sphere politicises their social function and allocates them sole responsibility for social morality. The sexualisation of women whose actions transgress the boundaries of the private familial sphere, and who thus do not act as its representatives, underlines the separation of the public and private spheres. However, it also allows the public sphere to become the site of extra legal sexual practices such as prostitution which are given a tacit positive sanction within Fichte's "Family Law."

The implications of the sexual contract for female character and conduct, or for women's psyche and their destiny, are the subject of the textual analyses that follow.

Part Two.

II. The Sexual Contract and the Analysis of "Fictions of Female Development."

My discussion of the sexual contract will show that women's participation in civil society is determined by their gender, and that the terms of the sexual contract reduce them to their sexual and biological functions. Moreover, the sexual contract supports but is in turn supported by normative constructs of the ideal woman. According to its terms, women's destiny is determined largely by the kinds of sexual relationships they enter into, and is narrowly defined within preset boundaries of possibility and acceptability. Thus the sexual contract has an impact not only on the socially sanctioned form of heterosexual relationship, but also on the socially sanctioned form of subjectivity and sexuality of women. Accordingly, in my investigation of literary texts I thus look at the impact of the sexual contract on the constitution of the heroine's identity and its determination of her relationships with men.

My exploration of the narrative plotting of a heroine's destiny and the exposition of the development of her psyche uses the model of normative womanhood provided in Fichte's text. It is underpinned by feminist work on gender and genre in late eighteenth-century and early to mid-nineteenth-century texts which presents characteristic typologies for the stories of the developmental path of literary female figures in this period. I draw on Nancy Miller's identification of two main plots of female destiny, the "euphoric," which results in the heroine's social integration, and the "dysphoric," which results in her fall, namely her exclusion from society, alienation and perhaps death.¹ I also refer to the work of Abel, Hirsch, and Langland, who stake out a theoretical field for the female Bildungsroman. They proceed from an identification of the gender bias inherent in traditional generic definitions of the Bildungsroman as a fiction of male development,² and find that the genre's treatment of the individual's relationship to society deploys psychological conventions that fail to account for specifically female experience.³ Some typical patterns they identify for a woman's development are relevant for my study. These are namely that the development of the female

¹Nancy K. Miller, *The Heroine's Text: Readings in the French and English Novel, 1722-1782* (New York: Columbia UP, 1980).

²Elizabeth Abel, Marianne Hirsch, Elizabeth Langland, Introduction, Abel et al., eds., 3-19.

³Abel, et al., eds., 5.

individual begins after her marriage, and that it is characteristically internal, occurring in "brief epiphanic moments" rather than the "continuous unfolding" characteristic of male development.⁴ Lehmann's study of the novel of seduction in turn provides a multi-levelled paradigm for the destiny of "fallen women" in novels of this period.⁵ All three studies suggest ways in which the fate of literary women may be read in terms of established cultural norms. The patterns they establish contrast with the usual patterns for the male Bildungsroman protagonist, who has access to a wide range of experiences in many walks of life. While his developmental phase involves critical questioning of the status quo, it culminates in his social integration.⁶ This pattern is clearly inapplicable to women, who have limited access to formal education and whose social interactions and other activity in civil society are severely circumscribed by the terms of the sexual contract.

The explanatory model derived from Fichte's text is particularly appropriate to assess ways in which fictional narratives might trouble or subvert normative expectations because it provides templates for non-ideal as well as ideal modes of being and (sexual) practice for women. It may thus be used in assessing the narratives of women who are in various ways 'non-ideal,' and who either partially or fully succeed in escaping containment by the ideal. Fichte's text provides a template for discussion of the interplay between judicial and extrajudicial judgements of what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate conduct, as well as demonstrating how extrajudicial judgements are enforced through the regulatory authority of public opinion.

Fichte's definition of marriage and marital love in the "Family Law," as well as the stereotype of womanhood he develops for the ideal wife, all suggest very strongly why in these novels transitional stages of life, or threshold experiences such as falling in love, the period of courtship, and the act of marriage, are only the beginning of the story for a woman who perceives herself as an independent person, but who then falls in love. Love requires that she

⁴Abel, et al., eds., 11.

⁵Christine Lehmann, *Das Modell Clarissa: Liebe, Verführung, Sexualität und Tod der Romanheldinnen des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1991).

⁶C.f. Franco Moretti, *The Way of the World: The 'Bildungsroman' in European Culture* (London: Verso, 1987).

moves through the stage of courtship which ideally leads to marriage, and the impact of this process on the unformed girl differs markedly from its impact on the independent woman who has experienced autonomy. Both cases occur in the texts I examine. I thus explore the impact of the processes of the sexual contract on the unformed young girl, who emerges victorious from the engagement (Lewald, *Jenny*). I also show how the independent woman seeks to remodel the legally sanctioned form of relationship to gain greater autonomy for herself than the norm allows (Hahn-Hahn, *Faustine*).

One focus of my exploration of "the heroine's text"⁷ is thus what happens in a love relationship conducted by a heroine accustomed to acting independently once she and her beloved acknowledge their reciprocal love, and he proposes marriage. In many of the novels discussed in the present thesis, the heroines are, up to the point of the proposal, independent women who have struggled to gain and maintain independence from one or a number of authorities such as their father, a previous husband, or society in the form of public opinion. They value their autonomy, and typically, the men they fall in love with are presented as politically liberal thinkers. The point of crisis occurs when the man proposes and reveals himself to have conservative expectations of marriage that correspond to the requirements of the sexual contract. The heroine is thrown into turmoil, as such a marriage threatens her identity and way of life. As thematised in these novels, the prospect of admitting one's love or accepting a proposal of marriage potentially has extremely destructive consequences for the female protagonist.

The dilemma which affects the female psyche in these literary depictions of women moving from various degrees of autonomy and independence into love and/or marriage is not simply the classic conflict between public duty and private desire, and thus between the private and the public self. It is, rather, a dilemma faced by two aspects of the private self. This dilemma exposes the ambivalent, neither/nor position of women in society and the state at the time, not recognised as individuals in the public sphere, but crucial to its working by virtue of the

⁷C.f. "By the heroine's text, then, I mean in the first instance, nothing more than the inscription of a female destiny, the fictionalization of what is taken to be the feminine at a specific cultural moment" Miller, *Heroine's X*.

function they fulfil as wives and mothers, nurturing and supporting the family, which in turn supports the public sphere. In more abstract terms, the dilemma exposes the way in which the public role of women is coterminous with their personal life, laying bare the political function of the personal.

The framework of the sexual contract demonstrates the inadequacies of the term emancipation when used as an investigative category, and introduces subtlety into textual readings by making it possible to investigate ambivalences and ambiguities in the representation of a literary figure's relationship to codes of conduct and other manifestations of patriarchy and patriarchal power in the personal and the literary sphere. Free from restrictions imposed by the term "emancipation," the investigative framework of the sexual contract allows a differentiated exploration of issues of freedom and containment, enabling examination of interaction, engagement and the possibility and nature of female agency that is not hampered by the necessity to regard pejoratively a literary figure's inability to fully emancipate herself.

While the women are seldom successful, if success is defined as becoming absolutely independent of family and society, their efforts delineate the boundaries which circumscribe the possibilities in a woman's life. In this, the novels under consideration present at the very least a problematisation of the social strictures imposed upon women in terms of the sexual contract, and provide an indication of the areas in which change would be desirable. In this sense each novel explores paths possibly leading to freedom. Where relevant, I also explore the effects of the sexual contract on male literary figures. The juxtaposition of the contract's effects on men and women can more clearly expose its impact on women's lives, whether the behavioural norms resulting from the sexual contract favour men over women in a particular instance, as they favour Julian in Lewald's *Eine Lebensfrage*, or whether they have a negative impact on both parties, as is the case in the relationship between Caroline and Alfred in the same novel.

The most viable and most powerful means to freedom presented in Lewald's and Hahn-Hahn's novels is an individual code of conduct defined by the individual's moral code. This

enables the individual to exercise agency in making autonomous decisions, and thus transcend the sexual contract, on the level of the individual psyche if not in terms of heterosexual love relationships. It is particularly evident in the conduct of Lewald's Jenny (*Jenny*). The code of conduct to which she adheres is valorised as a code which transcends the hypocrisies of the social code, and exemplifies truly moral behaviour. Determined by the individual's inner morality, these codes may be based in ideal(ised) versions of moral codes defined by established religions and religious institutions, with which they are contrasted. This is particularly obviously the case in Lewald's *Jenny*, in which the boundaries and intersections of Jewish and Christian life are clearly drawn when the Jewish German protagonist attempts to live out her ambitions and desires in the Christian German community. The narrative illumination of areas in which the individual's inner morality comes into conflict with versions of moral codes defined by established religions and religious institutions interrogates the practices of institutionalised forms of established religion as well as the social practices these underpin (c.f. Sophie in Lewald's *Eine Lebensfrage*).

In various ways, Gutzkow's, Mundt's, Lewald's and Hahn-Hahn's novels problematise love and marriage as states which have tremendous impact on the psyche of the heroines, on who they are, and who they are allowed to be once they enter into a positively sanctioned love relationship with a man. They examine the heroine's transition into a different social space from the one they inhabit as non sexual, or not yet sexualised girls or young women, or the one they have inhabited as a woman or widow of independent means. The heroine's contestation of the limitations imposed by the sexual contract in these novels is always a challenge to the self, which each heroine resolves differently.

II.1. Karl Gutzkow: *Wally, die Zweiflerin* (1835).

My discussion of Gutzkow's novel explores the impact of the sexual contract on the constitution of the female protagonist's psychosexual and social identity.⁸ I thus look at its

⁸Herbert Kaiser, in contrast, asserts that Wally is not the sole protagonist: "Wally und Cäsar (sind) spiegelbildlich aufeinander bezogen und deshalb beide Hauptfiguren." He claims: "Wally und Cäsar entsprechen sich ... so eng, daß man fast von einer Doppelfigur sprechen könnte." "Karl Gutzkow: *Wally, die Zweiflerin* (1835)," *Romane und Erzählungen zwischen*

scripting of Wally's social destiny and her status in her engagements with men on the one hand, and its scripting of her psyche on the other. I firstly focus on Wally's interaction with Cäsar and Luigi in the principal heterosexual relationships in the novel. Secondly, I examine Wally's psychic development in greater detail, as it is presented both exegetically and diagetically by the narrator, and through Wally's textual self-representations. The story of her development reveals how different forms of "imaginierte Weiblichkeit" which support the sexual contract intersect with lived reality in the female psyche to determine Wally's identity, her relationships with men, and her destiny.

II.1.1. Love agreements, marriage, and the sexual contract.

Wally's emotional and intellectual awakening is catalysed when she meets Cäsar. This principal relationship in the novel in many ways propels her inner development. In the course of the narrative Wally increasingly questions the terms in which the female ideal is determined by the requirements of the sexual contract. Her multifaceted internal development includes her struggle to come to terms with her religious scepticism as well as her interrogation of women's alignment with nature, their socialisation into a particular role, and their limited access to education and intellectual endeavour. Wally's developmental trajectory takes her through the love relationship with Cäsar and the marriage with Luigi to suicide. The love plot is interpolated by the marriage plot, and accompanied by a third narrative strand, the religious plot. Wally's struggle with religious scepticism thus runs parallel to and is imbricated with the relationship with Cäsar. I show that the critique of

Romantik und Realismus, ed., Paul Michael Lützeler (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1983) 183-201, 188. According to Kaiser, this focus prevents "eine einseitige Festlegung auf Wally als Zentralfigur und auf Fragen der Frauenemanzipation" (Kaiser 188). Although the question of Wally's emancipation and Gutzkow's promotion of women's emancipation in this novel have been discussed in the scholarship, this is clearly not the only category of interpretation that has been or may be applied in considering the representation of this female protagonist. On the question of emancipation, Tatlock comments that the novel "has long been considered to be a book which supports the emancipation of women," but that "readers will find many inconsistencies in the portrait of Wally which point to an ambiguous attitude on Gutzkow's part toward women in general." She cites Paulsell in support of this view, countering Joeres' suggestion that "... in *Wally* Gutzkow seems to be standing on the side of those who would advocate a less stringent appraisal of the traditional role of women." Lynne Tatlock, "The Young Germans in Praise of Famous Women: Ambivalent Advocates," *German Life and Letters* 39.3 (1986): 193-209, 566.

established constructs of love, marriage and religion in each plot strand produces what would more accurately be called anti-love, anti-marriage and anti-revelatory plots.

Wally's relationships with Cäsar and Luigi involve negotiating agreements about her status and role, whether the agreements are cast as legal contracts or not. She negotiates a "Verabredung" with Luigi,⁹ and enters into two separate agreements proposed by Cäsar. The first of these, which the narrator classifies as an "Übereinkunft der Liebe," occurs in the forest scene, and the second is her agreement to enact the Sigune scene.¹⁰ My discussion of these scenes and her marital relationship shows that although Wally appears to enter into the contract with Luigi and the two separate agreements with Cäsar as an equal, and appears to contribute to the shaping of each agreement, she nevertheless is placed in a subordinate position each time. She is compromised not only by the male partner's execution or subversion of the arrangements, but by their very terms. Each agreement centres on her sexual person, and Wally's agreements with Cäsar and Luigi function as "mechanisms through which men claim right of sexual access to women's bodies and claim right of command over the use of women's bodies."¹¹ The terms of the sexual contract determine that this sexual access entails the woman's psychic as well as her sexual subordination. Accordingly, in Wally's arrangements with Cäsar and Luigi, not only her sexual self but her entire person is at stake, as is reiterated in the course of the narrative.¹²

A complicating factor in each relationship is that the conduct of each individual is based on different sexual and moral codes and conventions. This means that the sexual contract is expressed slightly differently in each case, depending on whether the aristocratic or the

⁹It is not clear whether this is part of a marriage contract or a more informal arrangement. The single reference to it is when Luigi, using the pretext of desiring to see her again, comes into Wally's room to cut off a lock of her hair to give to Jeronimo. This disturbs Wally considerably, since "solche Besuche waren ganz gegen die Verabredung" (W 63, 36f).

¹⁰While the Sigune scene ("Sigunenszene") has been the focus of critical attention since its publication, achieving almost synecdochic status for the novel, the forest scene has been less frequently discussed, and given independent status even less frequently. Vonhoff refers to it as the "Waldepisode" (92), while Heintz refers to "jenes Rencontre Wallys und Cäsars auf der Waldlichtung zwischen Bad Ems und Schwalbach" (461), and Kaiser's discussion avoids any such descriptive terms (191).

¹¹Pateman, *Contract* 17.

¹²This is made most explicit in Wally's retrospective insight that in the Sigune scene she gave Cäsar everything she had, her "thoughts," her "soul," and her "shame." (W 69, 19-21).

bourgeois sexual moral code determines the interaction. While Wally and Cäsar belong to the aristocracy, their views on love, sex and marriage spring from both the bourgeois and the aristocratic codes. Thus their relationship is initially determined by the aristocratic code. It then at different times proceeds according to either the aristocratic or the bourgeois sexual moral codes, or a conflation of both. Wally's ideas about love and fidelity are determined by the bourgeois code, even though her union with Luigi, the Sardinian ambassador, is a marriage of convenience for both parties. Through this marriage the novel thematises the contradictory impulses governing marriage in the enlightened circles of the aristocracy and educated bourgeoisie, since the latter adopted this Old Regime practice. Cäsar's critique of sexual prudery is directed at the bourgeois sexual and moral code, reflecting Gutzkow's criticisms in his "Vorrede" to Schleiermacher's *Vertraute Briefe über Friedrich Schlegels "Lucinde"* (1835), published shortly before *Wally*.¹³ In fact it may well be that the resultant blurring of boundaries in the text is the source of the confusion in *Wally* scholarship about the social status of the two figures.¹⁴ This explains some inconsistencies in the narrative, although not all, as I shall demonstrate.

To some extent the simultaneous relevance of both codes in this novel reflects the intermeshing of the aristocratic and bourgeois codes of sexual conduct and morality in German society from the late eighteenth century and through the nineteenth. The meshing of codes is also apparent in both Hahn-Hahn's and Lewald's novels, and is a motif of my discussion of these authors' texts. My particular focus is on the status and relevance of gender in the adoption of aspects of the bourgeois code by the aristocracy and vice versa.

II.1.II. The failed marriage plot.

The marriage plot acts as a foil to the love plot with Cäsar. It satirically exposes the bankruptcy of conventions governing the conduct of the aristocratic marriage of convenience.

¹³Gutzkow describes the "Vorrede" as "diese Rakete," which he flings "in die erstickende Luft der protestantischen Theologie und Prüderie." *Schleiermachers Vertraute Briefe über die Lucinde: Mit einer Vorrede von Karl Gutzkow* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1835) xif. Future references will use the abbreviated forms "Vorrede" and *Vertraute Briefe*.

¹⁴See Vonhoff's review. (390, fn. 228)

Demonstrating the adaptability of this Old Regime institution within an economic climate in which the circulation of money plays an increasingly important role,¹⁵ Wally's and Luigi's marriage further exposes the intrinsic commercial nature of this institution as Luigi harnesses Wally's beauty and inclination toward coquetry to divest his brother Jeronimo of his share of their joint inheritance.¹⁶ The "Verabredung" (W 63, 37) that supposedly guarantees Luigi's absence from Wally's bed and bedchamber underlines Wally's view that the object of this union is not sex but commerce. However, when Luigi enters Wally's room in pursuit of his economic project and leaves having violated her and their agreement, he asserts that sex is a part of their commerce, and that the sexual contract is at the root of this marriage.¹⁷ Wally thus only apparently subverts the sexual contract when she manages to negotiate a marriage agreement that denies Luigi sexual access to her body. Her body, her private life and her social identity remain fundamentally under his control, as his deliberate destruction of her reputation in Paris confirms (W 79, 9-10). Criticisms of the marriage as "unmotivated," and as merely attesting to Wally's superficiality, fail to take into account both the prevalence of arranged marriage in Wally's social class and its pragmatic nature: her marriage to Luigi has nothing to do with romance, but is rather an alliance into which both parties enter to further their own interests.¹⁸ I will discuss Wally's interests in entering the marriage below.

¹⁵C.f. "Die neueste Revolution hatte zu den alten Elementen des Pariser Lebens neue, zu zwei Aristokratien ... noch eine dritte gesellt, die Aristokratie der Banquiers. Mehr als je wurde das Geld der Hebel des gesellschaftlichen Mechanismus ..." (W 58, II.20-24). See Vonhoff's (109) and Geller's (340-344) excellent discussions of the socio-political and economic significance of money.

¹⁶Massey views Wally's coquetry as lacking in calculation, stating that Luigi "uses her socially proper and unsuspecting habit of coquetry to bewitch his brother Jeronimo, in order to gain control of the family fortune." (50)

¹⁷Wally is extremely disturbed by his behaviour, and perceives it as an extreme violation: "Der Gesandte hatte ihr eine Locke genommen. ... Zu dieser Stunde, wo sie ihn nie sah. Sie erbleichte, denn jetzt war ihr dieser Mann erst im Lichte eines Gatten erschienen. ... Sie wischte an ihrem Antlitz, das er berührt hatte. Sie lüftete das Bett, um es von den unkeuschen Worten zu reinigen, die hineingefallen waren, denn es stand offen." (W 64, 29-32; 65, 1 - 4) Gutzkow uses the term "Umarmung" to denote sexual intercourse in the forest scene, discussed below, and it is possible that the scene above also suggests sexual activity.

¹⁸The failure by much Wally scholarship to correctly assess Wally's marriage as an aristocratic alliance possibly stems to some degree from a confusion about Wally's (and Cäsar's) social class. It also stems from a lack of recognition of the degree to which Wally's and Cäsar's ideas and behaviour spring from both the aristocratic and bourgeois sexual and

According to Vonhoff the marriage confirms the degree to which materialistic interests determine reality in Parisian society, and demonstrates that those who fail to recognise this may fall victim to people more rapacious than themselves.¹⁹ Luigi's ability to destroy both his brother's and Wally's reputation (W 80-83) while acting immorally to further his own ends, supports this view of economic corruption running parallel to the sexual and moral corruption of Paris society. In addition, the marriage plot demonstrates the potential for corruption of a marriage contract within which a woman and her sexuality qualify as chattels at the disposal of the husband, to be used as he deems fit. As Cäsar's assessment of Wally's ruined reputation and fallen status in Parisian society indicates (W 80-83), the marriage plot also underlines the vulnerability of women to social perceptions about a woman's sexual propriety. While considerations of moral propriety supposedly determine allowable behaviour for a woman, her social status is in reality dependent upon society's perception of her virtue. This perception, which is ultimately a social construct, determines whether a woman is accepted into society or cast out. Luigi ruins Wally's reputation by manipulating the public opinion of their milieu to the point where she is viewed as complicit in Jeronimo's downfall (W 80-83).²⁰ Wally's marriage of convenience thus exposes the potential social bankruptcy of the aristocratic marriage contract, as well as demonstrating the powerlessness of women within such an arrangement.

However, Wally's relationship with Luigi does not have a lasting impact upon her psyche.²¹ Similarly, Jeronimo's suicide does not affect her or change her behaviour, as has been

moral codes. Herbert Kaiser imposes the bourgeois code of romantic love in his view of Wally's marriage as "eine leichtsinnig eingegangene Ehe" (193), an "unmotiviert[e] Augenblicksbindung" (195) which attests to Wally's superficiality. Others also view the marriage as abrupt and unmotivated: Günter Heintz, *Wally, die Zweiflerin: Studienausgabe mit Dokumenten zum zeitgenössischen Streit*, ed. and afterword, 2nd rev. ed., (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1983) 454; Meyer, 142; Inge Rippmann, "... statt eines Weibes Mensch zu sein: Frauenemanzipatorische Ansätze bei jungdeutschen Schriftstellern," *Kruse and Körtländer* 109-133, 121; Sammons, 37.

¹⁹Vonhoff 109.

²⁰C.f. the narrator's statement that Wally "wurde unbewußt das Werkzeug einer nichtswürdigen Intrigue." (W 74, 3-4)

²¹Wally is unconcerned at her loss of reputation, saying to Cäsar, "so schenken Sie den Narrheiten der Welt nicht fortwährend Ihr Ohr. Ich bin für Sie ohne Tadel und bedarf nicht mehr, weil ich nur Ihnen gefallen will." (W 81, 33-82, 3)

suggested.²² It simply acts as a spur for her to leave her marriage and return to Germany with Cäsar. Indeed, Wally displays equanimity on her departure, to the extent of coolly stepping over Jeronimo's remains after his suicide the previous evening (*W* 86, 29-31). In terms of Wally's emotional and intellectual development, the marriage functions as an interlude within the relationship with Cäsar. She enters into it in an attempt to free herself from him when she realises he will not commit himself to a lasting relationship with her; she realises the sham of her marriage and her true feelings for Cäsar when Luigi enters her bedchamber in violation of their agreement; and she leaves the marriage thinking she and Cäsar will resume a love relationship with mutual commitment.

II.1.iii. The failed love plot.

Wally's and Cäsar's relationship is initiated through the agency of chance in the opening scene of the novel, when the five rings fly off her whip to land at Cäsar's feet as she rides past him in the forest.²³ While the magical and otherworldly aspect of their relationship is emphasised in the text,²⁴ the incident also evokes the aristocratic code of courtly love. At the outset of the novel Wally's actions appear to be determined by this code, in that Wally bestows her favour in exchange for a ring. She selects a new favourite each month, leaving her rings for the poor at the end of each spa season. She appears to be in control of this exchange, but

²²Blackwell claims that Jeronimo's suicide has great impact on Wally and that the event effects a fundamental change in her character, asserting that Wally's "heartless unconcern for suitors and selfish coquetry are reversed by her experience with Jeronimo; she is distraught that she drove a man to such an act unawares, and the burden of his death weighs on her. After it she does not seek flirtation, and is open, honest, and considerate with Cäsar, even after his rejection of her." (249-250) The narrator reports that immediately after the shooting, "Wally tobte wie eine Bacchantin. Sie lief, sie schrie, sie riß die Zimmer ihres Gatten auf, der nirgends zu finden war." (*W* 85-86), adding, that if Jeronimo hadn't been dead she'd have killed him (*W* 86, 3-5), but then describes how coolly Wally orders preparations to be made for immediate departure: "Sie befahl, majestätisch, kalt, nordisch, wie eine Alleinherrscherin Moskoviens." (*W* 86, 13-15) When she awakes she has no memory of "[d]as blutige Ereignis" (*W* 86, 18). I argue that Jeronimo's fate is immaterial to the change in Wally's demeanour.

²³Geller argues in his discussion of "The Magic of Rings and Things" that their moment of first contact is defined by magic and rings (344ff).

²⁴Cäsar reflects on "eine alte Sage" once Wally is out of sight, concerned with the "Prinzessin im Walde, und sich selbst mit irgendeinem Zauber in Verbindung zu bringen." (*W* 7, 10-12) The synaesthesia of magical musical sounds accompanying the flight of the rings recalls the appearances of Serpentina in E.T.A. Hoffmann's *Der goldne Topf*. (*Werke*, ed., Herbert Kraft and Manfred Wacker, vol. 1, Frankfurt a.M.: Insel, 1967, 126-204.)

the opening scene reveals she is not, when Cäsar refuses to return the rings. She reveals her acquiescence to the code when she does not insist that Cäsar return them to her, but instead waits for the five givers of the rings to restore them by defeating Cäsar in duels. However, Cäsar's victory over the five men results in Wally herself becoming the object of exchange. While on one level the transfer of the rings has a magical dimension, and symbolises the role of chance and the irrational in sex and love relationships, on another level it reasserts Wally's subordinate status within the aristocratic code of exchange and favour.

As a result of the encounter in the woods and Cäsar's refusal to return the rings to Wally, both are drawn into a relationship which in some sense unsettling to them, however temporarily in the case of Cäsar. Cäsar is "außer sich" (W 21, 33), but his state of ex-stasis is defined by the narrator as actually only existing "[s]oweit Menschen dieser Art noch lieben können" (W 21, 32-33). The narrator further underlines the ambivalence of Cäsar's feelings for Wally by stating that even though she has made a very deep impression on Cäsar, the latter is driven by either "Liebe" or "die Aufgabe, die sich seine Eitelkeit gestellt hatte, Wally, diese Ungezähmte und Unbändige, überwunden zu haben" (W 31, 29-30). The narrator emphasises the narcissistic element of Cäsar's pursuit, warning: "Hütet euch, Ihr Frauen! Die Liebe der meisten Männer ist nichts als eine Huldigung, welche sie sich selbst bringen." (W 31, 30-32) Wally is involuntarily drawn to Cäsar, and in a scene at the gaming table in which her luck suddenly turns and she loses, the narrator comments:

Ihr Glück stürzt zusammen. Sie fühlt, daß ihr ein Dämon entgegentritt und ratet auf Cäsar. Sie wußte, daß ihr alles Widerwärtige nur von einem Mann kommen konnte, der sie beunruhigte und der sie vielleicht zu lieben anfing. (W 24, 4-7)

This alignment of Cäsar with the demonic further underlines the impression that Wally is being carried along in a situation which is beyond her control and likely to be harmful to her.

The forest and Sigune scenes represent pivotal points in Wally's and Cäsar's relationship, and mark significant stages in Wally's progression from love to suicide. In these scenes, she enters into two different agreements with Cäsar that are sexual transactions. Cäsar presents them as challenges to bourgeois moral conventions governing sexual propriety, inviting Wally to step outside the stifling conventions that enforce bourgeois prudery and confine

women's sexual activity to the monogamous marital relationship. However, as demonstrated in the discussion of Fichte's regulation of adultery above, the double standards enshrined by the bourgeois sexual moral code effectively mean that two separate codes regulate the sexual conduct of the two genders. As a consequence, participation in Cäsar's challenges has different implications for Wally than for Cäsar. By placing herself outside the boundaries established by the bourgeois sexual moral code and into Cäsar's hands, she places herself and her reputation at risk in two different ways. In allowing him to determine the terms of their sexual exchange by acceding to his requests, Wally firstly allows Cäsar's authority to supersede that of the bourgeois moral code. Secondly, regardless of the nature of their private agreement, they remain subject to the moral code operating within their social sphere. Thus, while Cäsar's actions in fact remain within acceptable social boundaries, this is not the case for Wally. Moreover, the bourgeois sexual moral code allows Cäsar to engage in sexual experimentation without taking ultimate responsibility for his female partner if she transgresses against it. As a corollary to this, Wally has no recourse to an external authority if Cäsar does not keep to their private agreement(s).²⁵

Very clearly then, in both agreements not only Wally's sexual self, but her social identity is at stake. Two separate stories thus run parallel to each other in the presentation of Wally's and Cäsar's relationship in these scenes: the story of fulfilled sexual desire and symbolic closure of relationship on Cäsar's part, and that of love and confirmation of continuing desire on Wally's.

II.1.III.a. The forest scene.

The forest scene takes place in a space defined as located outside conventional sexual morality and conduct. Initially, Cäsar appears interested in establishing a new form of love relationship which transcends social convention. However, events in this scene do not change his fundamental ambivalence towards Wally, as after the scene Cäsar does not transpose his

²⁵These effects of the sexual moral double standard regulating extra-marital sexual practice are drawn out in Lewald's presentation of the relationship between Sophie and Julian in *Eine Lebensfrage* (see discussion below).

proposal for unconstrained love into a socially meaningful possibility for the conduct of his and Wally's relationship. After the forest scene their communicative exchange is no more successful than before, and both remain locked within their own discourse and thus their own discursive understanding.²⁶ My consideration of this scene pays particular attention to Cäsar's proposal to Wally and the degree to which their "love agreement" might present a challenge to the sexual contract, and could thus be seen as a template for the refashioning of sexual relationships for both sexes, as Cäsar maintains.

In the forest scene, as in the opening and the later Sigune scenes, there is the suggestion of an 'other-wordly' dimension that hints at the extra-rational status of the exchanges in these three scenes.²⁷ Having escaped into the forest from their companions, Wally and Cäsar seat themselves with rather "mechanical movements" on tree stumps, but "als wenn eine Verabredung stattgefunden hätte" (*W* 33, 14-15).²⁸ However, the forest scene also subverts the codes it cites: it is an anti-love scene. This is acknowledged in the narrator's retrospective classification of the scene as a "Kontrafaktur der klassischen Liebesszene."²⁹

Lengthy silences alternate with verbal exchange in this scene, and Wally's initial confession, made after they have sat in silence for a time, initiates her deconstruction of the normative model of ideal femininity as women's natural, i.e. original state. In a lengthy passage (*W* 32, 32-33, 8), Wally alleges that in their natural state, competitive brute force conditions women's relationships with each other, and that their capacity for feeling and emotion is entirely undeveloped, thus directly contradicting idealised notions of woman's nature current at the time. She characterises women as possessing neither consciousness nor

²⁶C.f. Geller's analysis of their communication: "Every relationship in the novel is characterised by broken or non-communication. In this regard, the interaction between Wally and Caesar is exemplary. Their first extended conversation consisted of "rockets which they threw at one another" ...; they constantly changed topics and talked past each other. ... Almost every subsequent encounter between Caesar and Wally proceeds in fits, with conversations often consisting of missed cues and misunderstood gestures." (331f)

²⁷C.f. The "Unsichtbaren" create the Sigune scene. (*W* 56, 13-14) See discussion of the extrarational aspect below.

²⁸Vonhoff notes the mechanical movements, viewing them as part of the deconstruction of the classic love scene, but does not discuss the aspect of prearrangement. (89)

²⁹Vonhoff draws this out, noting the scene's subversive citation of stereotypical gestures of romantic love scenes, such as the male lying in supplication at the woman's feet, and meaningful looks replacing verbal exchange (88f).

the reflective capacity of a noble soul ("edle[n] Seele" *W* 33, 7), but as governed by "animal fear" and feelings of horror ("Schauer" *W* 33, 5). Of herself and indeed all women, Wally says:

Ich muß mich, ich muß die Frauen hassen ... [V]on Natur sind wir grausam, und zu den Gefühlen, welche wir zu äußern wohl unter Umständen fähig wären, haben wir ursprünglich nur die bloßen Anlagen. Glauben Sie es, Cäsar, die Frauen gedeihen nur durch die Männer. ... Ach, ich zittere oft vor einer Empfindungslosigkeit, die ich nicht zu heilen weiß. (*W* 32, 32-33, 8)

As well as insisting on women's "natural" cruelty, Wally in the above statement further deconstructs the model of normative femininity by challenging the notion that women nurture men in a love relationship. The analysis of Fichte's "Family Law" above has shown that Fichte devotes much time arguing that women's "natural" "urge" is that of selfless love, and that they teach men to love.³⁰ Wally's statement directly contradicts this.

Cäsar inquires as to the cause of women's later metamorphosis, and a second silence follows, one of wordless emotion with Cäsar at Wally's feet, astonished by the "Wahrheit, welche sich in Wallys Antlitz ausdrückte." (*W* 33, 10-11) However, when Wally finds words to break the silence, she rejects him.³¹ Cäsar is relieved by this, and his next words articulate their mutual inability to interact on the non-reflexive emotional level. The unexpected emotion has left him with "[n]ichts in seinem Herzen Vorbereitetes" (*W* 33, 9), revealing his inability to give free rein to emotion. The narrator states that Cäsar remains silent because "ihm jede Situation fatal war, in der er sich selbst nicht mehr hätte beobachten können" (*W* 33, 19-21). Wally finally breaks the silence, confirming the "Wahrheit" which had been expressed in her face by revealing that only the "Zauberrute" of love (*W* 33, 26) has the capacity to transform women into feeling and noble beings.³² Her

³⁰The civilising role of women in the marital sexual relationship is expressed unambiguously in Fichte's "Familienrecht:" "Liebe" is in men "eine erst durch Verbindung mit einem liebenden Weibe entwickelter Trieb" (I,§4,100). Women's transmission of civilisation in the private, familial sphere is a feature of late eighteenth century discourse on the social role of women.

³¹Although Geller correctly analyses Wally's and Cäsar's difficulties in communicating with each other, he also claims incorrectly that in the forest scene, "Silence betrays an incapacity or anxiety to articulate desire: "As long as they remained mute the two were able to share the happy emotion but when Wally began to grope for words she rejected him" (333).

³²The phallic image evoked by the term "Zauberrute" reinforces the sub-text of the forest scene, in which Wally subordinates herself to Cäsar through the sexual act, as required by the sexual contract.

assertion that the love of men acts as a civilising force which enables women to develop their emotions underlines her previous critique of normative ideas as expressed by Fichte about women's love acting as the catalyst which enables men to transcend their natural uncivilised state.

Cäsar's response to her confession is to assert their similarity to each other, and in doing so, to further underline the fact that Wally contradicts the model of ideal femininity which should act as a counterpoint to the masculine stereotype. Instead of describing her as an unreflective unified self that acts spontaneously for the greater moral good, Cäsar describes Wally as highly socialised and highly reflective: "Wir sind für die Illusion beide nicht gemacht. ... Jede Aufwallung, bei der wir nur einen Augenblick unsre Manieren nicht in der Hand hätten, würde uns lächerlich scheinen" (W 33, 28-33). On this basis he suggests that they come to a "kurze Übereinkunft" which could grant them the happiness they could not achieve through the usual modes of conduct, namely "Zurückhaltung, Scham, natürliches oder kokettes Wesen" (W 33, 35-36). When juxtaposed with Wally's previous description of women's 'unnatural' "natural" state, Cäsar's usage of "natürlich" here, signifying an incapacity to act naturally and without constraint, highlights the multivalent and often artificial meanings of this category. The text's and Wally's interrogation of the term continues in the prelude to the Sigune scene, in which the narrator describes Wally's decision to abandon the rules for socialised "natural" behaviour inculcated during her upbringing.

Wally's interrogation of normative categories and definitions of the feminine is not always apparent to scholars, as Herbert Kaiser's recent discussion of her inadequacies demonstrates.³³ Kaiser first finds that "Wally bleibt substanzlos, ohne Identität, die aus einer bildenden Vermittlung mit der Wirklichkeit kommen müßte."³⁴ However, he then argues that, "was man auf den ersten Blick für Naivität halten könnte - 'ihre Natürlichkeit; daß sie sich gibt, wie sie ist' ..., verweist aber nur auf ihre Naturferne und damit auf ihre Unwahrheit; denn Wally hat keine Beziehung zur Natur, 'sie ist ohne Schwärmerel' für sie, 'ohne Sinn für

³³Kaiser 189.

³⁴Kaiser 189.

Blumen'"³⁵ Here, Kaiser appears, with no semblance of irony, to assert the authoritative status of the normative criteria which state that the "truth" of woman and therefore women is her/their identity as/with nature. He continues as follows: "'Natürlichkeit' bezieht sich deshalb bei ihr ganz auf sich selbst, ist identisch mit ihrer Willkür, Spontaneität und Reflexionslosigkeit. ... Ihre subjektive Unmittelbarkeit, ihre naturferne, unnatürliche Natürlichkeit ist bloß der Ausdruck völliger gesellschaftlicher Vermitteltheit."³⁶ Kaiser quite rightly finds that Wally is constituted neither as nature, as she should be in terms of the ideal feminine stereotype, nor through the cultural medium of education, as men are. He finds further, that she is in fact constituted by cultural codes. In his assessment of these findings as attesting only her "Unwahrheit," his interpretation succumbs to a twofold failure. He fails, in the late twentieth century, to consider Wally's inquiry into these codes in her attempt to discover "who" she is, and thus also fails to understand the text's interrogation of the same over a century earlier, in the mid-nineteenth.

Having established a verbal framework for their further interaction, Cäsar gives way to emotion, again lying at Wally's feet, "wahrhaftig, ohne Bewußtsein, von einem ungeheuchelten Gefühle übermannt." (W 34, 2-3) His motivation is defined as "[n]icht die Liebe, sondern der Gedanke an eine Humanitätsfrage" (W 34, 3-4). This thought proves to be a generalised desire for the sexual liberation of his brothers and sisters, as well as the more specific wish that Wally free herself of her inhibitions:

O warum dies Gehäuse von Manieren, in welches du Spröde dich zurückziehst? Warum diese Verhüllung des Menschen in und an dir? Warum Zurückhaltung, du, mein Bruder, du, meine Schwester, da du doch gleichen Wesens mit mir bist, eine Hand wie ich zum Drucke, einen Mund wie ich zum Kusse hast? ... Diese unsichtbaren Barrieren, welche die Menschen trennen, welche auch den Jüngling vom Mädchen trennen, müssen fallen Weib, in deinen Augen, in den Formen deines Körpers bist du überreif zur Liebe; und wenn ich dich heut zum ersten Male sähe, so pflückt' ich dich, denn wir sind die Kinder eines und denselben Planeten, ich Mensch wie du, beide alternd, beide den Tod fürchtend, beide elend. Was weichst du mir aus? (W 34, 8-30)

Significantly, these are not Cäsar's precise words; rather, the narrator remarks that Cäsar had *almost* spoken to Wally in this manner.

³⁵Kaiser 189.

³⁶Kaiser 189.

The complete suppression of Cäsar's voice from the moment he proposes the "kurze Übereinkunft" which articulates the "Gedanke an eine Humanitätsfrage," represents on the one hand the "Parteinahme" of the authorial narrator,³⁷ and protects Cäsar's privacy with respect to the most intimate aspect of heterosexual relationships. On the other hand Wally's thoughts and feelings are laid bare. The narrator's assertion of his authority in this way draws attention to the partiality of the narrative perspective at this point, a partiality which is again on display in the Sigune scene.

Wally is overwhelmed emotionally by Cäsar's appeal, dissolving into tears and feeling the joy of being a "Mensch," a human being instead of a woman: "Sie zitterte bei dieser echt philanthropischen Vorstellung, welche, wenn sie allgemein würde, die Welt durchaus umgestalten und ihre Fragen im Nu lösen müßte." (W 34, 33-36) She allows Cäsar's "Umarmung" (W 34, 36) and the hot kisses he presses on her lips, not out of "love, egotism, or pride at having conquered a man," "sondern," as the narrator tells us, "weil sie sich als das schwache Glied der großen Wesenskette fühlte, die Gott erschaffen hat, weil sie wußte, daß sie ja vor der Wahrheit der Natur ganz nackt und bloß und mitleidswürdig war, weil sie zuletzt glaubte, daß diese heißen Küsse, welche Cäsar auf ihre Lippen drückte, allen Millionen gälten unterm Sternenzelt." (W 34, 37-35, 7)³⁸ Although Cäsar's speech inspires Wally to think of herself as having transcended her sex and become men's equal through their common humanity, she can acquiesce to his physical attentions only by negating her individual selfhood.

The brief moment of apparent transcendence Wally thinks she achieves is undercut as she is, on the one hand, imbued with the knowledge of her insignificance and powerlessness before the truth of nature, and, on the other, figures herself as standing in proxy for the citizens of the world. The agreement she enters into thinking she can transcend her status as a woman to become a "Mensch" and part of humankind is thus predicated on her negation as an autonomous being and on a sexual surrender to Cäsar. Vonhoff's description of Cäsar's proposal as a

³⁷Vonhoff 90.

³⁸Sammons (157 fn. 35) and Joeres (119 fn. 36) note the reference to Schiller's "an die Freude." Sammons states it is parodic, but does not analyse its function.

"bildungsbürgerlich ausgedrückte[s] Begehren als Emanzipationsmöglichkeit" couched in the rhetoric of a "klassische[n] Humanitätsidee" involves Wally acting as the passive vehicle for Cäsar's sexual activity, and the surrender of her self to the proposed universal good.³⁹ Cäsar's proposal in fact proves closer to the Christian concept of the insignificance of the individual before God's creation. Moreover, it stresses the importance of self-abnegation exclusively with regard to the female individual. Thus in this sense Cäsar's 'radical' proposal conforms precisely to the requirements of the sexual contract.

The narrator valorises Cäsar's attempt at the abstract universalisation of his feelings, claiming its superiority to the egotistical sexual love of a Romeo and Juliet. He describes the scene as a "lie," but one born of the "Zerrissenheit" (W 35, 9) of the time, and thus truer than the truth of the latter couple. His description of the scene as an "Übereinkunft der Liebe" (W 35, 18), in a recapitulation and extension of Cäsar's description ("kurze Übereinkunft" W 33, 33), emphasises that the love of Romeo and Juliet is not relevant in the present era.⁴⁰ According to the narrator, the scene demonstrates that the divided self is incapable of experiencing love except at one remove: in these passages it continually observes itself, and converts spontaneous emotional effusions into a "love agreement." However, like the marriage contract, Cäsar's "love agreement," as presented by the narrator, relies on the suppression and subjugation of female individuality. In other words, although the divided self of both genders may experience difficulty in behaving naturally and engaging emotionally in a love relationship, the alternative proposed by the male divided self and validated in the context of these passages is predicated on the subjugation and suppression of the female individual.

Vonhoff views the scene as expressing Cäsar's desire to initiate change, but as confirming that "die Betroffenen nicht aus ihren jeweiligen, gesellschaftlich vorgegebenen Verhaltensmustern herauszufinden vermögen."⁴¹ He argues that *Wally* scholarship has failed to recognise "den emanzipatorischen Gehalt" of Cäsar's proposal, and has thus failed to see "wie mit Metaphern, Anspielungen und Zitaten der Klassik einer 'Körperlichkeit' das Wort

³⁹Both quotations Vonhoff 90.

⁴⁰C.f. Vonhoff 90. Vonhoff here also draws attention to Herbert Kaiser's literal reading of this comment and thus his misreading of the comment in the context of the text. See Kaiser (191).

⁴¹Vonhoff 88f.

geredet wird, von der durchaus revolutionäre Wirkungen erwartet werden."⁴² To substantiate this latter claim about the revolutionary implications of Cäsar's suggestion, Vonhoff cites Wally's response, her shivering at the prospect of this genuinely philanthropical idea (W 34, 33-36). He finds that although the emancipatory potential of the scene cannot be realised by the two participants, it nevertheless represents a significant challenge to the conventional conduct of sexual relationships.

My analysis of the two faces of the gendered sexual moral code governing bourgeois sexual practice has shown that the problem is precisely the fact that while Wally accedes to Cäsar's request and indeed deems it to be revolutionary, Cäsar's revolutionary agency would also be required in order to effect change. While Wally transgresses the boundaries of the socially acceptable, Cäsar can still choose whether he wishes to be truly revolutionary or whether he wishes to retreat back into the conventional mode of behaviour. His actions after the forest scene confirm that he does the latter, as indeed does the narrator's immediate post mortem of the scene.

Vonhoff argues that the scene is caught within a paradigm shift, in a time of "*nicht mehr*" and "*noch nicht*" [original emphasis, MV] in which social conditions do not allow the spontaneous realisation of the self through sexual fulfilment without the "Lüge der Sublimierung."⁴³ This is certainly true in the sense that the desire for the dissolution of barriers expressed in the scene identifies a major problem in the conduct of sexual relationships between women and men, a problem substantiated by the scene's and the novel's failure to provide any realisation of a viable alternative. In this light, the basis for Vonhoff's further claim is unclear when he states that "keine rückwärts gewandte Utopie findet damit ihren Ausdruck, sondern das Bekenntnis zur Geschichtlichkeit, und das heißt zur Zukunft."⁴⁴ It is not clear what the forward-looking utopia implied here would actually entail. The forest scene focusses exclusively on Wally's sexual availability, with the implication that women must change in order to effect change in the conduct of sexual relationships.⁴⁵

⁴²Vonhoff 90.

⁴³Vonhoff 90.

⁴⁴Vonhoff 90.

⁴⁵C.f. In the "Vorrede" Gutkow also states that women must change, but also concedes that

On the evidence of the text, the alleged "new corporeality" visualised in this scene in fact remains trapped within traditional structures defining the conduct of relationships between women and men: it is Cäsar who wishes to pluck Wally's ripe beauty. The barriers fall temporarily, and Cäsar's wish for a spontaneous consummation of sexual desire is juxtaposed to Wally's experience of a transcendence which attests to the nullity of her existence. The narrator's post-mortem of the scene refers to it as an "Übereinkunft der Liebe" (*W* 35, 18) which has left its trace; on Wally "der melancholische Schatten jener entzückenden Verirrung" (*W* 35, 22-23), and on Cäsar "die Resignation und Selbstzufriedenheit, welche selbst blasierte Charaktere und verwitternde Natürlichkeiten ergreifen kann, wenn der immer durstige Becher ihrer Wünsche einmal voll ist bis an den Rand der Erfüllung." (*W* 35, 23-27) According to the narrator the two have come as close to an admission of love as possible, and Cäsar's desire appears fulfilled, albeit only momentarily. He judges Wally's feelings to be mistaken, thus confirming that Cäsar's 'radical' request in this scene was limited to persuading her to participate in an act of "freie Liebe."⁴⁶

In light of conflicting interpretations of the scene in the last twenty or thirty years it is perhaps necessary to emphasise that the text, by referring to Cäsar's and Wally's sexual activity with the term "Umarmung," deploys a word whose ambiguity is as explicit a signal as Gutzkow could make at the time, that Wally and Cäsar consummate their relationship sexually. This word is also used by Schlegel in *Lucinde*, and others in the period, to refer to sexual intercourse.⁴⁷ More recent Wally scholarship has tended to resist this

sexually active women lose their reputation (Gutzkow, *Vorrede* xxxiif). The narrative working through of this statement in *Wally* is a more subtle demonstration of the negative consequences for a woman who attempts to change sexual mores by becoming sexually involved. The "Vorrede" locates *Wally* within the genealogy of scandalous texts beginning with Schlegel's *Lucinde* and continuing with Schleiermacher's *Vertraute Briefe* and Gutzkow's "Vorrede."

⁴⁶According to Royen the forest scene unequivocally promotes "freie Liebe." "Die Auffassung der Liebe im Jungen Deutschland," diss., Westfälische Wilhelms-U zu Münster i. Westfalen, 1926, 58).

⁴⁷C.f. "wir umarmten uns mit eben so viel Ausgelassenheit als Religion." Friedrich Schlegel, *Lucinde*, ed. and intro., Hans Eichner, *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe* ed., Ernst Behler together with Jean-Jacques Anstett and Hans Eichner, V, i, 1-92, (München: Schöningh, 1962), 8.

Grimm provides examples for all the following senses of the word, i.e. "als ausdrück der liebe, freundschaft, dankbarkeit, freude o.ä. von mensch zu mensch." These include the following more explicitly sexual references by Gutzkow's contemporaries Büchner ("die

Interpretation,⁴⁸ viewing the scene as a relatively innocent declaration of love, or even a proposal of marriage or an engagement.⁴⁹ However, Gutzkow's detractors made much of the ambiguity of the embrace in the forest scene, as Gustav Bacherer's interpretation demonstrates. Bacherer discusses Cäsar's plea for the abolition of barriers as follows:

So sprachen Sie unter anderem, Herr Gutzkow! Und nachdem Sie so gesprochen hatten, geschah es, daß Wally Ihnen nicht auswich ... denn sie fühlte das Entzücken, "statt eines Weibes Mensch zu seyn." Und es geschah sogar weiter, daß sie Ihre cäsarischen Umarmungen zuließ, Herr Gutzkow, und zwar nicht weil sie Sie - sondern das Fleisch und Blut im Allgemeinen herzlich lieb hatte. Und somit war der Bund zweier schönen Seelen geschlossen; ein Akt vorsündfluthlicher Liebe zwischen Fräulein Wally und Herrn Cäsar ward nach wenigen Minuten vollendet.⁵⁰

The general scholarly misinterpretation of the probably fleshly nature of the "Umarmung," and the failure to acknowledge at least the ambiguity of the formulation, has resulted in a concomitant failure to consider the implications for the plot if one reads the forest scene as representing the consummation of Wally's and Cäsar's relationship. The scholarship, like the

freiheit wird die schwächlinge, welche ihren mächtigen schosz befruchten wollten, in ihren umarmungen ersticken") and Laube ("der arzt kündigte ihr an, dasz eine fernere umarmung ihres gemahls den tod für sie zu folge haben würde"). (*Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm*, Leipzig: Hirzel, 1889, München: dtv, 1984, vol. 23, 809.

⁴⁸This is not the case for Rippmann (119f) and Vonhoff (89), and in Royen's 1926 study (58).

⁴⁹Sammons, who views Wally's and Cäsar's relationship as "technically chaste," terms it a "quite strangely organised" love scene (41, 42); Blackwell sees it as a "marriage proposal" performed through the re-enactment of "the sentimental tableau of union of two souls" (241). Zeller reads the "Umarmung" as a hug, and thus finds the scene "reichlich harmlos" (210). She asserts that in a conventional novel it would be interpreted as an engagement scene. This is despite her citation of a passage from Bacherer's attack on Gutzkow which emphasises the sexual nature of the embrace (210f). (See discussion of Bacherer's *Vademecum* below).

⁵⁰Gustav Bacherer, "Vademecum für Hrrn. Carl Gutzkow und in gewisser Beziehung, für das gesammte deutsche Publikum," (Stuttgart: Hallberger, 1835, Estermann I, 135-149, 139). Bacherer's reading of Wally conflates Cäsar and Gutzkow, and refers suggestively to Gutzkow's "jung-literarisches Verhältnis zu Fräulein Wally" and the latter's stay in Schwalbach with "Wally," presumably the (married) actress Charlotte Birch-Pfeiffer (139). Joeres establishes that Gutzkow and Birch-Pfeiffer were in Schwalbach together at the same time in the summer of 1835 (Joeres, Introduction 1974, 118, fn.24; 119, fn. 29). Numerous letters held by the Gutzkow archive attached to the Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek in Frankfurt attest to their close relationship while he was engaged to Rosalie, as a letter from Gutzkow to Birch-Pfeiffer from 13 January 1834 shows. Gutzkow assesses their recent meeting in Berlin against an earlier stage in their relationship in Munich, in which they "bei dem Nächsten, dem Sinnlichen, dem Persönlichen das vergessen hätten, was diesem und wohl gar kompromittierenden Verhältnis Wahres und Haltbares zu Grunde liegen konnte!" He states that at that time many things prevented him from calling her "meine theuerste Freundin. Denn einmal hätte meine Zärtlichkeit mit einer Anmaßung, welche die Rechtehres Mannes kränkte, können verwechselt werden; sodann mußte sich damals alles das vorbereiten, was jetzt erst zum Ausbruch gekommen" (Brief 34/13, Blatt 134).

censors and the Mannheim court,⁵¹ has focussed instead on the transgressive aspects and the nature of the sexual exchange in the Sigune scene.⁵² An admission that the forest scene might involve sexual consummation has implications for the question of Wally's virginity, for the status of the Sigune scene, and thus for the narrative as a whole. If Wally's and Cäsar's relationship is consummated sexually before the Sigune scene, then this scene can only be 'anti-climactic' in both a literal and literary sense.

Cäsar's proposal for a primordial consummation of sexual desire in the forest, outside the boundaries of civilisation and its trappings, and also outside institutionalised marriage, was viewed with irony by contemporaries such as Bacherer, whose statement above identifies Wally's and Cäsar's "Umarmung" as "ein Akt vorsündfluthlicher Liebe." However, it is useful in the present context to compare Cäsar's proposal with the mythic concept of hierogamic union. This also takes place in the open, and is always invested with a significance that transcends the two human individuals. Hierogamous sexual union, according to Hinz, is "symbolic of the individuals' entrance into a communal order."⁵³ Hierogamy reestablishes the individual's "connection with the cosmos, while what it does for the cosmos is to regenerate its vitality."⁵⁴ Hinz emphasises that the hierogamous union of a human couple "is not for the sake of the human couple but for the sake of the cosmos," and "what is for the sake of the partners is the feeling of consonance with the cosmos that hierogamy effects."⁵⁵ The aim of hierogamy between human individuals is "*cosmogony*, the regeneration or rebirth of the cosmos. This is the reason why ... hierogamous unions typically occur in the open - in fields, in the woods - in the immediate proximity of nature. It is less a matter of getting 'back to nature' than a matter of getting nature to come back."⁵⁶ "[Hierogamy] demands ... that one

⁵¹The prosecution focussed on passages from the Sigune scene and its prelude, and Cäsar's "Confessions." C.f. Dr. H[einrich] E[berhard] G[ottlob] Paulus, ed., *Des Großherzoglichen Badischen Hofgerichts zu Mannheim vollständig motiviertes Urteil über die in dem Roman: Wally, die Zweiflerin, angeklagten Preßvergehen nebst zwei rechtfertigenden Beilagen und dem Epilog des Herausgebers: Aktenstücke und Bemerkungen* (Heidelberg: Groos, 1836) 4 - 12.

⁵²See discussion below.

⁵³Hinz 904.

⁵⁴Hinz 910.

⁵⁵Hinz 910.

⁵⁶Hinz 909.

abandon one's connections with history, or, more dramatically, that one attempt to reverse the process of civilization and abolish profane time."⁵⁷

However, Wally's and Cäsar's "Umarmung" does not enable the participants to transcend their time or status or to effect change. Through Cäsar's ambivalence towards Wally, which is supported by the narrator, their union questions the rules of hierogamy. The concept of hierogamy, or sacred marriage thus acts as a foil to the "Übereinkunft der Liebe" between Wally and Cäsar in the woods, emphasising that their union does not arise spontaneously or from love but is a rational choice, at least on Cäsar's part.

Although Wally feels "consonance with the cosmos," this is undercut by the narrator's parodic reference to Schiller's "An die Freude." It is apparent that the "Zauberrute" (W 33, 26) of Cäsar's love only temporarily engenders in Wally a sense of oneness with the universe, and by extension, with nature. It enables her to think she has transcended her previous, divided self, and by analogy, to have entered the realm of the feminine and nature. Wally's sense of transcendence is not accompanied by a similar experience on Cäsar's part: his perspective on the scene is not given, nor does the narrator indicate that something of that kind might have taken place. Instead, the latter's post-mortem of the scene implies that Cäsar's thirst, and thus his desire, is likely to resurge. Although Cäsar says to Wally that he wishes to break down those invisible barriers separating people, which would correspond to the "breaking down of elemental barriers" in "the mythic narrative" of hierogamy,⁵⁸ the forest scene does not serve to deepen their relationship. Even though their union bears the hallmarks of hierogamy, the two fail to transcend their isolation as individuals to achieve union on the interpersonal level. This failure is typical for their inability to constitute the self through the other in a love relationship.⁵⁹ Nature cannot "come back" through the "love agreement" these two achieve as a couple.

⁵⁷Hinz 908.

⁵⁸Hinz 907.

⁵⁹Herbert Kaiser makes a similar point, although his reasoning is different: "Beide sind zur Liebe als einem dialektischen Gefühl, zur Begründung des Ich durch den anderen, unfähig - er, weil er egoistisch mit ihr spielt, sie, weil sie die Liebe zu einem anthropologischen Problem, einer religionsphilosophischen Gattungsfrage macht (was zur Konstruktion ihrer "pflanzenartigen Bewußtlosigkeit" nicht paßt ...). Da sie sich in ihrer Identitätslosigkeit, ihrer völligen Vermitteltheit nicht einfach lieben können, treffen sie eine "Übereinkunft der

The narrator emphasises Cäsar's ambivalent feelings for Wally ("Es ist möglich, daß Cäsar Wally liebte, wenigstens war sie ihm eine Vertraute geworden" *W* 48, 15-16) and his intentions: "Er hätte sie vielleicht einem anderen abtreten können; aber von ihr sich trennen, das konnte er nicht. Und doch! Vielleicht! Wir sind Scharlatane, wir können alles!" (*W* 48, 16-19) This multi layered ambivalence underlines the lack of any sense of progression or ultimate goal in Cäsar's conceptualisation of the relationship. The narrator's description of problems faced by Cäsar and his generation in the opening scene of the novel appears to be as apt for his practice on the field of love as on that of politics, at least with respect to the creation of a new kind of sexual relationship.⁶⁰ The relationship remains in stasis until Wally announces to Cäsar that she is to marry Luigi.

II.1.iii.b. Prelude to marriage.

Wally's decision to marry Luigi arises from her perception that Cäsar will not marry her. This point that has not been discussed in previous *Wally* scholarship. This is explicitly stated when Wally arrives in Paris after the Sigune scene and her marriage. She finds she can breathe again, and expresses relief that she is no longer subject to Cäsar's whims and no longer in a situation which was counterproductive to her well-being:

Sie war froh, sich von einer ganz verfehlten Stellung befreit zu sehen. ... [S]icher war sie jetzt vor den Zumutungen der Genialität, vor dem verwirrenden Benehmen Cäsars, vor Männern, welche zu poetisch sind, um ganz nach der Mode, und zu modisch, um ganz nach der Poesie zu leben. (*W* 57, 30-58, 1)

Liebe:" sie wollen sich nicht als Individuen, sondern als "Menschen" lieben." (191)

⁶⁰C.f. quotation and discussion above: "Unglückliche Jugend! Das Feld der Tätigkeit ist dir verschlossen, im Strome der Begebenheiten kann deine wissensmatte Seele nicht wieder neu geboren werden; du kannst nur lächeln, seufzen, spotten, und die Frauen, wenn du liebst, unglücklich machen!" (*W* 6, 27-32)

⁶⁰In contrast to Wally, Cäsar is presented as a fully-formed, mature individual, his education complete. Significantly, he is also presented as without opportunity and incapable of transcending his present state ("Das Feld der Tätigkeit ist dir verschlossen" *W* 6, 27-28), and as somebody dangerous to women ("du kannst nur lächeln, seufzen, spotten und die Frauen, wenn du liebst, unglücklich machen." *W* 6, 30-32) Vonhoff identifies Cäsar as a bürgerlich denkender Intellektueller von adliger Abstammung", a radical thinker but resigned to scepticism, as he is not exposed to the precarious existence of a member of the bourgeois "Bildungsproletariat" of the epoch (390 fn. 228).

The narrator here confirms that Cäsar has no inclination to carry his radical ideas to their logical conclusion, and indicates that Wally had found the relationship oppressive. However, she cannot withstand his mephistophelic charms other than by marriage to another.⁶¹

In this light, and even though there is no doubt Wally is not sexually attracted to Luigi, her increasing feelings of oppression before her marriage perhaps have a more complex origin.⁶² These feelings occur after Cäsar has requested that she enact the Sigune scene. While her immediate reaction was to leave the room immediately (*W* 52, 35-37), his request and her reaction continue to prey on her mind. She uses the image of an invisible net (*W* 53, 20-23) to evoke suffocation (*W* 53, 28-32),⁶³ and she is likened to Goethe's Gretchen, opening all the windows and doors, "da Mephistopheles Im Zimmer es so schwül gemacht hatte." (*W* 53, 26-27) Immediately after the reference to Mephistopheles, the narrator reiterates the reference to suffocation, this time with the image of the bell-jar and a reference to Cäsar's request that she enact the Sigune scene:

Noch größer aber war die Unruhe in Ihrem Innern. Sie brauchte gern physikalische Gleichnisse und verglich sich mit dem Gefühl eines lebenden Wesens, das man in die Glocke einer Luftpumpe setzt; mit dem Vogel, dem es von innen und außen bei entzogener Luft wehrt. Ach, sie konnte Cäsar nicht vergessen: sie konnte jene begeisterte Miene des Freundes nicht vergessen ..., als sie einige aus seinen Lippen schleichende Worte mit so pedantischer, altkluger Entrüstung aufnahm. (*W* 53, 28-54, 5)

Given the earlier linking of Cäsar with the demonic, the reference to Mephistopheles in the passage directly preceding the above excerpt (*W* 53, 26-27) strongly suggests that Cäsar is as likely a source for Wally's state of mental dis-ease as Luigi. In the course of the narrative it becomes clear that both men oppress her, Luigi because she finds him revolting, and Cäsar because he only wants a relationship without commitment.

⁶¹C.f. the linking of Cäsar to the demonic (*W* 24, 3-5).

⁶²Geller notes Wally's feelings of suffocation just before her wedding "that is, her entry into the religiously sanctioned gender relationship" (323); Massey refers to Wally as "[t]he woman in this bell-jar" (49); and Vonhoff asserts that "der Druck, welcher auf Wally lastet, (wird) im Roman deutlich genug benannt ..." (91).

⁶³Marianne Hirsch discusses the description by Goethe's "schöne Seele" of her engagement to Narcissus "as a 'bell jar which locked me into an airless room.'" Commenting that "his name is no accident," Hirsch emphasises that "marriage, for women, involves total involvement with another and self-destruction" ("*Spiritual Bildung: The Beautiful Soul as Paradigm*," Abel, Hirsch, Langland 23-48, 30).

II.1.III.c. Cäsar's request.

The scene in which Cäsar tells Wally the Sigune story and requests her to enact it is erotically charged: Wally receives him wearing a "schwärmerisches schwarzes Kleid," and appears to want nothing but his forgiveness for her precipitate decision to marry (W 51, 4 - 5). As always, their conversation functions as a barrier to communication, and they speak only, "um den Erklärungen, die sie sich machen wollten, zu entgehen." (W 51, 10-11) The narrator emphasises the degree to which Cäsar's vanity determines his interpretation of the scene: "Cäsar mochte in seiner Eitelkeit übertreiben; Wallys Bescheidenheit lag wohl nur darin, daß sie glaubte, Cäsar um Verzeihung bitten zu müssen. *Alles übrige aber dichtete seine Phantasie hinzu.* [emphasis added MV]." (W 51, 11-15) Wally is subject to her own illusion as she offers Cäsar her entire body as a pillow, and "hielt ihn umschlungen, während sie unwillig glaubte, daß er es täte" (W 51, 26-27). The narrator's description of both as being subject to illusion in their interpretation of events provides a key to understanding the events of the Sigune scene, as I shall demonstrate.

In making his request to Wally, Cäsar explicitly relinquishes all material claims to her person such as are guaranteed by the marriage and sexual contract. He states he does not insist on possession of Wally's "göttlichen Leib[es], dessen Seele mich stets umhauchen wird." (W 52, 6) His paraphrase of Titurel's words presents the reenactment as symbolising the nature of their relationship for "eternity," but places greater emphasis on the aspect of farewell in the original story (W 50, 37-53, 17). In Cäsar's words Titurel asks, "daß Sigune, um durch ihre Schönheit ihn gleichsam fest zu machen, wie der magische Ausdruck der alten Zeit ist, um ihm einen Anblick zu hinterlassen, der Wunder wirkte in seiner Tapferkeit und Ausdauer - daß Sigune - in vollkommener Nacktheit zum vielleicht - ewigen Abschiede sich ihm zeigen möge." (W 52, 29-34)

Wally's initial response to Cäsar's request is to emphasise the implications, in terms of "Gesetze der Moral und des Herkommens," (W 54, 16) and thus of the sexual contract, of presenting herself naked. This gives way to her decision to acknowledge poetry as the higher authority, and dismiss the "Ideal[e] des Naturschönen" (W 54, 29) promoted by "all ihr[e]

schön[e] Grundsätze[n] und d[ie] Lehren, die sie ihrer Erziehung, ja selbst ihrer vernünftigen Überlegungen verdankte" (W 54, 26-28). She decides to constitute herself as art rather than nature, and according to the script proposed by Cäsar (W 54, 24-36). Wally's desire to constitute and thus objectify herself as art occurs after she has failed to constitute herself convincingly as nature, either through her socialisation or through the union with Cäsar in the forest scene.

In this, as in Wally's previous accession to Cäsar's proposals, her aim is to maintain a relationship with him, as her focus in her reading of "Der jüngere Titurel" demonstrates: "[S]ie kostete die Unschuld, die in dem Verlöbniß der beiden Liebenden des Gedichtes lag, immer tiefer" (W 54, 22-24). In her view the notion of chastity and the symbolic engagement of the couple not only attests to the primordial innocence of true love, but forges a permanent bond. Wally accedes to Cäsar's second request as she does to his first, by focussing on its poetic significance and placing it outside the framework of bourgeois social moral convention. She thus interprets the scene as a pledge of eternal commitment, while the emphasis of his interpretation was on its finality. As a result the Sigune scene represents two different kinds of closure, with different implications for each participant. Wally surrenders herself to Cäsar in a manner proscribed by the sexual morality of their society and in a doubly transgressive act. Not only does she reveal herself naked to a man outside wedlock, but she does so on her wedding night and in her bedchamber in the rooms of the man who is to be her husband.⁶⁴

II.1.III.d. The Sigune scene.

The Sigune scene is far removed from the natural setting of the forest scene. It is also far from being "nichts anderes als eine modifizierte Wiederholung der Waldepisode," as Vonhoff claims.⁶⁵ According to Vonhoff, Cäsar in this scene attempts to overcome "die repressiven sexuellen Normen, welche die bürgerliche Prüderie, aber inzwischen ebenso die adlige

⁶⁴This desecration of the marital bedchamber was a focal point of the enraged contemporary reaction and featured in the Mannheim court case. See Houben (*Sturm* 507f).

⁶⁵Vonhoff 92.

Koketterie bestimmen, im poetischen Anspielungshorizont"⁶⁶ Although Cäsar's rhetoric and Wally's interpretation emphasise this aspect of the request, the subtextual level of the narrative attests to the fact that the scene operates on the social as well as the poetic level. On the latter level, it represents the symbolic closure of relationship on Cäsar's part, and love and confirmation of continuing desire on Wally's.

A fundamental aspect of the scene is that it is described as staged in the manner of the "tableaux vivants," in which the female body is presented to the gaze. In such representations the woman produces herself or is produced according to pre-given images, and this production is in turn re-produced and interpreted through the gaze or male commentary.⁶⁷ Hoff and Meise describe the process as focussing on the female body, which presented a blank surface⁶⁸ to be inscribed during the performance: the actual body of the performer disappears in this process and is replaced by the inscription. This inscription is the pose, which is grounded materially by clothing, or drapery. Hoff and Meise extrapolate from early-nineteenth-century commentators such as Diderot that this art form considers the body to be a direct conduit to the soul: the external appearance or "outside" of the represented female ostensibly corresponds to the reality of the being, or the "inside."⁶⁹ In other words, appearance is reality, and the representations thus supposedly offer unmediated access to the soul, or innermost being of the woman represented. Such performances were all explicitly theatrical, in that use was made of props adding iconographic significance to the representation.⁷⁰ In the Sigune scene Wally's 'performance' similarly exposes her innermost being to Cäsar.

⁶⁶Vonhoff 92. Vonhoff considers that Wally finally realises "das bildungsbürgerlich ausgedrückte Begehren als Emanzipationsmöglichkeit." (93) Accordingly, he argues that "ganz analog zur Verwendung der klassischen Humanitätsidee in der Waldepisode ist der Rückgriff auf den Sigunenstoff ... als eine historische Möglichkeit für die betroffenen Figuren zu begreifen, sich im Medium der Literatur über das Tabuisierte erst einmal klar zu werden, Sinnlichkeit als das eigene Interesse zu begreifen und auszudrücken." (93) The present reading shows that the text demonstrates that this is illusory, both because of who Cäsar is, and also because the socio-cultural reality of Wally's time does not allow her emancipation in this way.

⁶⁷Hoff and Meise 79.

⁶⁸Hoff and Meise 71.

⁶⁹Hoff and Meise 75f.

⁷⁰Hoff and Meise 70f.

In this performance, Wally/Sigune, framed by ivy and vines, appears at the same time as a painting and a page of illuminated text,⁷¹ "ein Gemälde im alten Stil, zart, lieblich wie die saubern Farbengruppen, welche sich auf dem sammetweichen Pergamente goldener Gebetbücher des Mittelalters finden." (W 56, 14-17) Naked and presenting a visual allusion to the *venus pudica*, she is:

ein Bild von bezaubernder Schönheit: Sigune, die schamhafter ihren nackten Leib enthüllt, als ihn die Venus der Medicis zu bedecken sucht. ... Sie steht ganz nackt ... Und zum Zeichen, daß eine fromme Weihe die ganze Üppigkeit dieser Situation heilige, blühen nirgends Rosen, sondern eine hohe Lilie sproßt dicht an dem Leibe Sigunens hervor und deckt symbolisch, als Blume der Keuschheit, an ihr die noch verschlossene Knospe ihrer Weiblichkeit." (W 56, 34-57, 11)

The potentially transgressive sexual nakedness of the Medici Venus is transformed into a nakedness proclaiming chaste sexuality,⁷² a chastity reinforced by means of the ambiguously coded lily, flower of death as well as chastity.⁷³ In a process already foreshadowed by the juxtaposition of the references to the Medici Venus and to the illustrated prayer books of the Middle Ages at the beginning of the passage, Wally/ Sigune becomes a christianised version of Aphrodite, a figure whose beauty she is proclaimed as exceeding in the opening scene of the novel,⁷⁴ and whose sexuality, now in service of chastity, is without power (or inclination) to seduce and bewitch. Moreover, the tall lily links this chaste virginal sexuality of the configuration Wally/ Sigune/ Venus Aphrodite with sterility and death, and permitting no engendering of new life.

⁷¹It is safe to assume that the Sigune scene does not have its pictorial source in the Heidelberg manuscripts, but in Gutzkow's phantasy. Gutzkow reports that he copied half of the first printed manuscript, held in Heidelberg, of Albrechts von Scharfenberg's "Der jüngere Tituel." ("Literatur-Blatt" Nr. 71, 11.7.1832, S. 283b-284b, Helntz, 198f, fn. 52,14) Neither of the Heidelberg manuscripts of Albrecht's "Der jüngere Tituel" (i.e. Cpg 383 (B) and Cpg 141 (E)) has illuminated miniatures. (Peter Jörg Becker, *Handschriften und Frühdrucke mittelhochdeutscher Epen*, Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1977, 122, 128)

⁷²Warner refers to "the intertwining of classical and Christian ideas about virtue and nakedness after the Middle Ages which was evident in representations of the "allegorical, nude figure" of Truth, "invented in the fifteenth century", stating these are an intensification of the way in which "earlier Christian meanings attached to nakedness inform the complex transformations of Venus in Renaissance painting. (Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form*, London: Picador, 1985, 314) Warner further discusses representations of the naked Venus in Renaissance paintings, particularly in Botticelli's "Birth of Venus" and his usage of a figure similar to the *Venus pudica* of the latter painting in the "Calumny of Apelles" as the figure of Truth. (316f)

⁷³Geller 336, fn. 221.

⁷⁴"Wally, ein Bild, das die Schönheit Aphroditens übertraf ..." (W, 5, 4-5)

The constitution of the figure of Cäsar/ Tschionatulander is even more complex, and leads to fundamental questions about the relationship between Cäsar and the narrator, and thus the status of the narrator's narrative as representation. Closer examination reveals that it is not possible to ascertain Wally's precise contribution to the scene, as it is a mediation delivered by the narrator, who, in a manner similar to the forest scene, again occludes Wally's perspective by presenting the scene through Cäsar's eyes.

As in the forest scene, in which neither the precise words of Cäsar's proposal to Wally are given, nor his response within the scene itself, the narrator again shows his partiality, acting to censor aspects of the Sigune scene. This becomes apparent on examination of the three references made to Tschionatulander in the course of the passage. Tschionatulander is first described as a shadowed participant in the picture, accompanied by his faithful dog: "Zur Rechten des Bilds aber im Schatten steht Tschionatulander im goldenen, an der Sonne funkelnden Harnisch, Helm, Schild und Bogen ruhen auf der Erde. Der Mantel gleitet von des jungen Helden Schulter, seine Locken wallen üppig, wie von einem Westhauch gehoben." (W 56, 27-32) Further on, the narrator writes: "Alles ist ein Hauch an dem Auge, ein stummer Moment, selbst im dem klugen Auge des Hundes, der die Bewegungen verfolgt, welche der Blick seines Herrn macht." (W 57, 11-34) Once the "Gemälde" is transformed into a diptych, its status becomes even less clear. As Cäsar sees the ambassador enter the room, the "Gemälde" becomes "ein Tropfen, der in den Dampf einer Phantasmagorie fällt und sie in Nichts auflöst," the curtains drop and "Tschionatulander wankte nach Hause" (W 56, 18-21). Cäsar is Tschionatulander, and just as clearly, the narrative here reveals an identification with events as they take place in Cäsar's imaginary, coinciding with Cäsar's view-point and his gaze, a reading supported most strongly by the fact that it is termed a "Phantasmagorie."⁷⁵ Here, as in the forest scene, the narrator privileges a certain reading of events, and his identification with Cäsar's perspective results in the silencing of Wally, completing the process of objectification already inherent in the practice of the "tableaux vivants."

⁷⁵In addition, there is only a single reference in the text to Cäsar owning a dog: there is no mention of "Tschionatulander" being accompanied by a dog as he lurches away.

The discussion of the request scene above has shown that the narrator has already alluded to Cäsar's capacity for investing a scene with additional elements, indicating a predisposition to enrich scenes from real life according to his whim.⁷⁶ From this perspective it is also possible to argue that the vision of Lulgi entering the room in fact only exists in Cäsar's imagination, and is part of the "Phantasmagorie" of the whole. This also means that despite assertions in the scholarship that Wally "lässt einen Vorhang malen in dem Stil, wie sich das 19. Jahrhundert das Mittelalter vorstellt"⁷⁷ or that she stages the entire scene herself as described,⁷⁸ the narrator's removal of certainty about what actually occurs means that the reader does not know exactly how Wally has staged her self-representation. The Sigune scene largely excludes the woman's viewpoint, her voice, and her person. The text further supports this uncertainty with the following words which introduce it: "Und an [sic] Wallys Hochzeitstage zeichneten die Unsichtbaren ein reizendes Gemälde" (W 56, 13-14)

A further relevant detail in this context is the multivalent figure of the phoenix which presides over the scene ("Oben schwebt der Vogel Phönix, der fußlose Erzeuger seiner selbst" (W 56, 22-24)). Functioning as an obvious allusion to Gutzkow's editorship of the literary supplement of the journal *Phönix*,⁷⁹ it is also a symbol of self-regeneration. In the writings of the Church Fathers the phoenix is defined by its "sexlessness and its absolute uninvolvedness with carnal procreation."⁸⁰ It is "cited as a parallel in nature for the mystery of the Incarnation as a symbol of the virgin, and as a figure of spiritual perfection."⁸¹ Further, "in bestiaries and other Christian writings" the phoenix appears as the "allegorical figure of Christ and, in rare instances, by virtue of its purity and uniqueness, of the Virgin."⁸² All of these aspects are closely related to asexual self-generation as well as the

⁷⁶This is also clear from Cäsar's reflections on Wally as the princess in the forest, and his insertion of himself into the magical narrative of the "old saga" in the Opening scene. (W 7, 9 - 12)

⁷⁷Zeller 213.

⁷⁸Wally's sole agency is claimed by Rippmann: "Mit der von ihr [i.e. Wally MV] selbst - und das wird fast immer übersehen - meisterhaft inszenierten Sigunenszene". (121) Vonhoff similarly comments that Wally has "alles bis ins Detail vorbereitet" (118)

⁷⁹C.f. Heintz 201, fn. 56, 23.

⁸⁰Hassig 78.

⁸¹Hassig 79.

⁸²Hassig 79.

more obvious resurrection or self-regeneration normally associated with the phoenix. Given that both the phoenix and Cäsar have a similar status in the Sigune scene, at the same time being participant and outside observer, it is possible to transfer the symbolism attached to the phoenix to Cäsar. Cäsar's apparent self-sufficiency with regard to Wally can thus be placed under the aegis of the phoenix, leading to self-regeneration, or new life, in stark contrast to Wally's display of herself to Cäsar's gaze, which is fatal.

While Gutzkow retrospectively interpreted the scene as a symbolic marriage,⁸³ and Lehmann as an attempted rape,⁸⁴ Manfred Schneider describes the scene as a vaccination against the threat of desire.⁸⁵ Geller in turn argues that "[f]rom his vantage point Cäsar incorporates her into his imagination; his desire finds its object in this internalized image."⁸⁶ He adds:

Cäsar's voyeuristic incorporation of Wally is reflected in the phallic lily which "symbolically" screens her femininity and thereby signifies that she is determined by the male imaginary. Man defines woman. She possesses value - she only exists - as a representation.⁸⁷

It is likely that the lily which blocks visual access to Wally's sex is, like much of the scene, itself a product of Cäsar/Tschionatulander's Imaginary, rather than being a prop of her self-representation.⁸⁸ In this case the organic upward movement, the "hervorsproießen" of the lily "dicht an dem Leibe Sigunens" (W 57, 9) and covering her sex evokes phallic penetration. The choice of the lily rather than roses ("blühen nirgends Rosen" W 57, 8) emphasises that the generative or life-affirming aspect of Venus Aphrodite/the Virgin Mary has been suppressed in favour of death, or less literally, in favour of closure of the relationship.

⁸³In the "Vorrede" to the second and expurgated 1852 edition of *Wally* Gutzkow argues that the scene is the symbolic representation of "einer im Geiste vollzogene Ehe" (Heintz 146). In this text the Sigune scene is rewritten in an attempt to emphasise the aspect of spiritual union.

⁸⁴Lehmann 70.

⁸⁵Manfred Schneider 208f.

⁸⁶Geller 337.

⁸⁷Geller 337, fn. 222.

⁸⁸The above reading has shown that Wally is not necessarily in control of what Cäsar sees, in that the props, including the dog, may be present only in Cäsar's phantasy. The dog may very well not be there when "Tschionatulander" makes his way home because the author forgot to tie up all loose ends, since he was writing at speed. However, it is equally possible that the dog is missing because it was not there to begin with. What is clear, is that from the Sigune scene onwards Wally no longer qualifies as Cäsar's beloved in the "real world".

Cäsar's act of penetration confirms he has taken possession and discarded her in the same moment, rendering Wally irrelevant to his emotional life.

It is possible that "die Unsichtbaren" who draw this scene are agents of the poetic truth Gutzkow argues to establish in the essay "Wahrheit und Wirklichkeit" appended to the narrative of Wally (W 128-132).⁸⁹ In this essay Gutzkow proposes the revolutionary potential of poetic truth precisely because it is not confined to the world of concrete reality:

Es gibt eine Welt, die, wenn sie auch nur in unsern Träumen lebte, sich ebenso zusammensetzen könnte zur Wirklichkeit wie wir durch Phantasie und Vertrauen zu combinieren vermögen. Schale Gemüther wissen nur das, was geschieht; Begabte ahnen, was sein könnte; Freie bauen sich ihre eigene Welt.
Zwei Garantien der unsichtbaren Welt sind die Religion und die Poesie ..." (W 128)

Gutzkow claims further, that poetic truth is "unsichtbar und liegt niemals in dem, was wirklich ist" (W 130), contending that it is in the process of being established, and lies beyond that which already exists in the institutions of his day (W 131). Poetic truth is cast as the guarantee of freedom, and the question to address to Wally is whether it fulfils its mission.⁹⁰ Examination of Wally within the present analytical framework indicates that "die Unsichtbaren" assert the continuing dominance of the male perspective and the sexual contract. In that sense the text's poetic truth does not offer a revolutionary corrective to prevailing wrongs. However, the complexity of what it lays bare identifies the starting point for change.

The forest and Sigune scenes have been discussed in terms of their representation of Cäsar's and Wally's mutual inability to constitute the self through the other.⁹¹ My analysis of the scenes has shown that both scenes raise questions of love and the constitution of identity through love. Each scene presents the collision of Wally's and Cäsar's respective desire with the desire of the other, both mediated by different literary, philosophical and social

⁸⁹This essay first appeared in *Phönix* on 25 July 1835. Scholars have argued on the whole that Gutzkow appended it in order to add the bulk which would ensure the text as a whole would escape pre-publication censorship. (C.f. Herbert Kaiser, 188.) Kaiser is one of the few scholars to consider "die Frage nach dem Verhältnis von Theorie und Roman" (188) noteworthy of discussion (196-199).

⁹⁰ Kaiser concludes that the revolutionary potential of poetic truth posited in the essay is not achieved within the text (198).

⁹¹Kaiser (189) looks only at the forest scene from this perspective, whereas Vonhoff analyses both in these terms (88-95).

conventions. My application of gender as a category of analysis in these scenes together with the model of the sexual contract has drawn out the two different stories that coexist in the scenes. I have also shown that the narrator's periodic alignment with Cäsar's perspective in these scenes leads to the exclusion of Wally's viewpoint and her final obliteration as an individual in the Sigune scene. The narrator's partiality in his shaping of events, and his failure to adequately present Wally's view at crucial points in the narrative, have not been treated fully in *Wally* scholarship.⁹²

II.1.III.e. The rescue.

Cäsar's behaviour towards Wally after the Sigune scene is consistent with the view that this interlude has effected closure in the relationship from his perspective. When in Paris, he does not visit her, despite having heard the rumours of her damaged reputation and being aware of Luigi's role in this. Rather, as in their initial meeting, chance governs their encounter in Paris and the resumption of a form of relationship in which Cäsar assumes the role of protector. While Cäsar is unable to explain why he has not visited her,⁹³ the text provides a hint as to Cäsar's priorities by locating his rescue effort in front of the theatre door. Cäsar rescues Wally when Jeronimo runs into the actresses' carriages, parked there during rehearsal.⁹⁴

Although Wally is not aware of the depth of her feelings for Cäsar before her marriage to Luigi, his entry into her bedroom four months after their wedding presents a turning point in Wally's feelings and her consciousness. Her husband's violation of their "Verabredung" is the catalyst for Wally's realisation both of the gravity of her situation ("Sie begriff jetzt erst die

⁹²Vonhoff correctly states that the role of the narrator has been neglected in *Wally* scholarship (79). My analysis extends the former's observation of the narrator's identification with Cäsar in the forest scene. The framework of this thesis does not permit discussion of other aspects such as the narrator's representation of Wally in the opening scene of the novel, in which Wally is presented on the stage of the narrator's gaze.

⁹³"Ich wollte Sie nicht besuchen. Ich vermied Sie. Warum? fragen Sie mich! Ich weiß es nicht. War ich stolz, beleidigt? Nein, es war lächerlich; aber Sie kennen mich, Wally, wie schwierig ich zu behandeln bin. Ich lasse immer auf eine Liebenswürdige zehn unerträgliche Torheiten kommen." (*W* 78, 33-79, 5)

⁹⁴The analysis of Lewald's *Eine Lebensfrage* demonstrates that "Theaterintriguen" were ubiquitous with young men about town.

Lage, in der sie sich befand, daß sie seit vier Monaten an einen Mann verheiratet war, den sie nicht kannte." *W* 65, 4-6), and the fact that she loves Cäsar ("Wally liebte jetzt Cäsar wahrhaftig, ohne sich darüber ein Geständnis zu machen. Sie hatte sich ihm auf ewig durch jene mystische Szene verpflichtet." *W* 66, 7-10).

In emphasising the innocence of Wally's feelings for Cäsar, the narrator stresses they are not driven by the concerns of social convention. She is not attached to Cäsar through "Scham," or mercenary self interest: "Und doch war es weder Scham, was sie an ihn fesselte, noch der Gedanke, ihn besitzen zu wollen. So viel Unschuld bei so vieler Freiheit!" (*W* 66, 10-12). The realisation of the charade of her marriage prompts her to write to Cäsar. She chances to see the letter again after she discovers that he has been in Paris for four weeks without visiting her. At this point the narrator provides the interlocutor's voice in an internal dialogue in Wally's head, through which she gains insight into Cäsar's character as well as the implications for her of the transaction in the Sigune scene:

Unglückliche Wally! Was hattest du nicht dem Egoismus eines Mannes geopfert? Du gabst ihm deine Seele, deine Gedanken, deine Scham, alles, was du außer dem armseligen Stand der Verheiratung hattest; und dies alles dem Egoismus, dem Lächeln, vielleicht dem Verrat? "Oh, das wäre entsetzlich", schrie sie auf; dem Verrat? Das nicht, Wally! Aber sein Herz ist kalt, er lebt nur von Gefühlen, die er raffinieren und filtrieren kann ...; du bist die Leiche, die er mit Füßen tritt." [quotation marks as in original MV] (*W* 69, 19-21)⁹⁵

The narrator's voice impresses upon her the gravity of her sacrifice as well as Cäsar's negation of her.⁹⁶

After the rescue Cäsar becomes Wally's ambivalent champion. He takes up Wally's cause with her husband, yet has no intention of committing himself to her. This is made clear in a conversation between Cäsar and Luigi. When the latter suggests: "Dann scheint es, als bauten Sie ihr eine neue Welt" (*W* 82, 33), Cäsar avoids any such commitment in his response: "Ja,

⁹⁵Geller draws this out, stating: "She offers to him that which was exclusively her own, that which alone signified her identity, she sacrifices her shame." (336)

⁹⁶The narrator also views her actions in the Sigune scene as a transgression of the bourgeois moral code requiring marital fidelity: "Welches Vertrauen, welche Harmlosigkeit! Wie treue, kindische Worte! Wie alles so selig, so unbewußt verbrecherisch, so süß in etwas, was zuletzt immerhin eine Übertretung ihrer Pflicht war! Sie hatte ihm alles gegeben!" (*W* 69, 28-31) Wally also appears to take seriously the notion of maintaining marital fidelity in her expression of concern that in the whirl of Paris society, "ihre eheliche Treue mit weit gefährlicheren Lockungen wie in der Heimat würde herausgefordert werden." (*W* 57, 28-30).

Sie können so sagen, wenn Sie darunter verstehen, daß ich die alte einreißen werde.* (W 82, 34-35)⁹⁷

II.1.III.f. Delphine.

Wally and Cäsar leave Paris together, but Cäsar withdraws from her, and effects the final break by informing her he will marry Delphine in a civil wedding (W 98, 19-20). Delphine is presented only through Wally's eyes, and as Cäsar's attraction to the former becomes increasingly obvious, so Wally's view of her changes. Wally's commentary, a mixture of fact and speculation, becomes increasingly speculative as she attempts to find reasons for this attraction, and must correct previous assumptions.⁹⁸ The most obvious of these is the initial claim that Cäsar and Delphine can never meet, as she is Jewish (W 90, 8) This is followed by the reference to the "noch andern Reiz" that Cäsar finds "in der Liebe zu Jüdinnen" (W 91, 28-29). However, Wally also contradicts herself, and her description of the extent of Delphine's education is particularly contradictory.⁹⁹ This occurs in her diary entries, providing an indication of her state of mind as she notes Cäsar's increasing involvement with Delphine.

⁹⁷Vonhoff misunderstands the exchange when he claims: "Cäsars Versuch, 'eine neue Welt' zu bauen, indem er 'die alte einzureißen' gedenkt, dieser Versuch scheitert unter den entwickelten historischen Bedingungen der Pariser Gesellschaft jedenfalls kläglich" (117). Gutzkow's later novel *Seraphine* presents a similar case of a young man, the narrator, wishing to offer a young woman protection, with the young woman emphasising that the only way in which he can do this without compromising her honour is to become her fiance. However, the narrator also notes: "Ich glaube, sie sang schon im Vertrauen auf meinen Schutz oder auf meine Liebe, wie sich denn auch schon bei mir beides verwechselt hatte." (80) Once he has proposed to Seraphine he writes: "Vormund wolltest du sein und bist Geliebter geworden!" (81) He views the entire episode as having been cleverly orchestrated by her: "Ich sahe, wie klug Seraphine auf eine Entscheidung gedrängt hatte und erinnerte mich, daß sie bei meinen Versicherungen, ihr beistehen zu wollen, einmal nach dem andern fragte: "Wie wollen Sie das aber anfangen, ohne mich zu kompromittieren?" (81) Karl Gutzkow, *Seraphine, Gesammelte Werke*, 1845.

⁹⁸Joeres refers to the often ambiguous nature of Delphine's characterisation (Introduction 23).

⁹⁹Wally thus writes of Delphine: "Vielleicht arbeitet sie noch mehr an ihrem Geiste. ... Sie liest, aber fragmentarisch. ... [S]ie sollte sich durch vielfache Lektüre darin zu bilden suchen, was über die Musik und das bloße Gefühl hinausliegt." (W 89, 24-25; 33; 34-35) Vonhoff notes that Wally "sich in Widersprüchen verfängt" (125f). Although this is partly true, Vonhoff does not always account for shifts in perspective, as I demonstrate.

Wally constructs Delphine as the stereotype of the female Jewish/Oriental other current at the time, the polar opposite to herself. She states that Christian men "nehmen hier weder Bigottismus noch eine Zerrissenheit wie die meinige in den Kauf, sondern weiden sich an der reinen, ungetrübten, natürlichen Weiblichkeit, an einem sinnlichen Schmelz der Liebe, welcher die der Christinnen bei weitem übertreffen soll[emphasis added MV]." (W 91, 14-19) Wally presents Delphine as not being exposed to "den ganzen Bildungsgang christlicher Ideen" (W 90, 17f) and with no idea of Jewish religious ideas or ritual. As a result, Delphine "(steht) auf einer Stufe ..., welche ganz Gefühl ist" (W 90, 18-19).¹⁰⁰ However, Delphine is the embodiment of the ideally socialised 'natural' woman who can perform in a limited way in the salon (W 89, 36-90, 3) but is no intellectual threat (W 89, 25-32) and is willing to subordinate herself to the man who would love her (W 89, 10-16).

Delphine is stylised as a true representative of nature, and thus of the normative ideal of womanhood and the feminine, evoking also the stereotype of the sexualised oriental/Jewish woman. Wally alleges that Delphine's sexuality is freely expressed, unlike that of Christian women like herself:

Bei einer Jüdin reduziert sich alles einseitig auf ihre Liebe, Rücksichten tauchen nirgends auf: ihre Liebe ist ganz pflanzenartiger Natur, orientalisches, wie eingeschlossen in das Treibhaus eines Harems, der alles erlaubt, jedes Spiel, jede weibliche (aber wollüstig-ergreifende) Gedankenlosigkeit, alles, alles: darum schwillt Delphine von Liebe. (W 91, 19-25)

Besides being as divided ("zerrissen") as their male counterparts, Christian women are always conscious of the "Rücksichten" of Christian sexual moral convention, which suppresses and otherwise disciplines their sexuality. Wally casts Delphine as the embodiment of the ideal woman who focusses her entire being on her male partner. Delphine is also, unsurprisingly, the ideal representative of womanhood for the sexual contract, and her "Willensschwäche" (W 89, 13-14) is, according to the stereotypical thinking of the time, an

¹⁰⁰On this basis Köster asserts that Delphine represents "die Partnerin, mit der die Praxis der neuen Moral möglich ist." (*Gesellschaft* 163) However, he fails to recognise the degree to which Wally's representation of Delphine is a representation and is contradictory and speculative. C.f. Vohoff's criticism (125) of Köster. In addition, César's behaviour with Wally as well as the fact that he intends to marry Delphine demonstrate that the "neue Moral" he suggests in the forest scene is a rhetorical strategy to bend Wally to his will.

indicator of her readiness to subjugate herself to the male beloved.¹⁰¹ Wally, who has begun to interrogate the conditions of female socialisation, has left the organic female sphere of nature, and has thereby also disqualified herself as the ideal partner for a man whose ideas of heterosexual relationships are determined by the sexual contract.¹⁰² Her analysis of Delphine dissects a subject position she can no longer occupy, but whose social validity she recognises.¹⁰³

A further reason Wally identifies to account for Cäsar's fascination for Delphine is his rejection of the institutional control of marriage by the church.¹⁰⁴ While the fact that they will marry in a civil ceremony means that Delphine does become "a symbol of freedom,"¹⁰⁵ at least in Wally's eyes, the fact that he intends to marry her means he fails to actualize his critique of marriage.¹⁰⁶ Cäsar's insistence on a civil rather than church service exhausts his

¹⁰¹Wally recounts Delphine's confession to her that: "Sie würde jeden lieben, der sie liebt. Oh, wie nötig ist es, bei solcher Willensschwäche, daß sie in die Hut eines Mannes kömmt, der so viel geistiges Leben besitzt, um sie ganz durchströmen zu können mit seiner eigenen Willenskraft!" (W 89, 13-16)

¹⁰²Massey quite rightly states that the reason for the failure of the love plot is that Wally cannot function as pure nature for Cäsar and thus as a vehicle for transcendence as Delphine can or as Lucinde does for Julius (51). However, the novel takes this further and interrogates the assumption that women do in fact embody nature, as shown in its representation of both Wally and Delphine.

¹⁰³Wally thus does not, as Vonhoff claims, contradict her previous critique and rejection of the "pflanzenartige Bewußtlosigkeit, in welcher Frauen vegetieren" when she admires ("bewundert") the "pflanzenartige Natur" of Delphine's love. Rather, she makes the latter remark in the context of reflecting on why Cäsar would find Delphine more attractive. (Vonhoff 125).

¹⁰⁴Wally states that in Cäsar's opinion "Das Sakrament der Ehe ist nach seiner Theorie die Liebe, nicht des Priesters Segen. Wie glücklich würde Cäsar sein, wenn er je heiratete, es ohne kirchliche Zeremonie tun zu dürfen." (W 91, 31-34)

¹⁰⁵Joeres, Introduction 23.

¹⁰⁶Cäsar's projected marriage represents a retraction of his admittedly rather flippant suggestion that: "Der Staat sollte niemals die Ehe bürgerlich vollziehen lassen, bis nicht ein Kind vorhanden ist, welches die Liebe vorher ausweisen muß" (W 50, 6-8). This passage in fact one marked as offensive by the prosecutors of the "Großherzogliches Obergericht und Hofgericht des Unterrheins" at Gutzkow's trial in Mannheim. (See Paulus, *Urteil* 4; Houben, *Sturm* 508) Cäsar's views as expressed here reflect Gutzkow's in the "Vorrede," expressed as follows: "Der Aufruf ist der: Schämt Euch der Leidenschaft nicht und nehmt das Sittliche nicht wie eine Institution des Staates! Vor allen Dingen denkt aber über die Methodik der Liebe nach und heiligt Euern Willen dadurch, daß ihr ihn freimacht zur freien Wahl! Der einzige Priester, der die Herzen traue, sey ein entzückender Augenblick, nicht die Kirche mit ihrer Ceremonie und Ihren gescheitelten Dienern!" (Gutzkow, "Vorrede" xxxv) Although Gutzkow here explicitly targets the church, he also refers to its function as a state institution. In that sense a civil ceremony removes the authoritative status of the "entzückender Augenblick" and is just as subject to state control as a church ceremony.

protest at the limiting agency of convention and the institutional power of the church.¹⁰⁷ In deciding to marry, even in a civil ceremony, Cäsar subjects himself to the authority of the state.¹⁰⁸ This in turn supports the sexual contract that grants the male supremacy within marriage.

Cäsar thus fails to radically refashion the conduct of a love relationship outside the boundaries regulated by church, state or social convention, a failure that is symptomatic of a broader failure to rethink and thus restructure the conduct of sexual relationships between women and men. Cäsar's attempts to change the conduct of heterosexual relationships by changing conventional modes of sexual(ised) interaction rely on a female partner without sexual agency as an object of male sexual desire, even though she might perceive herself as having agency. They thus do not entail a fundamental questioning of the framework of the sexual contract, either with respect to changing the terms of the contract itself, or in terms of challenging the conceptualisation of female subjectivity on which the contract relies. His choice of Delphine confirms his entrapment within convention.

In contrast, Wally's positive response to Cäsar's initiatives has led her to defy convention and thus place herself at risk. She fails to constitute herself as an adequate partner for Cäsar firstly within the "feminine" and "nature," and secondly, when she objectifies herself as art. In both the forest and Sigune scenes Wally constitutes herself through her love for Cäsar, relinquishing her "Scham" and thus her identity to him. According to the terms of the sexual contract as elucidated by Fichte, her act of love subordinates her to him, and she constitutes herself through him. However, even as she gives him her self he rejects her, and she becomes

¹⁰⁷Geller finds Cäsar's decision to "leave Germany" signals that "Gutzkow, like the bourgeois characters he depicts, sidesteps the political responsibilities of the critique of both religion and its social effects." (328f) His point is valid even though he mistakenly identifies Cäsar as a bourgeois.

¹⁰⁸Wally defends his decision, writing that a civil marriage of this kind, performed by the offices of the courts, is "ein Akt der geselligen Übereinkunft". (W 92, 2) Nevertheless, whether he marries within the church or in a civil ceremony the legitimating authority of the union is not love but the state. According to the Napoleonic Code civil marriages are obligatory (Joeres, Introduction 125, fn. 12). Geller asserts that: "While delegitimizing the institutional determination of gender relationships, Cäsar's decision to marry Delphine legitimates the reigning sexual stereotype of and male wish for a woman 'completely without a will of her own,' for one who is the picture of 'self-surrendering helplessness.'" (330) Although I argue Cäsar does not entirely do the former, his marriage certainly enforces the latter.

the "Leiche, die er mit Füßen tritt" (W 69, 26). As a consequence, Wally cannot achieve self-realisation through love, nor can she overcome her divided self through sexual union in marriage with the man she loves. Cäsar's incapacity or lack of desire to challenge the sexual contract, and indeed his own ultimate entrapment within its terms, is fatal for her, while at the same time serving to uphold the status quo.

II.1.IV. Wally's development I: love and religion.

I now consider other aspects of Wally's development, focussing particularly on her moments of introspection and struggle to acknowledge her religious scepticism. Wally's intellectual and spiritual inquiry occurs in tandem with her emotional development, and her relationship with Cäsar is intertwined with her reflections on religious faith and scepticism, as stated above. After Cäsar's loss Wally attempts to resolve her spiritual crisis intellectually in order to gain a sense of self that is independent of Cäsar. Her suicide is then on the one hand a consequence of her inability to constitute her identity in a love relationship with Cäsar, and on the other, to regain her autonomy without him.

In the first two books of the narrative, Wally alternates between effortless coquetry, and mindful introspection and self-examination. Wally's introspective inquiry repeatedly brings her to a consideration of discourses which constitute woman and the feminine as nature. My discussion of her deconstruction, in the forest scene, of woman as the embodiment of nature, has shown that Wally engages in a complex interrogation of the female ideal and women's socialisation. This results from her attempts to position herself and women in general with respect to the constructs produced within normative discourses. Wally's difficulties in acknowledging and accepting her religious scepticism flow from the fact that a woman questioning the belief system based on revelatory religion also questions normative female identity.

The importance attributed to religious belief for women in mid-nineteenth-century Germany is clear from its foregrounding in German pedagogies of the 1820s. For example, in a teaching syllabus which promotes polarised gender functions (*Über weibliche Bildung*,

1820), Friedrich Faber claims it is only in religion that women find security.¹⁰⁹ Another typical pedagogical work developed for the "höhere Mädchenschulen" by August Spilleke (1823) emphasises teaching every subject in terms of its "Bedeutung für das Gefühl."¹¹⁰ The first of the four subject categories lists "Unterrichtsgegenstände zur Entwicklung des religiösen und sittlichen Sinnes."¹¹¹ In these pedagogies intellectual endeavour cedes to the priority of cultivating a religiously inflected "schöne Tugend" in women. On this basis a woman who dares to admit lack of faith clearly transgresses the conventions governing ideal womanhood. Wally's religious scepticism thus has negative implications for her social identity, as I shall demonstrate.

My examination of the link between Wally and religion thus focusses on the significance of religion for women, rather than on the theological/philosophical debates into which Cäsar's "Geständnisse über Religion und Christentum" (W 106, 26-124, 14) inserts itself.¹¹² Until the mid-1980s the latter text was regarded as the core of the novel by critical scholarship, which reasoned that Gutzkow only wrote *Wally* because his publisher Campe responded negatively to the latter's suggestion he re-edit Lessing's *Wolfenbüttler Fragmente*.¹¹³ Of the critical analyses that acknowledge a link between women and religion, some assess Wally's preoccupation with her lack of religious belief as insignificant,¹¹⁴ or negligible.¹¹⁵ A number

¹⁰⁹See Karin Meiners, *Der besondere Weg, ein Weib zu werden: Über den Einfluß von Leitbildern auf die Entwicklung der höheren Mädchenbildung seit dem 17. Jahrhundert*, Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe 11, Pädagogik 128 (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1982) 102.

¹¹⁰Meiners 101.

¹¹¹Further categories are "Unterrichtsgegenstände" for the awakening and development of an aesthetic sensibility; the development of the intellect; and preparation for the woman's future role (Meiners 101).

¹¹²From now on I shall refer to these as the "Confessions." Köster provides an excellent analysis of their status in philosophical/theological discourse. (*Literatur* 160f).

¹¹³See Vonhoff's thorough review of Germanist critical scholarship (405, fn. 341). Houben suggests that Schlesier's negative criticism of Gutzkow's *Maha Guru* ("Herzblut müssen Sie zeigen! sich Ihre Brust aufreißen!"), spurred the latter into writing *Wally*. Houben, *Sturm* 25-26. Geller provides an excellent overview of the incidents said to have inspired the novel (288, 297f). An encounter with a young Jewish woman at the Frankfurt home of the converted Jewish doctor August Clemens is thought to be the source of Wally's distress regarding religious matters. (Houben, *Sturm* 35)

¹¹⁴Sammons finds that "the religious problem [in *Wally*] as such is adulterated with Gutzkow's views about women." (48). Massey considers this statement "historically naïve" (50), and Geller asserts that "Wally is guilty of adulteration, but only in the original meaning of the term: desecration of the marriage chamber. The publication of *Wally* was adulterous; the novel, unlike its title character, was able to break out of the bridal chamber

of those who consider the link more seriously treat "religion as a site for the symptomatic emergence of the psychopathology of bourgeois society, with particular reference to Wally."¹¹⁶

Of those who focus on Wally's mental state, Vonhoff concludes that gender determines Wally's and Cäsar's ways of thinking about religion: where Wally's religious doubt is thus determined by her socialisation as a woman of the aristocracy, and is emotionally driven and superficial, Cäsar tackles his religious doubt intellectually.¹¹⁷ Vonhoff concludes that Wally does not understand "Cäsars religionskritische Erklärungen samt ihrer am Ende wieder in religiöse Metaphorik gehüllten Handlungsanweisungen."¹¹⁸ In contrast, Massey and Blackwell look most specifically at Wally's spiritual development as an aspect of her development as an individual.¹¹⁹ Massey is the first scholar to have explicitly examined the "linkage of the quest for female self-identity with the quest for Christian religious identity,"¹²⁰ in the novel, concluding that Cäsar "not only fails to give Wally a place in society, he also fails to give her religious solace."¹²¹ Massey also discusses the socio-political context of Wally's life,

and enter the public sphere." (308)

¹¹⁵Janet Kay Zacha Van Valkenberg writes: "it is noteworthy that Wally's religious doubt plays such an insignificant part in all but Book Three of the novel," although she concedes that in "Book One attention is called to Wally's discomfort when the topic of discussion is religion or when reference is made to religious belief." "Karl Gutzkow and *Wally, die Zweiflerin*: A Biographical Reevaluation," diss., U of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1981, Ann Arbor: UMI, 1981, 8127723, 159.

¹¹⁶Geller 304, fn 161. Geller here refers to Löwenthal (98) and Sammons, who finds that religion is "paradigmatic for the generalized feeling that society had lost its compass and anchor." (48) However, Geller similarly asserts that the link between women and religion provides a form of social criticism. He views woman and religion as linked in their metaphorical social function: as "the other which straddles both the public and the private" they "can be the locus for the manifestation of social contradictions or of the symptoms of these contradictions." (304.) He views the reactions of the political and literary authorities to Gutzkow's novel as symptomatic of their fear of an other beyond their control, an other who threatened to further disrupt the already fragile structures of Metternich's authoritarian regimen (308f).

¹¹⁷Vonhoff 87.

¹¹⁸Vonhoff 139.

¹¹⁹Marilyn Chapin Massey, "*Wally the Skeptic: A Suppressed Feminist Novel*," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 35.1-2 (1979-80): 49-55; Jeanine Blackwell, *Bildungsroman mit Dame: The Heroine in the German Bildungsroman from 1770 to 1900*, diss., U of Indiana, 1982, Ann Arbor: UMI, 1982, 8307995, 238-255.

¹²⁰Massey 49.

¹²¹Massey 50. Massey reads Wally's in terms of Carol Christ's discussion of the "peculiar form of spiritual quest [which MV] emerges from the female's dissatisfaction with the roles available to her. This unique spiritual quest often takes the form of conflict with transformative powers, often those of Nature, transcending those of the man's world. It is

religious quest, and suicide, with specific reference to the significance of religion in the life of women of the nineteenth century. She concludes that Wally's "skepticism" has the broader political function of adverting to "repressive social and political relationships." It is the "symbolic vehicle" for "the urging of political change in the direction of democratic government."¹²²

Blackwell's extremely useful and pathbreaking study contextualises Wally's religious quest and quest for identity in terms of the German literary tradition. She states that in this tradition the genre of the "female Bildungsroman" grew out of the spiritual autobiography," in which "[t]he religious journey through sin and confusion up to salvation was the paradigm for describing the spiritual growth of the heroine."¹²³ For the heroine of this genre the "struggle with religious doubt, disbelief and despair" was "conspicuously absent from that growth."¹²⁴ The Young Germans' introduction of this element in the heroine's development "undermined a premise not only of the female Bildungsroman itself, i.e. a spiritual quest that must end with at least implicit acceptance of God, but also of the limits on the heroine's self-searching."¹²⁵ Blackwell's account attests to the radicality of Gutzkow's novel in its denial to Wally of religious faith. Blackwell links the "shift in the Bildungsroman from the biography of religious, moral and philosophical growth to the biography of psychological, intellectual and social development"¹²⁶ from the 1830s to the 1880s with the religious crisis that ran

interesting that in the case of Wally, a man beginning with social dissatisfaction creates a story about a woman's spiritual quest in which the female religious experience of nature is closed for her by the fact that male culture has glorified her power to contact it." (53 fn.10) Massey concludes that "the dynamic of the novel forces the reader to remain on the *surface* of Wally's life, to remain with its ugliness and meaninglessness because when Wally "sins" by thinking, she remains an ordinary shallow coquette. She has no depth to escape into inside and she has no place to run outside. She is a pathetic ordinary girl." (52) This conclusion does not adequately consider Wally's self-analysis or the analysis of women's socialisation in which Wally engages, both in the forest scene and in the letter to Antonie discussed below.

¹²²Massey 50.

¹²³Blackwell 229.

¹²⁴Blackwell 229.

¹²⁵Blackwell 229. Young Germans appear to be synonymous with Gutzkow in this context, as Blackwell does not refer to other examples of Young German novels in which women engage in a quest for spiritual identity which is as unsuccessful as Wally's. Mundt's Maria first finds spiritual satisfaction and then institutionalised religion: her story is a vehicle for subtly distinguishing between these two. See discussion of *Madonna: Unterhaltungen mit einer Heiligen* below.

¹²⁶Blackwell 230.

parallel to "Germany's industrial and political revolutions." She states that Young Germany "present[ed] the first direct, recognized, public literary attack on religious structures in the nineteenth century."¹²⁷ Blackwell underlines the fact that Gutzkow's novel presents the limitations of women's self-development and their socially inscribed destiny in spiritual as well as emotional and intellectual terms.

II.1.IV.a. Wally's epiphany.

I now turn to the novel's presentation of Wally's religious scepticism. The first indication of her concerns, which is also the first thematisation of religion in the novel, occurs in the boudoir scene on the morning after her initial encounter with Cäsar. In its deployment of tropes from seminal experiences of religious and secular revelation in Western Judaeo-Christian culture, this scene cites two kinds of revelation. Parallels to the revelatory experience of Saint Augustine cite an epiphanic confirmation of religious faith, and parallels to Rousseau confirm the epiphanic realisation of its lack. The boudoir scene presents Wally's paradoxical anti-revelatory experience: her secular yet at the same time religious epiphany attests to her lack of faith, as confirmed by the narrator's statement that "[d]ie Gottheit ist nirgends näher, als wo ein Herz an ihr verzweifelt." (W 11, 1f)

In this scene, Wally looks through the latest journals, which include those of "das junge Deutschland." Once her maid Aurora leaves the room, Wally's observation of a printing error in the "Carlsruher Bilderbibel" (W 10, 15-17)¹²⁸ triggers a synaesthetic experience:

Wally blickte sich scheu um und las weiter. Ihr Auge haftete stier auf den Buchstaben: sie schlug eine Seite nach der andern um: dann lehnte sie sich zurück: eine Träne stand in ihrem Auge. Sie sah mit einem flehenden, verzweifelnden Blick auf den kleinen Tisch, der so viel Widersprechendes friedlich umschloß. Sie stützte den Kopf auf die Lehne ihres Sessels; es war Sonntag. Die Glocken läuteten, aus der nahen Kirche brausten die Töne der Orgel herüber. Wally war in Tränen aufgelöst. Kann man dem Himmel ein schöneres Opfer bringen? Diese Tränen flossen aus dem Weihebecken

¹²⁷Blackwell 227.

¹²⁸Joeres identifies the text as: *Bilderbibel für die Jugend von K. Gersbach: Mit erklärendem Text von E. Knapp* Karlsruhe, 1835 - 1836 (Joeres, Introduction 116). This may be a reference to "das durchaus lutherische Motiv, daß die Wahrheit "innerlich überzeugen müsse," daß heißt jetzt das an intellektuelle Wahrhaftigkeit gebundene Gewissen des Einzelnen, und daß man darum die Wahrheit gegebenenfalls gegen Tradition und Autorität und jetzt auch gegen die "Buchstaben" der biblischen Schriften und gegen den "Papsttum" des Buchstabens, wie Lessing gesagt hat, zur Geltung bringen müsse" (423).

einer unsichtbaren Kirche. Die Gottheit ist nirgends näher, als wo ein Herz an ihr verzweifelt." (W 10, 29-11, 2)¹²⁹

This description, with the references to shyness, tears, sacrifice, and acknowledgement of the status of belief, recalls Augustine's account, in his *Bekenntnisse* (Bk.12, Ch.11), of the revelatory experience that precedes his conversion to Christianity. He similarly makes reference to shyness, despair, and tears which are associated with the notion of sacrifice.¹³⁰

However, even though both Wally and Augustine experience a "turning-point" on reading a Biblical text,¹³¹ and even though in both accounts "there is a real conviction of need and a correspondingly strong desire for mercy,"¹³² Augustine, like other church fathers who experienced similar conversion experiences, adapts his life to his insight: his conversion is "absolute and final."¹³³ Immediately following Wally's synaesthesia, her maid reenters the room to announce visitors. Although she feels her experience was portentous, she nevertheless does not allow it to change her way of life: "Wally hätte absagen müssen, aber sie war willenlos." (W 11, 4) Her visitors are "die Ritter von den fünf Ringen, einige von ihnen

¹²⁹This scene is echoed and given reverse meaning at the end of Cäsar's "Confessions." As he finishes writing on Whitsunday he hears the simultaneous ringing of Catholic und Protestant bells (W 123, 37-124, 1) He asserts that this confirms the presence of the Holy Spirit in the present as in the past. He concludes with the oft-cited statement: "Wir werden keinen neuen Himmel und keine neue Erde haben; aber die Brücke zwischen beiden, scheint es, muß von neuem gebaut werden." (W 124, 1-14)

¹³⁰His tears occur within the context of an ongoing struggle with his fleshly desires and also a fear of committing himself wholly to God, that is, of effecting the final sacrifice of the self: "Als sich aber aus geheimnisvoller Tiefe die ernste Betrachtung sammelte und mein Herz mein ganzes Elend schauen ließ, brach es aus in mir, wie ein nie erfahrener Sturm und löste sich auf in einen Strom von Tränen. Ihn ganz zu ergießen mit seinen Lauten, erhob ich mich von des Alyplus Seite; denn paßender schien mir die Einsamkeit für solche Thränen. Ich entfernte mich so weit, daß mir seine Gegenwart nicht mehr lästig werden konnte. Stauend blieb er zurück, schon zuvor bemerkend, daß zurückgehaltene Thränen meine Stimme dämpften. Ich warf mich unter einem Feigenbaum nieder, da ließ ich meinen Thränen den Lauf, und ein dir wohlgefällig Opfer ergoßen sich die Quellen meiner Augen. Und vieles rief ich zu dir, nicht mit diesen Worten, aber dieses Sinnes: "Und du, Herr, wie so lange! Wie lange, Herr, willst du zürnen! Sei nicht ungedenk unserer vorigen Missethat!" (Augustinus, *Die Bekenntnisse des heiligen Augustinus*, trans., from Latin Georg Rapp, Gotha: Gustav Schloßmann, 1868, 5th ed., 182).

Augustine's account of his revelatory experience is prefigured in "the account of the conversion of Antony of Egypt, the most famous and influential of the desert fathers." (Benedicta Ward, SLG, *Harlots of the Desert: A Study of Repentance in Early Monastic Sources*, Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian, 1987, 3) However, the detail of Augustine's account most closely resembles that of Wally.

¹³¹This is taken from Ward's description of parallels in Augustine's and Antony's experience. (Benedicta Ward 4).

¹³²C.f. comment in previous fn. (Benedicta Ward 6).

¹³³C.f. comment in previous fn. (Benedicta Ward 4).

leicht verwundet." (W 11, 5f) Wally is thus drawn back into the love plot, although the connection between the love and the religious plots is made evident by the juxtaposition of Wally's epiphany and the indication that she has been passed on to Cäsar. Although Wally resists further religious inquiry, Cäsar's interest in religious issues exposes her to conversations criticising religion, clearly demonstrating a link between the love and the religious plots. Thus, while Geller asserts that Cäsar's "Confessions" are not sufficiently integrated into Wally's story in terms of narrative development,¹³⁴ the present analysis argues the reverse.

Wally's epiphany has notable parallels to Rousseau's secular revelatory experience, and indeed Gutzkow experienced his own "Damaskuswunder" in similar manner to Rousseau, namely while pondering on his response to an essay question.¹³⁵ Wally's overwhelming sense of the contradictions embraced on the table before her, and her despairing realisation that she

¹³⁴Geller 301.

¹³⁵This description occurs in the autobiographical account of his student years, "Das Kastanienwäldchen in Berlin" (1869). Gutzkow describes his experience as "eine Art Damaskuswunder, eine mystische Verzückung," which occurs as he ponders his approach to an essay question on the classical gods of destiny: "Es war ein schöner, Wintertag. Der Tiergarten lag hart gefroren. Durch die kahlen Bäume schimmerte ein malerisches Abendrot. Um zu meditieren, streifte ich durch die Alleen über alle "Rondells" hinweg, an allen "Floraplätzen" und "Rousseauinseln" vorüber. Ein Lichtglanz umgab mich. Ich sah durch die prismatische Beleuchtung des Satzes: "Was ist, ist vernünftig", die Zeiten. Ich grübelte: Was heißt heidnisches Altertum -?" As he walks along it becomes apparent to him that the gods of antiquity are only a stage in the historical development of the notion of God and the revelation of this being in ourselves and in the world. He realises that at this point we will be able to look upon God without fear and we will be able to recognise him in ourselves: "Und in diesem Augenblick, wo mir die alten Götter nicht im mindesten unvernünftig, sondern vollberechtigt, und die Mythologie, zumal in ihren Lehren über ein ewiges, selbst die Götter beherrschendes Fatum, tief und gedankenreich erschien, hatte ich eine geistige und zugleich wunderbare physische Kraft gewonnen. Ich hätte mich anheischig machen können, junge Eichen auszureißen und fortzufreveln." ("Das Kastanienwäldchen in Berlin." Karl Gutzkow, *Werke*, ed., and intro., Reinhold Gensel, 1912, 7 vols., Hildesheim: Olms, 1974, III, 8: 36f.) Letters held in the Gutzkow archive at the University of Frankfurt library confirm Gutzkow's religious sensibility and continuing preoccupation with religious questions. In the context of a discussion about *Wally*, Gutzkow's first wife Amalie writes to her friend Julie von Carlsen (1.11.1841): "[Gutzkow] trägt etwas tief Religiöses in seinem edlen Gemüth, obgleich sie alle es nicht glauben. Was er auch geschrieben haben mag so war es das Ergebnis eines vielleicht zu tief in die wahre Religion eindringenden." A further, more explicit reference to Gutzkow's own experience of something akin to Wally's synaesthesia is in the following letter from Schirges to Ludmilla Assing (24.10.1842): "[Gutzkow] erzählte vor einigen Tagen von einem Tage in Münster, wo er unter dem Geläute der Messe das Bedürfnis zu Gott empfand." This linking of church bells with the desire for religious faith echoes both Wally's experience and its reversed echo in Cäsar's "Confessions." (References for the letters are 41,301 and 42,294 respectively.)

has no religious faith echo the "moment on Rousseau's road to Damascus,"¹³⁶ which as discussed by Kavanagh, "was to leave him with a legacy not of religious truths, but of a suddenly clarified and compelling vision of what he [i.e. Rousseau, MV] calls the contradictions of our situation."¹³⁷ Rousseau later "traced the shape of his life-story to the overwhelming impact of one particular moment."¹³⁸ Gutzkow's epiphany includes a similar sense of synaesthesia to Wally's, in that the external environment contributes to the overall experience, but unlike the experiences of Rousseau and Wally, it confirms a pantheistic sense of the existence of God in all living things. Gutzkow's insight is repeated at the end of Căsar's "Bekenntnisse" (W 124, 1-14), which are thus also clearly inserted into the tradition discussed here.¹³⁹

Wally's epiphany confirms her religious scepticism, and is a key point in her development. Her experience confirms that one level of her story is the expression of an anti-conversion and anti-revelatory narrative, with a female protagonist at its centre. Wally's experience of an epiphany that confirms her lack of faith at the same time as it confirms her spirituality is to have far reaching negative consequences in the future, although she becomes immediately reabsorbed in the meaningless social whirl (W 11, 13-17).

¹³⁶According to Rousseau's well known account, his "revelatory" experience was triggered while walking from Paris to Vincennes (1749), when he noticed in the paper he was reading the "subject announced for the essay contest proposed by the academy of Dijon: whether the country's rebirth of science and the arts had done more to corrupt or to purify morals." (Kavanagh, Thomas M., *Aesthetics of the Moment: Literature and Art in the French Enlightenment*, Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1996, 82) Rousseau "insisted that the entire course of his life had been abruptly redefined by a moment's reading" (Kavanagh 82). His description of the experience echoes that of Saint Augustine, complete with violent emotion, agitation, and tears. He even throws himself under a tree as the experience begins: "Rushes of vivid ideas crushed in on me all at once with a force and confusion that threw me into an inexpressible discomfort. I felt my head caught by a dizziness as though I were drunk. A violent palpitation overcame me, taking my breath away. No longer able to breath [sic MV] as I walked, I let myself fall to the ground under one of the trees along the road where I spent half an hour in such a state of agitation that, when I got up, I discovered that the whole front of my jacket was wet with tears I never realized I had shed." (Rousseau, *Lettres à Malesherbes*, in *Oeuvres complètes*, I: 1135. Cited in Kavanagh 82f.)

¹³⁷Kavanagh 83.

¹³⁸Kavanagh 82.

¹³⁹Brockhaus defines "Bekenntnis" as "im religiösen Sinn sowohl die Bezeichnung des persönlichen religiösen Glaubens als auch das Glaubenszeugnis einer religiösen Gemeinschaft, bes. der christlichen Kirchen." *Der große Brockhaus*. Brockhaus: Wiesbaden, 1952, vol. 1, p. 722.

Her religious despair and doubt remain however, and her reactions to discussion of religious questions become increasingly pronounced. Her most marked physical response occurs on overhearing a discussion between Waldemar and Cäsar, in which they agree that since religion is itself a product of despair, it cannot offer guidance to those in despair (*W* 37, 12-15; 37, 16-29): "Ein Krampf schnürte Wallys Brust zusammen. Sie wankte ohnmächtig fort" (*W* 37, 30-31).¹⁴⁰ The presence of the theme of religious scepticism from the very beginning of the narrative, and its intertwining with the love plot is thus very clear. The imbrication of the love and religious plots establishes a complex relationship between the question of Wally's religious despair and her capacity to maintain a love relationship with Cäsar.

II.1.IV.b. The letter to Antonie.

The narrator recalls Wally's religious preoccupation in her next introspective episode, the writing of the letter to her friend Antonie. This episode occurs after the forest scene and during her relationship with Cäsar. It is preceded by Bärbel's suicide, and followed by that of the trumpeter's wife. Wally is tangentially involved with both, clearing Cäsar's friend Waldemar of culpability in Bärbel's death, and witnessing the suicide of the trumpeter's wife. This framing of Wally's introspective episode with two episodes of suicide foreshadows Wally's own decision to take her life following the prolonged introspective period between Cäsar's loss and her receipt of his "Confessions."¹⁴¹ In addition, the linkage of love, betrayal and female suicide in the two anecdotes underlines the same linkage in the love plot, as Cäsar is Wally's initial source for the stories of Bärbel (*W* 24, 29 - 26, 30; 38, 1 - 40, 7) and the trumpeter's wife (*W* 27, 8 - 31, 12; 44, 32 - 46, 15), both of which concern betrayal in love and the subsequent descent of the woman into madness and death.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰A section of Cäsar's speech was cited by the prosecution during Gutzkow's Mannheim trial for blasphemy, namely (*W* 37, 12-20). Paulus, 1836, 4.

¹⁴¹Abel, Hirsch, Langland establish a link between death and the inner life in their discussion of characteristics of the nineteenth century female novel of development. They assert that "withdrawal to the inner life leads to fever, hallucination and death." Introduction, Abel et al., eds. 3-19, 13.

¹⁴²Cäsar is the source of three anecdotes interpolated into the love plot, including that of Alfred (*W* 102, 21 - 104, 15), and insists they are sourced from real life. Vonhoff's focus

I will look at the letter to Antonie before considering the Bärbel episode and the suicide of the trumpeter's wife. I focus on the letter's content, Wally's state of mind in writing it, and the narrator's exegetical assessments of her person. The chapter dedicated to Wally's letter presents her first lengthy introspection,¹⁴³ and begins with the narrator's derisive comments about Wally, which contradict other evidence provided about and by her. I reverse the sequence of presentation in the novel, looking first at Wally's self-representation, and then contrasting it with the narrator's assessment.

In the unsent letter to Antonie Wally identifies negative and destructive emotions that govern her, and suggests why she is unable to deal with them, thus presenting an analysis of her condition, which she views as analogous to that of women in general. Her investigation of her emotions identifies their source as both nature and nurture. She thus views them as springing from her/women's natural vegetative unconsciousness, yet at the same time finds they result from the constraints of her socialisation and social status.

Wally refers to the "peinliche Unruhe und Hast, von der wir getrieben werden, eine Ängstlichkeit, von welcher die Männer keine Vorstellung haben."¹⁴⁴ (41, 31 - 34) This fear and constant feeling of being under pressure leads to women acting according to whim and on the spur of the moment, as well as causing their "Vergeßlichkeit." The source of this behaviour is the "pflanzenartige[n] Bewußtlosigkeit, in welcher die Frauen vegetieren." This description of women's inconsistency and natural vegetative unconsciousness in a text by a star pupil of Hegel recalls the philosopher's articulation of the reasons for women's exclusion from intellectual endeavour in the *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*.¹⁴⁵ Hegel likens

on sociological and socio-critical aspects of the narrative leads him to criticise Wally's reception of the anecdotes related by Cäsar as consistently demonstrating her ignorance of the social circumstances of those not in her class, a lack reflected by the scholarship (121). However, the fact that the trumpeter's wife is actually the betrayer signals the fact that in these cases of suicide the narrative emphasises the mental state of the person who commits suicide rather than the fact of betrayal. The trumpeter's wife commits suicide in order to escape the continuous sound of ghostly drumming in her head. The drummer she betrayed committed suicide after drumming a deathly serenade beneath her window (*W* 29, 15-34).

¹⁴³Blackwell, in contrast, considers that only after the collapse of her marriage "does she [Wally MV] start her real inner development." (245f.)

¹⁴⁴This fearfulness has, however, been identified by the narrator in the opening sequence.

¹⁴⁵Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts oder Naturrecht und Staatswissenschaft im Grundrisse*, (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1976) §166, Zusatz, 319f. Gutzkow studied philosophy in Berlin with Hegel and bested six other contenders to be

women to plants, men to animals; women act "nach zufälliger Meinung;" their education occurs "man weiß nicht wie, gleichsam durch die Atmosphäre der Vorstellung, mehr durch das Leben als durch das Erwerben von Kenntnissen, während der Mann seine Stellung nur durch die Errungenschaft des Gedankens und durch viele technische Bemühungen erlangt."¹⁴⁶ Gutzkow presents his female literary figure as attempting to reconcile a Hegelian reading of her identity with the impact of her socialisation as a woman in mid-nineteenth century Germany according to similar terms.¹⁴⁷ Gutzkow's interrogative allusion to this description demonstrates that Wally is inserting herself into the philosophical discourse of the time on normative ideals of woman('s nature). The fact that this is Wally's starting point, and that she indeed feels the pressure to perform according to the normative requirements thus set out, demonstrates the broad currency of such normative definitions. Her capacity for critical analysis obviously exposes such definitions as fictions, but they nevertheless provided the interpretative framework that guided any reflection on woman's nature and women's perceptions of themselves in the mid-nineteenth century. Kaiser's discussion of Wally's "unnatural" nature above, and his unreflected assumption that the "truth" of a literary woman lies in her embodiment as nature confirm that such a framework in fact remained operative well into the late twentieth century despite feminist endeavour. In this context, the text's presentation of Wally's capacity to think beyond this framework by interrogating various aspects of her socialisation is an extremely radical move.

Wally's discussion of her "Schmerz, der unheilbar ist, da ich ihn gar nicht zu nennen weiß" (*W* 42, 4-5) views it and "dieser spiralförmig fortkeiselmnden Unruhe ..." (*W* 42, 7-8) as stemming firstly from women's enforced inactivity, and secondly from women's socialisation and restricted access to education. Contrasting women's lot with the social

awarded the gold medal in the discipline in 1830. The prize-giving ceremony coincided with news of the Paris revolution, which Gutzkow found to be of greater significance. Gutzkow, "Vergangenheit und Gegenwart," *Werke*, ed., Gensel, 1974, III, 8: 88-89.

¹⁴⁶Hegel, *Grundlinien* 319f., §166, Zusatz.

¹⁴⁷For two more recent contradictory views see Genevieve Lloyd's analysis of the three stages of consciousness according to Hegel, according to which women do not qualify as human. ("Masters, Slaves and Others," *Radical Philosophy* 34 (Summer 1983): 2-9) In contrast, Johanna Hodge's discussion of Hegel's conceptualisation of female subjectivity argues that the broader framework of Hegel's concept of history negates his claims of women's inferiority to men. ("Women and the Hegelian State," Kennedy and Mendus 127-158)

expectations made of men (*W* 42, 8-9), she refers to the proscription on reading *Faust* as emblematic of women's lack of access to the intellectual tools with which to articulate their thoughts and emotions, and their resultant inability to analyse or improve their situation:

Auch dies sage, warum wir den 'Faust' nicht lesen sollen? Die Schilderung jener Zweifel, die eines Menschen Brust durchwühlen können, macht uns vertraut mit ihnen und die Wirkung derselben für uns weniger gefährlich. ... [D]as ist der Fluch: man verlangt gar nichts von uns, man will gar nichts, es kömmt gar nichts drauf an. (*W* 42, 11 - 15; 22-23)

Melanie Unseld analyses the *Faust* taboo as linked with the status of "[d]as Faust-Sujet als Prüfstein intellektueller Auseinandersetzung mit metaphysischen und selbstreflexiven Fragen," which presents a "massive" contradiction to the nineteenth century normative female ideal.¹⁴⁸ She comments that "[d]ahinter steht der 'ewig lauernder Verdacht, weibliche Intelligenz sei ein Verstoß gegen die Natur.'¹⁴⁹ Unseld states that the taboo is readily explicable given that

wesentliche Aspekte des Faustschen Charakters offen mit dem Frauenbild des 19. (und offensichtlich des 20.) Jahrhunderts kollidieren: Gelehrsamkeit, (auch sexuelle) Selbstbestimmung, Freiheit der Lebensführung, Partizipation an wesentlichen Erkenntnisfragen und vieles mehr. Gerade jene Punkte, die eine Frauenfigur als "faustisch" erscheinen lassen können, sind die Hauptforderungen der frühen Emanzipationsbewegung und damit das Schreckbild konservativer Köpfe.¹⁵⁰

Wally explicitly states that the taboo on reading *Faust* is her culture's denial to women of the means of understanding and overcoming their own divided nature. She thus underlines the burden placed on women in a society that requires them to behave according to the stereotype of normative womanhood that views women as the embodiment of unified nature.

Wally's inability to act on her insights shows that her psyche and her identity are so determined by the the sexual contract that she is unable to change. The text underlines this point when Wally evokes Kant's description of women's lot in his "Beantwortung der Frage:

¹⁴⁸Melanie Unseld, *Man töte dieses Weib! Weiblichkeit und Tod in der Musik der Jahrhundertwende* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2001) 283. I am indebted to Margaret Kling for the reference to this text.

¹⁴⁹Unseld 283. Citation Peter von Matt, *Liebesverrat: Die Treulosen in der Literatur*, 1989, München, 1994, 40.

¹⁵⁰Unseld 283. Hahn-Hahn's *Faustine* (1841) explores similar territory, although the author significantly expands the contested areas. See discussion below.

Was ist Aufklärung?"¹⁵¹ Her words emphasise the determining nature of women's socialisation, and the definitive effect of their limited exposure to ideas:

Auch dies noch: wir haben einen Ideenkreis, in welchen uns die Erziehung hineinschleuderte. Daraus dürfen wir nun nicht heraus und sollen uns nur mit Grazie wie ein gefangenes Tier an dem Eisengitter dieses Rondells herumwinden. Diese Gefangenschaft unserer Meinungen - ach, was Spreu für den Wind! Rechte will ich in Anspruch nehmen, für wen? für was? (W 42, 23-30)

Having clearly articulated the problem, Wally falls into self-criticism, emphasising the worthlessness of her thoughts and inadequacy of their expression. She hints that people denied access to education present a potential political danger, and speculates that the inability to believe in God is due to the lack of intellectual tools with which to understand him (W 42, 30-43, 3). Unfortunately, Wally turns her intellectual acumen and suggested revolutionary potential in upon herself when Cäsar fails to provide a foundation for her need to believe.

Wally's inability to implement her insights and further contest the sexual contract is confirmed by her actions of tearing up and reassembling the letter before she can bring herself to read it. Only once the whole has been dis-membered and then the fragments re-membered, does she find that "[d]ie Linien und Buchstaben paßten zusammen." (W 41, 15-16) However, this act distances her from more than simply her words ("Jetzt erst las sie ihn [i.e. the letter MV], wo sie gleichsam wußte, daß er ihr nichts mehr schaden konnte." (W 41, 16-17) It distances her from her self, the self that is capable of insight and analysis, but whose contestation of the status quo would force her to take responsibility for herself. In dis-membering the letter Wally dis-members the inquiring aspect of her self. While the insights remain, they will not be transmitted further.

Wally finds not only her thoughts confronting, but also the process of articulating and writing them down, as she is for the first time acknowledging to herself that she has thoughts

¹⁵¹"Daß der bei weitem größte Teil der Menschen (darunter das ganze schöne Geschlecht) den Schritt zur Mündigkeit, außer dem daß er beschwerlich ist, auch für sehr gefährlich halte: dafür sorgen schon jene Vormünder, die die Oberaufsicht gütigst auf sich genommen haben. Nachdem sie ihr Hausvieh zuerst dumm gemacht haben, und sorgfältig verhüteten, daß diese ruhigen Geschöpfe ja keinen Schritt außer dem Gängelwagen, darin sie sie einsperreten, wagen durften: so zeigen sie ihnen nachher die Gefahr, die ihnen drohet, wenn sie es versuchen, allein zu gehen." Immanuel Kant, "Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung?" *Schriften zur Anthropologie, Geschichtsphilosophie, Politik und Pädagogik I*, ed., Wilhelm Welschedel (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1977) 53f.

and can think. This transgressive act contradicts her view of herself and the codes of her socialisation. The narrator, who initially disparages her capacity to think logically, confirms this: "Sie hatte zum ersten Male einige Beobachtungen über Ihren Zustand in eine zusammenhängende Kette aufgereiht. Sie war vor ihren Gedanken nicht scheu zurückgeschreckt, sondern hatte sie diesmal scharf ins Auge gefaßt." (W 41, 5-9)

The process of writing the letter presents Wally's attempt to relieve the symptoms of her confinement within the female role ("In einem Brief an einer Freundin suchte sie ihrer Angst Luft zu machen." (W 41, 9-10)). These symptoms include her "religiösen Tick" (W 40, 31), likened to a "Krankheit" (W 40, 31), as well as those already discussed. The narrator's deployment of the metaphor of suffocation links the pressure she is feeling to the pressure she is under before her marriage: "Sie war wie in einem Zimmer, das sich plötzlich mit Rauch füllt und wo man sich nicht anders helfen kann, als an das Fenster zu springen, es aufzureißen und mit einem unmäßigen Gestus nach frischer Luft zu haschen."¹⁵² (W 40, 32-41,3) Wally's equilibrium is disturbed by all the elements that support the sexual contract: the requirements of the feminine ideal, the need to have religious faith, the subordination of the female self to men and their desires, all enforce her feelings of helplessness and underline women's lack of agency in determining their own lives.¹⁵³ Wally's feeling of containment is so strong that any gesture of self-help must be "excessive."

The narrator's eventual positive assessment of Wally's letter acknowledges the incontrovertible evidence that she is capable of logical thought, although initially he seeks to deny this twice immediately preceding the letter-writing scene. After Wally's defence of Waldemar, the narrator remarks: "Jenes feste und präzise Benehmen ... war nur durch die Situation hervorgerufen worden" (W 40, 10-12). He rationalises it, saying that no woman could "(sich) bei der Leidenschaftlichkeit einer andern enthalten können, sich aufzuschnellen und mißachtend auf die fremde Verirrung herabzusehen." (W 40, 13-15). He also claims that Wally is incapable of logical thought: "Nirgends lagen etwa zerstreute Bruchstücke von

¹⁵²See discussion above.

¹⁵³Wally similarly needs air upon hearing Waldemar's negative comments on religion (W 40, 17-19)

Gedanken, die sie gern verbunden hätte. Unmittelbar und zufällig war Ihr ganzes Leben" (*W* 40, 21-23). He then asserts her general lack of concern about the direction of her life, and her reluctance to think, except in the area of religion. Even here, he characterises her as a lost traveller attempting to orient himself on a country highway, claiming she is directed by "ein ganz bewußtloses Sinnen, ein träumerisches Fühlen," (*W* 40, 27-28) thus emphasising that she is not capable of reflection or logical examination. Until his positive commentary on her letter the narrator repeatedly qualifies positive assessments of her intellectual capacity, attempting to cast her in the mould of conventional femininity. Both Wally and the narrator tend to present two radically opposed accounts of Wally. Despite evidence to the contrary, both tend to revert to normative ideas about women's nature and lack of intellectual capacity. This is emblematic of the power of conventional ideas to determine the way women are perceived.

II.1.IV.c. Anecdotal evidence.

Although critical readings disagree about Waldemar's culpability in Bärbel's death,¹⁵⁴ the narrator's response to Wally's attempt to clear him casts her in an equivocal light. When Wally states that she herself had had an involvement with him,¹⁵⁵ he cannot remember, and others congratulate her on her fiction (*W* 38, 36).¹⁵⁶ The narrator supports this interpretation when he comments that Wally provides the alibi "mit unpassender Heiterkeit" (*W* 38, 22). Moreover, when others congratulate her on the fiction, he states that she "blickte etwas stolz" (*W* 39, 1), the narrator adding "man kann durchaus nicht sagen, warum" (*W* 39, 1-2). The narrator's irony becomes heavier when Waldemar speculates whether Bärbel's uncanny identification of him as the giver of the ring could be magnetically induced:¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴Geller finds Waldemar innocent (344f., fn.232), while Vonhoff asserts it is obvious that Waldemar is Bärbel's seducer (105).

¹⁵⁵Wally states she had, as was her custom, cast the ring he had given her into the spa drinking cups at the end of the season for the poor to take (*W* 8, 23-25; 31-35).

¹⁵⁶The narrator recounts that other spa guests doubt his protestations of innocence when first introducing the story of "mad" Bärbel (*W* 36, 12-17)

¹⁵⁷Mundt's description, in a letter to Charlotte Stieglitz (Berlin 26 October 1834), of the newly invented "Psychometer," refers to the disrepute in which magnetism and its alleged effects had come. Mundt defends the invention, which uses "die Wirkungen des thierischen Magnetismus" to ascertain the personality and moral qualities of the person being tested,

Wie wunderbar war der Zusammenhang dieses unglücklichen Ereignisses! Man konnte versucht werden, an eine magnetische Wirkung zu glauben. Wer erklärte ihm, wie ein Ring eine Neigung veranlassen konnte zu einem Manne, den man nie gesehen! Wie kam es, daß die Arme, gleich als sie ihn zum ersten Male sahe, ihn als den Eigentümer des Ringes erkannte, den sie liebte und mit einer wirklichen Person verwechselte! (W 39, 2-11)

Waldemar returns to his wife, suggesting that they immediately leave the site of such "unheimliche[r] Begebenheiten" (W 39, 13). Waldemar is presented as a good friend of Cäsar's who views him as "eine treue Seele" (W 36, 18) and defends him in the face of more cynical judgements. However, Waldemar is connected with another uncanny occurrence, namely the fact that his wife "(siechte) an unheilbaren Übeln ..." (W 36, 1-2) since their marriage. In a text in which Wally's supposed "illness" and the mental pressure she is under are viewed as the result of social pressures on women, it is likely that Waldemar's wife's illness is also connected with their marriage. Her symptoms thus result from the conditions within her marriage, whether they are the result of syphilis contracted from her husband, or psychosomatic hysteria.¹⁵⁸

The fact that Wally's defence of Waldemar's implied sexual indiscretions follows the forest scene suggests that both Wally and Waldemar are potentially implicated in behaviour which transgresses approved bourgeois moral convention, but which is nevertheless implicitly tolerated. My analysis above of the double standards in the bourgeois sexual moral code as presented in Fichte's "Family Law," indicates that if Waldemar were Bärbel's betrayer, he would simply have been acting in accordance with social conventions which tolerated such behaviour. Convention defined such relationships as invisible, and accordingly, the man's actions did not take place. It was expected that the women remain invisible as well, particularly women from the fourth estate, who were invisible anyway, and whose social function was to provide males of the superior caste with sexual opportunities.¹⁵⁹ Bärbel's

asserting: "Hier ist durchaus keine Charlatanerie." Houben, *Sturm* 439.

¹⁵⁸Marianne Schuller, "Weibliche Neurose und Identität: Zur Diskussion der Hysterie um die Jahrhundertwende," *Die Wiederkehr des Körpers*, ed., Dietmar Kamper and Christoph Wulf (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1982): 180-192.

¹⁵⁹Gutzkow refers to this custom in his critique of *Lucinde*, stating it was "der Ausdruck dessen, was man sich damals in einer verabredeten Stunde und bei Aufstellung eines wachsamem Kammermädchens nicht mehr versagte. (Vorrede xxviii.) This practice clearly continued well into the nineteenth century and beyond. See also Luise Mühlbach

error was to seek recognition, and Wally's behaviour in supporting Waldemar's story aids in maintaining the status quo. The text gives no indication that Wally's social standing in the spa society is affected by her "Umarmung" with Cäsar, and presumably it is irrelevant whether her relationships with the men who presented her with monthly rings are sexual. Her defence of Waldemar thus supports a convention which tolerates her own extra-moral sexual practice.

The suicide of the trumpeter's wife, which ends the First Book of the narrative, is significant in that it "machte den ersten Abschnitt in ihrem Leben" (W 43, 22-23). This caesura is the point at which she resolves to avoid introspection and commits herself to a life of frivolity. This is also the point at which she resolves to marry the Sardinian ambassador in an attempt to escape her emotional bondage to Cäsar. The narrator emphasises that her introspective episodes and increasing focus on religious scepticism are connected with Cäsar: "Wally wirbelte sich in einer Lust, die sie so zauberhaft zu regeln verstand. Was Religion! Was Welterschöpfung! Was Unsterblichkeit! Rot oder blau zum Kleide, das ist die Frage." (W 46, 12-15) This is supported by the narrator's account of her hopes for the future in Paris, which states that she will switch off her intellect, commit herself to pleasure, and "den Becher der Lust und der Gedankenlosigkeit bis tief auf die Nelge leeren." (W 59, 13-15)

His description of this state confirms her freedom from both religious doubt, and emotional bondage to Cäsar, but also indicates that it is temporary:

Indem Wally Szenen erlebt, welche mit ihrer Krankheit nicht in der entferntesten Berührung liegen, indem sie von einem Gedankenreiche losgetrennt ist, das sie selbst in sich aufgereggt hatte; muß auch der Kontrast desselben später nur desto tiefer in ihr Herz schlagen. (W 60, 4-8)

He adds portentously: "Wally wandelte sorglos am Rande eines Abgrundes." (W 60, 9-10)

Wally in fact falls into the chasm when, after her husband enters her bedchamber and violates their agreement, she decides to resume contact with Cäsar. As with their initial meeting in the woods when Wally is riding a blind horse, the resumption of contact occurs by chance and with a horse again playing a significant role. In Gutzkow's personal mythology, related in the autobiographical "Aus der Knabenzeit," a horse can never be fully tamed to

serve a human master, and is likely to turn on him at any point.¹⁶⁰ Wally's two-part relationship with Cäsar testifies to the fact that the horse functions as a signifier for chance occurrences, unpredictability and change for the worse. Cäsar does not visit Wally after he rescues her, and when she discovers he had already been in Paris for four weeks without visiting her, she gains the insight, discussed above, that after having given him everything, she is now the "Leiche, die er mit Füßen tritt." (W 69, 26) The three week episode of high fever which follows confirms she is at her nadir (W 70, 2-17), as she is desperate to leave her marriage, but realises that Cäsar is not interested in resuming a relationship with her. The fever episode, during which time "der Wächter: Bewußtsein (war) vom Tore der Vernunft verschwunden" (W 70, 1-2), signals a complete breakdown. Upon regaining consciousness she clearly identifies Cäsar as its cause (W 70, 25-29). However, she is incapable of acting on her insight and attempting to initiate change in her life independently of Cäsar. She is able to believe that their return to Germany together means a resumption of their love relationship.

II.1.v. Wally's development II: search for autonomy.

The Third Book of the narrative focusses on Wally's internal life through her diary entries.¹⁶¹ Initially reflecting a state of assured self-confidence in the perception that Cäsar loves her, Wally's diary entries then trace an identity crisis that moves through a number of stages before she commits suicide. Her diary entries also link normative female identity, love

¹⁶⁰Gutzkow emphasises that a horse remains unpredictable: "Das Pferd hängt von der Reizbarkeit seiner eigenen Natur ab. Es hat sich beim besten Willen, wenn man so sich ausdrücken wollte, nicht in der Gewalt. ... So hat ein 'Bereiter,' ein Stallmeister, ein Offizier, ein Wettrenner, ein Pferdeamateur ein von arabischen Ahnen stammendes Tier liebgewonnen, er streichelt es, der treffliche Renner spielt mit den Ohren, schwingt den Schweif, stößt die kurzen grammelnden Laute des Wohlbehagens aus, man glaubt Wunder, wie innig der Bund zwischen Tier und Mensch geschlossen ist - und plötzlich bringt man den vom Rosseshuf getroffenen Herrn nach Hause. Blut quillt aus des sterbenden Mund." "Aus der Knabenzeit." Gutzkow, *Werke*, III, 7: 25.

¹⁶¹The narrator absents himself from the Third Book almost entirely, inserting himself into the narrative to introduce Cäsar's "Geständnisse über Religion und Christentum" (W 106, 26), and to describe Wally's state after she finishes reading (W 124, 14), then finally to give an account of her preparation for suicide, her corpse and her funeral (W 124, 15-127, 35).

and religion. The security Wally feels as Cäsar's beloved allows her to articulate and acknowledge her religious scepticism for the first time:

ich (weiß) aus meinem frühern Leben, wie unglücklich ich war, daß ich über diese Dinge nichts zu denken wagte. Ein männliches Herz, das uns liebt, ist der Wächter aller unsrer Gedanken und muß die stille Verantwortung dessen tragen, was in der Seele des Weibes Sünde und Empörung ist. (W 92, 10-16)

From within the safety of a heterosexual relationship, in which she has subordinated herself to her beloved according to the sexual contract, Wally paradoxically feels she is able to transgress against the feminine ideal and her upbringing, as in her mind Cäsar takes responsibility for her transgressive thoughts, thus acting as her intellectual as well as her emotional support.

The loss of Cäsar then forces Wally herself to take responsibility for her lack of faith. This involves her in a twofold crisis. Firstly, she must come to terms with the fact that Cäsar has left her for a woman she views as the embodiment of natural femininity. For Wally, this confirms her failure to conform to the model of normative womanhood, and she thus cannot occupy the pre-scripted female subject position. Secondly, her religious scepticism also confirms her failure to conform with the conventional ideal of womanhood. She cannot suppress this knowledge and its implications, as the articulation of her religious scepticism has reified it. She must therefore attempt to reconstitute her identity as a religious sceptic and without the male beloved who also functions as the "Wächter" of her thoughts.

As she senses Cäsar becoming increasingly interested in Delphine, Wally ponders on his significance for her and the possible consequences of his loss. In the following statement, her claim that she can only live within Cäsar's love defines this love as the "dam" that protects her from being overcome by her feelings of religious scepticism:

Die Unruhe, über Religion eine Ansicht zu haben, peinigt mich mehr als sonst. Sie hat eine solche, jetzt zur Not gedämmte Gewalt über mich, daß ich glauben muß, die Wegnahme dieses Dammes der Liebe bringt eine Überflutung in mir hervor, welche selbst den Schmerz über Cäsars Verlust mit fortschwemmt. Ich lebe und sterbe mit Cäsar. Leben kann ich nur mit Cäsars Liebe. Sterben muß ich, nicht weil Cäsar imstande wäre, eine andre mir, ein Mädchen einer Frau (ob er es wohl weiß, eine Unberührte einer Unberührten) vorzuziehen, sondern weil dann alles in mir zusammensinkt. Gott, ich glaube, fast brauch' ich Cäsar nur, um mich zu beschäftigen und meinen Gedanken eine unschädliche Richtung zu geben. (W 92, 25-93, 3)

I will first address Wally's claim that she can only live with Cäsar's love, and then show how this is related to the claim that she is a virgin.

As discussed above, the love that subsumes her as an individual also incorporates her religious scepticism, thereby negating it as a source of anxiety for her. The implication of Wally's claim that she cannot live without Cäsar's love is that she cannot live with her religious scepticism. Vonhoff reads the above statement as confirmation of Wally's imprisonment in conventional gender roles.¹⁶² However, he also finds that her claim that it is almost as though she needs Cäsar just to turn her thoughts away from dangerous paths, shows that "Ihr Verhalten noch dort, wo sie sich bemüht, Denkweisen bürgerlicher Provenienz zu übernehmen, ganz und gar an dem des Adels orientiert bleibt: selbst die Anleitung zur Reflexion dient da letztlich bloß zum Ausfüllen des standesgemäßen Ennui."¹⁶³ Vonhoff here reduces Wally's fear of the fact that she cannot deal with her religious doubt on her own to the clichéd malaise of aristocratic boredom, disregarding the implications of lack of faith for people of her gender.

Wally's claim of virginity appears to contradict the clear evidence in the narrative that Wally has indeed been sexually active. However, the context in which it is made highlights Cäsar's significance in protecting her from her religious scepticism. Each of these factors needs to be looked at more closely. My discussion has shown that the conventions sanctioned by the sexual contract permit a wide variety of sexual practices, giving tacit support to specific kinds of extramarital sexual activity. These conventions deem such activity invisible and define it as not having occurred. As I argue above, any sexual activity Wally may have engaged in with the ring givers or with Cäsar has, in this sense, not taken place. In addition, my discussion of Wally's relationship with Luigi has also shown that it left no traces on Wally's psyche. The marriage was not a love relationship in the bourgeois sense, and Luigi's possible rape of Wally occurred within the framework of Old Regime marriage practice.

In contrast, Wally gave herself to Cäsar in an act of love as it is defined by the bourgeois code: as a result, she is subsumed by his love and subordinates herself to him absolutely.

¹⁶²Vonhoff 124.

¹⁶³Vonhoff 125.

Moreover, in making him the keeper of her religious scepticism, she also cites a convention from the revelatory conversion narratives of many of the harlots of the desert.¹⁶⁴ This is, namely, that their conversion is as dependent upon a male as upon the Word. Whereas the account above of Augustine's conversion stresses that his revelatory experience follows upon his reading of the scriptures, accounts of the conversion narratives of some of the harlots show that they receive the Word by hearing it from the man who then oversees their conversion. Wally's representation in this narrative in fact bears strong resemblances to the narrative of Pelagia of Antioch.¹⁶⁵ She forms a strong bond with Nonnus, the bishop who oversees her conversion. Wally has arguably not only given Cäsar her identity in the secular sense of the sexual contract, she has also consecrated herself to him in a religious sense, in the tradition of these revelatory conversion narratives. Cäsar is the only man who "knows" her, and she remains otherwise "unberührt."¹⁶⁶

In this context it is only logical that when Cäsar finally confirms he is not available to her as a partner, she attempts to shift him into the role of spiritual mentor. Hoping that he will confirm her faith rather than her scepticism, she asks him to send her a testament of his religious belief.¹⁶⁷ Her request underlines the narrative's interrogation of the fundamental

¹⁶⁴The women known as the harlots of the desert are prostitutes such as Pelagia of Antioch, Mary of Egypt and Thaïs, who after undergoing a conversion experience, lived as revered (ostensibly male) hermits in the desert. Their stories were first told in the *Vitae Patrum*, passed around for the edification of young monks. (Benedicta Ward, 3) See Gottfried Arnold, ed., and annot., *Vitae Patrum oder Das Leben der Altväter und anderer Gottseligen Personen*, Mit Chur-Fürstl. Brandenburg. Freyheit (Halle: In Verlegung des Waisen-Hauses, 1700).

¹⁶⁵In the present framework it is not possible to deal with this more extensively. For Pelagia's story see Arnold, "Vom Leben der heiligen Pelagia" *Vitae* 200-210.

¹⁶⁶Given the way in which other apparent contradictions and ambiguities in the text reveal the discrepancy of the overt sexual moral code and the tacitly approved code, it is unlikely that Wally's statement of her virginity is a ploy on Gutzkow's part to escape the censors, or that it resulted from the haste in which he wrote the narrative. Rather, virginity appears to have been a fairly flexible term in the mid-nineteenth century. C.f. Hahn-Hahn's definition in *Faustine* (59) of "geistige Jungfräulichkeit" that is not linked with physical experience. Gerinde Geiger glosses this with reference to Esther Harding's definition of the original sense of the term. According to Harding, a virgin is a woman who has control over her body and her sexuality, "also keinem Mann angehört, sondern in sich selbst eins ist (vir-gyn)." (214) The flexibility may be partly due to the meshing of the aristocratic and bourgeois codes of conduct together with the fact that a woman's virtue was a social construct that depended on her social reputation rather than actual behaviour.

¹⁶⁷Wally's request carries the hope that his habitually heavily ironic mode of discussing religion is a ruse: "Seine Scherze verdecken nur eine Überzeugung, die vielleicht folgerichtig ist." (W 100, 14-16) She persuades herself that he will thus act to reassert her faith.

tenet of revealed religion, namely faith. In seeking confirmation of the stability of religious structures in this way, Wally attempts to reintroduce stability into her life in conventional terms. In having Wally make this final request to Cäsar, the narrative echoes the revelatory conversion narratives of the harlots of the desert who receive the Word through a male. As discussed above, Wally's own anti-revelatory experience following upon her reading of the Bible conforms with and at the same time undermines the model of male revelatory experience in the tradition of the church fathers. Her request to Cäsar arises not only from her inability to authorise her lack of faith. It also stems from a recognition that she cannot exist without an external support ("Stütze"). The text demonstrates that any such support must necessarily be male.

Wally's request that Cäsar provide her with his thoughts on religion follows her realisation that he is becoming increasingly interested in Delphine. The realisation triggers an attempt to constitute herself as a legitimating authority in order to have the capacity to assert stability in her life. This takes the form of seeking to adopt the male subject position through intellectual reflection. Her attempt to authorise her identity in this way is confirmed by her comment on a journal entry made after reading the "Wolfenbüttler Fragmente: "Ganz männlich werden meine Ausdrücke!" (W 96, 19). Once Cäsar confirms he is leaving her, Wally emphatically asserts her search for knowledge, declaring: "Ich muß Licht haben, Aufschluß, Einsicht! Ich denke an Cäsar nicht mehr. Ich will wissen, erkennen." (W 97, 3-5) However, her own reflections fail to illuminate, just as her attempt at losing herself in the social whirl also fails (W 100, 1-4).

Before receiving Cäsar's "Confessions," Wally also attempts to find intellectual succour in Rahel's and Bettina's writings. Neither provides what Wally seeks, as she finds their minds as undisciplined and untutored as her own. Rahel is judged as being "reif an Philosophie und objektiver Vergeßlichkeit" (W 101, 17-18),¹⁶⁸ and Bettina equally harshly: "Bettina hatte

¹⁶⁸Wally's dismissal of Rahel is foreshadowed in Gutzkow's necrologue on Charlotte Stieglitz, in which he celebrates the latter's "That." He asserts: "Rahel würde ihren Gemahl niemals haben so unglücklich machen können, denn sie wollte keine Resultate ...; sie ergab sich nur dialektischen Umtrieben." "Cypressen für Karoline [sic. MV] Stieglitz," *Phönix: Frühlings-Zeitung für Deutschland*, Literatur-Blatt Nr. 8, 25 February, 1835, 189-191, 190. I discuss Gutzkow's renaming of Charlotte as Karoline below.

so lang freien Willen, sich ein Gesetz zu schaffen; und nun so alt und noch Immer kein Gesetz! Ihr Buch ist ungereimte Poesie. Ein freies Weib ist nur erträglich mit Spekulation." (W 101, 25-28) In discussing Wally's judgement of these two of the three "Parzen,"¹⁶⁹ Vonhoff concludes that "die historischen Bedingungen haben die Frauenfiguren nicht hervorgebracht, die Wally als Vorbild dienen könnten."¹⁷⁰ He adds that "wo man sich das nicht eingesteht, kommt es höchstens zur Mythenbildung, mit der aber nichts für die Emanzipation der Frau gewonnen ist," as myths do not function to empower women in real life but in fact hinder progress.¹⁷¹ Vonhoff here draws on Wülfing's discussion of the tendency by her contemporaries to refer to Rahel by her first name only. Wülfing argues that omitting reference to either of her surnames, Levin or Varnhagen, frees her from her bourgeois context and aligns her with the other, biblical, Rahel.¹⁷² However, in the social context of the time, the tendency to refer to Rahel and Bettina by their Christian names only, indicates that in the public consciousness these women had freed themselves from the names of both the father and the husband. They thus successfully freed themselves from the bourgeois expression of the sexual contract, which specified that women only existed as adjuncts to a man. Rahel and Bettina emancipated themselves in publicly meaningful ways from their men, establishing an independent public identity for themselves. In contrast, Wally, in this final phase of her life, is trapped within the sexual contract. She expects Rahel's and Bettina's writings to conform to aesthetics established within a tradition of male writing, as indicated by her comment, cited above. History thus provides Wally with two female role models who are of no help to her, as they are committed to a process of socio-political interrogation from which Wally pulls away in this last phase of her life, as she seeks refuge in traditional structures.

¹⁶⁹C.f. Gutzkow's term in the essay "Rahel, Bettine, die Stieglitz," *Jahrbuch der Literatur*, 1839 (Frankfurt a. M.: Athenäum, 1971) 37-46, 37.

¹⁷⁰Vonhoff 130f.

¹⁷¹Vonhoff 130f.

¹⁷²Vonhoff 403, fn. 325; Wulf Wülfing, "Zur Mythisierung der Frau im Jungen Deutschland," *ZfdPh* 99 (1980): 558-581. In addition, Vonhoff cites the Biblical reference Wally makes, contrasting Rachel and Leah, namely: "Wieder wie Jakob einen Zug aus dem Rahelbrunnen getan. Aber es ist immer nur Lea, die man erhält, niemals Rahel. (W 101, 29-31) Vonhoff interprets this as indicating that, as Jacob was cheated of Rachel by Laban, her father, so too we are cheated in having to make do with Rahel Levin (130).

Wally's agitated state before receipt of Cäsar's "Confessions" is conveyed by the two anecdotes she interpolates into her diary, the one, concerning Alfred the sleepwalker and his bride-to-be Julie, originally related to her by Cäsar (*W* 102, 21-104, 15), and the other, which appears to be the product of her own phantasy, concerning the decapitated man brought back to life for a short time by means of a silver ring attaching his head to his torso (*W* 106, 2-20).¹⁷³ These two anecdotes, like those of Bärbel and the trumpeter's wife, concern love/sex, actual, intimated, or suspected betrayal, and death, as does the subplot. In each anecdote, the desire of one partner is greater than that of the other, and each establishes a causal link between love and death.¹⁷⁴

Wally's increasing sense of loss of control and breakdown manifests in horrific waking dreams and the inability to write down what she thinks (*W* 105, 27-106, 1). She indeed "seems to enter the borderline zones of an identity in crisis; the state, neither subject nor object, that Kristeva describes as abjection."¹⁷⁵ Once she has read Cäsar's "Confessions,"

¹⁷³Julie causes Alfred's death by disrupting his sleepwalking at a dangerous point, and subsequently has a mental breakdown (*W* 104, 11-15) Wally's phantasy revolves around the female lover's suspicion that her lover is betraying her with "Doris" or "Galathée" (*W* 106, 16-18). Her suspicions lead her to kill the beheaded man with a kiss (*W* 106, 18-20).

¹⁷⁴One of the earliest defenders of *Wally* and its author, Paulus, remarks on a similar nexus, arguing that the novel is anything but "*zur Sinnlichkeit und Verbreitung sinnliche Ausschweifungen verführerisch*" Hat doch der Vf. sogar drei bis vier Nebengeschichten, entbehrlicher, als ästhetisch erlaubt sein möchte, eingeschoben, in denen *die kläglichsten Folgen des sinnlichen Verliebtseyns* schauerlich, ja beinahe widerlich ausgemalt erscheinen. [emphases in original MV]" Paulus, *Sendschreiben an Karl Gutzkow: Von einem Freunde der Wahrheit*, (Mannheim: Hoff, 1836) 235-245, 239. Vonhoff, who emphasises the sociological aspects of all the anecdotes, states that they are "Krankheitsgeschichten, in denen die psychische und physische Erkrankung des Einzelnen als Folge gesellschaftlicher Prozesse erscheint." (99)

¹⁷⁵This formulation comes from Miller's reading of de Stäel's *Corinne* (Miller, *Subject* 184). Gutzkow's and de Stäel's text share other topoi such as placing the female protagonist in the scopic field of the beloved male. The opening sequence of *Wally* in fact presents the reader with a textbook example of reification of the etymological link between theory and vision emphasised by scholars in such instances in which the gaze is male (Jane Gallop, *Feminism and Psychoanalysis: The Daughter's Seduction*, Houndmills UK: Macmillan, 1982, 58). Wally is placed in the scopic field of the narrator, whose commentary reveals that seeing does not in fact equal knowing. The prominence accorded to vision in this scene is central to the text's interrogation of images and conventional notions of woman and the feminine in its representation of Wally as a woman who is judged according to conventional and well-worn tropes of the feminine. Through its unsettling of the narrator's authority and presumption to knowledge in this scene, the text presents an inquiry into theorising on the feminine, highlighting the disjunction between women and the feminine by attesting to the limitations of epistemology.

which she interprets as asserting the impossibility of religious faith, Wally's world collapses. Her diary is that of a traumatised woman, providing access to an "identity in crisis," and tracing the loss of that which provides the foundation for her life in both an emotional and spiritual sense, Cäsar, her "Stütze."

The situation of a woman who, after experiencing violation by a male, can no longer identify with her previous definition of herself, and thus moves into a state in which she is no longer who she was before, but has not gained a new identity, is a recurrent literary topos, as Miller notes in her discussion of de Stäel's *Corinne*.¹⁷⁶ With respect to de Stäel's protagonist, once she has "enter[ed] the realm of acute suffering,"¹⁷⁷ abandoned by her lover and having lost the ability to practise her art, Miller writes:

As if to figure Corinne's trauma and the difficulty of her recovery, the novel includes several pages of her attempts at writing Like Clarissa's "mad papers" written after the rape, Corinne's "reflections" both rehearse the violence she has undergone and obsessively embody its aftermath. Entitled "Fragments of Corinne's Thoughts" they tell the story of a double, if circular failure: a suffering that *undoes* talent; and the collapse of the erotic plot.¹⁷⁸

Wally's diary similarly traces "the collapse of the erotic plot" from her point of view, and her crisis of faith in herself, which articulates itself through her inability to authorise her religious scepticism and thus establish an identity outside the strictures of the feminine ideal. Wally's trauma is clear from her immediate response when Cäsar informs her of his decision to marry Delphine: "Ich bin ruhig. Ich habe keine Tränen für diesen Verlust. Ich bin in einer fürchterlichen Seelenstimmung." (W 96, 31-33)¹⁷⁹ Unable to acknowledge her condition as legitimate, she cannot accept Cäsar's twofold denial of himself to her both as lover and as spiritual guide.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶Miller, *Subject* 186.

¹⁷⁷Miller, *Subject* 184.

¹⁷⁸Miller, *Subject* 186.

¹⁷⁹The mental disturbance and distress which precedes Wally's suicide is emphasised both in her final diary entry (W 126, 6-33) and the final glimpse the narrator provides of her mental state before her suicide (W 126, 34-127, 9).

¹⁸⁰Blackwell and Köster offer diametrically opposed readings of the reasons for her suicide, the former arguing "it is a reasoned response to an unbearable ethical dilemma" rather than "due to unhappy love ..., social scandal, or remorse for past sins," as the Sentimental tradition dictated. (Blackwell, 246) Köster, in contrast casts it as the result of her lack of success in her relationships with men: "Als nach ihrer Ehe auch die Beziehung zu Cäsar scheitert, gerät sie in eine religiöse Sinnkrise und gibt sich den Tod." (*Literatur* 160) Heintz finds that society is ultimately at fault for Wally's suicide because it requires women's

Noch sechs Monate hielt Wally ein Leben aus, dessen *Stütze* weggenommen war. Sie, die Zweiflerin, die Ungewisse, die Feindin Gottes, war sie nicht frömmere als die, welche sich mit einem nicht verstandenen Glauben beruhigen? Sie hatte die tiefe Überzeugung in sich, daß ohne Religion das Leben des Menschen elend ist. Sie ging nun damit um, dem ihrigen ein Ende zu machen [emphasis added MV]. (W 124, 29-35)

As in the boudoir scene, the narrator here asserts that the sceptic is closer to God than those who merely engage in external religious ritual. However, Wally's socially stigmatised religious scepticism presents such an extreme threat to her that she cannot continue to live. After reading Cäsar's Confessions Wally states she must die, "denn hassenswert schien' ich mir, wenn ich mich durch die Welt schliche und mir selbst verbergen wollte, was ich leide. Wir erkennen Gott nicht." (126, 5-8)¹⁸¹

Directly preceding her death Wally attempts to reassert the sense of belonging she expressed when she felt herself to be a part of the great chain of being in the forest scene. She uses it in a positive sense at an early stage of the diary while she still seeks to adopt a male subject position; attempting to gain a feeling of belonging through attaining the "Ruhe des Weisen" (W 104, 36) who she thinks feels himself to be a "Glied einer großen Wesenskette." (W 105, 1-2) At this point she is still hopeful that she might be able to achieve equilibrium. (W 105, 3-4) However, Wally's third and final deployment of the classical metaphor on the final night of her life transmutes the chain of humanity into one which annihilates itself through self-sacrificial suicide: "Sie werden sterben, aber sie werden alle den Dolch in ihre eigene Brust senken und eine große Kette der Freundschaft schließen, die Menschen!" (W 126, 22-24) In universalising her suicide, Wally's nihilistic vision of the means to attain wholeness certainly does cast the possibility of self-realisation as a social question, as Vonhoff states,¹⁸² rather than as a purely metaphysical question. However, the narrative also

"moral and intellectual disenfranchisement and dependence," which is the basis of her inability to deal with her "religious scruples" and dependence on Cäsar (456). However, he does not analyse the socio-political institutional structures that deny women autonomy and enfranchisement or the workings of conventions which support the psychic inscription of gender.

¹⁸¹Whereas Köster finds that Cäsar's position is characteristic for most of the Young Germans (Köster, *Literatur* 161), Vonhoff argues that it is an early formulation of the intellectually-defined "political radicalism" which developed from the liberalism of the late 1830s into "Linkshegelianismus" and then socialist and communist radicalism. (Vonhoff 135f.)

¹⁸²Vonhoff contrasts this with his view that the case of Charlotte Stieglitz casts the possibility of self-realisation as the question of one individual sacrificing themselves for another

poses this question in gender-specific terms, which results in an examination of the possibilities of self-realisation for women who resist their social inscription according to the sexual contract. Wally's vision of the end of history asserts that social change of the kind that would enable her to survive as a female sceptic who is not an adjunct to a man is impossible.

II.1.vi. Suicide.

Gutzkow repeatedly stated that one of his inspirations for writing the novel was Charlotte Stieglitz's suicide.¹⁸³ However, although his initial response to this suicide was to celebrate it as a decisive and vital act, a "Tat," his response once he had had time to reflect, was more considered.¹⁸⁴ Gutzkow's immediate response, the necrologue upon Stieglitz's death entitled "Cypressen für Karoline [sic. MV] Stieglitz," appeared on 25 February 1835.¹⁸⁵ Through the 'slip' which leads to the conflation of the names and thus the identities of Karoline Gänderode and Charlotte Stieglitz, Karoline and Charlotte become metonymically linked signifiers for women's suicide enacted as self-sacrifice "in the name of love."¹⁸⁶ In the essay "Rahel, Bettina, die Stieglitz," Gutzkow reads Charlotte's suicide, allegedly committed in order to

(150). He states more explicitly with respect to Wally: "Aspekte menschlicher Selbstverwirklichung, wie sie der Roman als nicht verwirklichte dargestellt hat: Freiheit, Solidarität, Sinnlichkeit und Erkenntnis finden aus der verzerrten Perspektive des Leidens im visionären Bild ihren Ausdruck." (149) He finds that Gutzkow's novel thus brings about "die Umformulierung der individuellen zur sozialen Frage [emphasis in original MV]." Geller's reading of Wally's vision concludes that "only the dagger can satisfy the tragic demand for wholeness." (340)

¹⁸³In his introduction to the second edition of *Wally* (1852) Gutzkow states that his idea to combine the motifs of suicide and religious belief, i.e. "Selbstmord um eine Idee, Selbstmord um eine im Glauben und in der Liebe wankende und fortgezogene Stütze" (*W* 140), came when discussion of "[d]ieser grauenvolle Tod" (*W* 139) in Berlin circles caused a young girl to cry out: "Wie läßt sich begreifen, was wir glauben sollen!" (*W* 139)

¹⁸⁴C.f. Wülfing, "Mythisierung" 575f.

¹⁸⁵"Cypressen" 189-191.

¹⁸⁶Gutzkow, "Cypressen" 190. Manfred Schneider provides a thorough reading of ways in which the the slip reveals the personal, literary, and cultural resonance of Charlotte's suicide for Gutzkow (186-188). Most immediately, the feminine form of his own name connects Gutzkow both to Charlotte and the literary suicide of Karoline Gänderode, which was present in the public consciousness once again through the publication of Bettine's *Briefwechsel mit einem Kinde* in 1835). Geller maintains that the associations drawn out by Schneider "all point to the interconnection of woman, death, and male self-determination." (293, fn. 123)

inspire her husband's creative genius,¹⁸⁷ in terms of the Young German desire to unite art and life by means of the deed: "allein entschieden ist, daß man ihrem Tode eine Deutung auf den Kampf der Idee mit der Wirklichkeit gab."¹⁸⁸ In his initial celebratory reading of her death, Charlotte Stieglitz becomes a metaphor for the desire of the young generation of writers.¹⁸⁹

His later representation of Wally's death as that of a person fundamentally alienated from her self and from her community, and in a state of despair, clearly diverges from representations attempting to valorise both the physical circumstances of Charlotte's death and its symbolic significance in literary and philosophical terms.¹⁹⁰ However, for Wally as for Charlotte, death seems to be the only possible remaining form of action. Wally's "Tat," like that of the real Charlotte before her, emphasises the respective woman's inability to establish a liveable form of identity in the society of the time and the options it provides women. When Cäsar finally leaves Wally, she can neither resume her old life nor create a

¹⁸⁷See discussion of Mundt's *Denkmal* below.

¹⁸⁸Gutzkow, "Rahel, Bettine, die Stieglitz" 76. Lynne Tatlock provides a critical assessment of the way in which "these three women became mascots of the epoch, appropriated by men to articulate their own cultural preoccupations." ("Grim Wives' Tales: Mundt's Stieglitz, Stieglitz's Goethe," *Monatshäfte* 82 (1990): 467-486, 468. See also Tatlock's analysis of Young Germans' representations of the three women in "The Young Germans in Praise of Famous Women: Ambivalent Advocates." *German Life and Letters* 39.3 (1986): 193-209). Other studies include Georg Brandes, *Rahel, Bettina und Charlotte Stieglitz: Drei literarhistorische Charakterbilder aus der Zeit des "jungen Deutschland"*, (Leipzig: Barsdorf, 1896); Wulf Wülfing, "Zur Mythisierung der Frau im Jungen Deutschland," *ZfdPh* 99 (1980): 558-581. Kay Goodman looks at Rahel and Bettina in this light: "The Impact of Rahel Varnhagen in the 19th Century," *Burkhard* 125-54.

¹⁸⁹Geller emphasises the self-referential nature of Gutzkow's reading and that of other Young Germans. He argues that Stieglitz sanctioned the status quo of heterosexual relations through her suicide and in very material fashion illustrated and valorised the fact that woman herself is ultimately immaterial to man's existence, as long as the representation is right. In killing herself, Charlotte Stieglitz's "redemptive gift was to allow her husband to substitute his representation of her for her presence," and achieve "autonomy" without having to negotiate the difficult presence of the other (292). Geller argues further: "Thus Stieglitz both testified to the pathological social relations of the time and offered a way out: a woman's absolute love Regardless of her motivation, Stieglitz's suicide, because it was an absolute act of will consummated absolutely, generated a message that transcended perverse social relations." (292 and 293)

¹⁹⁰See discussion below of *Denkmal* and the by no means uniform responses of contemporaries to the suicide. Gutzkow's revised opinion of Charlotte's suicide, like his representation of Wally's, presents both as the result of an "Irrtum". He concludes his essay, "Rahel, Bettina, die Stieglitz," with the statement: "Es gibt Irrtümer, die schöner sind als das richtige." (Gutzkow, "Rahel" 76) Of Wally, he states: "Ich verschweige zuletzt nicht, daß Wally in einem Irrthume sich den Tod giebt." ("Vertheidigung gegen Menzel - Berichtigung einiger Urtheile im Publikum," *Estermann*, I: 81)

new one. More significantly, she cannot forge a new identity, and remains in the state of abjection.

In its representation of Wally's suicide, Gutzkow's text goes some way towards deconstructing the trope of "Die schöne Leiche,"¹⁹¹ and in doing so it implicitly deconstructs Mundt's, or rather the public representation of Stieglitz's suicide.¹⁹² Wally's corpse is not beautiful, and Gutzkow thus emphasises that Wally's suicide is a last resort, an act of helplessness rather than power. It cannot be portrayed as an act in service of the transformative power of art or life, as Wally's appearance on her death-bed is described as follows:

Man fand sie auf dem Bette ausgestreckt. Sie hatte mit beiden Händen den in das rote Tuch gewickelten und darin auch von ihr während des Stoßes gelassenen Dolch in ihr Herz gedrückt und lag da, nicht lächelnd und ruhig, wie wohl in andern Fällen hier getroffen ist, sondern mit krampfhafter Verzerrung ihres schönen Antlitzes und einem Ausdrücke der Verzweiflung in den starren Augen, der erschrecken machte." (W 127, 26-32)

Thus although Wally ends up dead, she is certainly not the "schöne Leiche" whose presence in nineteenth-century literature positively affirms the social status quo.¹⁹³ The fact of Wally's suicide instead provides negative affirmation of the social order: the corpse's lack of beauty embodies a critique of the conventions that assist in bringing about Wally's death, those conventions that support the status quo. Wally's unhappiness and the ugliness of her death thus point to the social ill caused by upholding those paradigms for the heterosexual relationship and woman's role in society which are cemented in the sexual contract.

The narrator's retrospective presentation of her suicide differs from Mundt's presentation of Charlotte's suicide in another significant respect. The narrator explicitly distances himself

¹⁹¹I refer here to Elisabeth Bronfen's exploration of the aestheticisation of death and the coupling of "Death and the Maiden" in literature. ("Die schöne Leiche: Weiblicher Tod als motivische Konstante von der Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts bis in die Moderne," *Weiblichkeit und Tod in der Literatur*, ed., Renate Berger and Inge Stephan, Köln: Böhlau, 1987, 87-115)

¹⁹²Vonhoff similarly concludes that the description of the manner of Wally's death, in contrast to that of Charlotte, indicates a challenge to the status quo rather than support (152). Vonhoff correctly notes that that *Wally* was published before Mundt's *Denkmal*. He adds that details of Charlotte's suicide were common knowledge at the time, and thus Mundt's text arguably provides a valid point of comparison. (409f, fn. 388) I argue below that Mundt's representation of Charlotte's corpse as beautiful occurs for strategic reasons. See discussion below: II.2.2.v. Dramaturgies of suicide.

¹⁹³C.f. Bronfen, "Leiche" 101.

from events he does not know about, unlike Mundt, who describes Charlotte's preparations for her suicide with great assurance, constructing an authoritative narrative based on an omniscient authorial voice.¹⁹⁴ In an ironic echo of Charlotte's farewell letter to Heinrich, Wally's farewell letter asserts the nothingness of her person and her life, and the appropriateness of death in this context. She expresses thanks are to all who loved her "und Dir, Dir, Cäsar; allen! Allen!"¹⁹⁵ (W 127, 19) At her grave, the mourners "beweinten nicht sie selbst, sondern nur ihre Jugend" (W 127, 34-35). They exhibit no comprehension of her or of the motivation underlying her suicide, which serves in terms of the narrative to underline her fundamental alienation from her community.¹⁹⁶

In terms of social convention, the significance of Wally's death once she no longer has a place in society cannot be overlooked. Having left Paris and the ambassador with her reputation in tatters, Wally is classified as a fallen woman in Paris society. She has also, albeit more subtly, been seduced and abandoned by Cäsar. Lehmann's survey of the "Verführungsroman" demonstrates that the novel of female development in which the heroine transgresses the moral code, normally ends in her death:

Der Tod der Heldin ist immer auch Beweis, daß eine promiskuitive Frau, die sich aus der Macht des Patriarchats begeben hat und womöglich noch zusätzlich vom Verführer verlassen worden ist, keinen Ort mehr in der Gesellschaft hat. Hat sie ihren Status als Tochter oder Ehefrau und Mutter verlassen und ist auch als Geliebte nicht mehr erwünscht, so hört sie auf zu existieren.¹⁹⁷

In terms of plot, and thus narrative structure, Wally's suicide presents a form of closure which confirms the dangers faced by nineteenth century female literary figures who stray from sexually, socially, morally and intellectually prescribed paths, whether these actions are initiated by themselves or by others.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁴See discussion below: II.2.2.v. Dramaturgies of suicide.

¹⁹⁵See discussion of Charlotte's suicide below.

¹⁹⁶C.f. Geller, who writes that "there is no one to comprehend her truth." (353) Massey maintains: "But despite his own skepticism, Caesar is capable of being saved by femininity while Wally is not. To put it another way, Wally's death is precipitated by her inability to be a Lucinde and to provide Caesar the peace of an inner sense and a taste for the infinite." (51)

¹⁹⁷Lehmann 141. The prevalence of this pattern in English, American, French and German literature is also attested to in the earlier American studies of Rachel Blau DuPlessis *Writing beyond the Ending: Narrative Strategies of Twentieth-Century Writers* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1985) 15-16, and Abel, et al, "Introduction," 8, 9, 11, 13, although neither study specifically refers to *Wally*.

¹⁹⁸For discussion of this point see Abel, Hirsch and Langland 12f; Rachel Blau DuPlessis,

Wally's progression from love to suicide traces her gradual awakening into self-awareness from a state in which she appears to be largely unreflective. Wally attempts to come to know her self and to determine her own identity through verbal and textual self-representations that provide a critique of the sexual contract and its supporting social structures. She thus links the representation of women as non-Intellectual beings with its enforcement by a process of socialisation that denies them equal access to formal education. Her identification of the proscription on women reading *Faust* takes this a step further. In identifying Faust's dilemma as her own, Wally shows that women are actively denied the right to even consider they might not be the embodiment of the unified, unproblematic, "natural," eternal feminine. However, her defiance of the proscription on women's intellectual endeavour fails when she finds she cannot simply adopt the male subject position through an act of will. Her experience ultimately confirms the psychosexual model of female identity that is the basis for women's subordination to men in the sexual contract. Although she is able to criticise its mechanisms and its effects, she is unable to free herself from them. Wally's continuing dependence upon Cäsar confirms that her identity is constituted through her love for him: Cäsar's denial of himself as her lover and as her religious mentor means Wally is left with nowhere to go but the void she finally identifies. In Wally's world, men and religion are the principal stabilising elements for women. Rejected by Cäsar, and unable to assert religious faith, Wally also fails in her attempt to constitute herself as an autonomous subject through intellectual inquiry. Her inability to find an alternative to the models provided by the sexual contract attests to the strength and dominance of the contract and its supporting mechanisms. However at the same time, her failed challenge to the contract provides a crucial contribution to knowledge about the effects of normative constructs of femininity on women.

II. 2. Theodor Mundt: *Madonna: Unterhaltungen mit einer Heiligen* (1835);
Charlotte Stieglitz, ein Denkmal (1835).

II.2.1. *Madonna: Unterhaltungen mit einer Heiligen.*

Mundt's representation of the key female figures in *Madonna* and *Denkmal* provides two different perspectives on the normative psychosexual model of female identity supported by the sexual contract.¹ I treat the two texts together, as *Madonna* represents Mundt's interrogation and reconceptualisation of the female ideal supported by the sexual contract, while *Denkmal* presents a woman's attempt to mould her desire within the limits prescribed by the sexual contract.

Mundt wrote *Madonna* at the height of his attachment to Charlotte Stieglitz, and after he had become interested in Saint Simonian and other ideas promoting the reconceptualisation of Christian theology to overcome the polarisation of the spirit and the flesh. Although the figure of Maria in *Madonna* is arguably Mundt's visualisation of a transformed Charlotte, this literary figure at the same time embodies his theological and social critique of normative female subjectivity and sexual practice. Through Maria's story Mundt inserts himself into the early nineteenth-century debate concerning women, the feminine, and the emancipation of the flesh prompted by the Saint Simonian movement. However, his contribution goes beyond the rehabilitation of the flesh to propose the emancipation of Western Christian consciousness from the Augustinian psychosexual model of sin promoted by the church. Mundt's valorisation of sexuality and female sexual experience in the figure of Maria thus presents a radical recasting of woman and the feminine determined by the operation of the sexual contract in the religious and social spheres.

In contrast, Mundt's representation of Charlotte Stieglitz in *Denkmal* mounts a defence of Charlotte, presenting her as a woman who embodied the feminine ideal, while also admitting the effects of its limiting agency on her, and her frustration at the limitations of her station.

¹Although both texts were published in the same year (Houben, *Sturm* 453), the manuscript of *Madonna* was completed by November 1834; and the textual memorial to Mundt's dead friend Charlotte Stieglitz was written after her suicide on 30 December 1834.

His representation reveals a woman who was concerned with living according to a model of ideal womanhood which in essence conforms to that prescribed by the sexual contract. However, Charlotte's textual self-representations reveal that she at the same time applied the notion of female self-sacrifice to gain status for herself as an individual, as Lynne Tatlock observes.² My discussion of Mundt's text looks at tensions between his attempt to present her as the embodiment of the female ideal while also acknowledging the constraining effects of this ideal and thus of the bourgeois woman's social role. In considering Charlotte's life and death I draw on a journal entry not previously examined by Stieglitz scholars to present the suicide as the direct result of a developmental trajectory Charlotte set for herself from within the framework of the sexual contract. I thus emphasise the degree to which her death was prescribed through her permutation of the sexual contract. My reading of the representation of her death in *Denkmal* also explores Mundt's function as the dramaturge and indeed stylist of the death-bed scene rather than Charlotte.³ The fissures in Mundt's re-presentation of Charlotte's life, her final hours, and her corpse reveal a reality that does not allow an unproblematic aestheticisation of her life and death.

II.2.1. *Madonna: Unterhaltungen mit einer Heiligen.*

Mundt's Maria presents a far greater challenge to the normative model of female identity than Gutzkow's Wally, with respect to both the character herself and her fate. Maria is a positively sexualised figure who does not subordinate herself to a male in a love relationship, and who is able to articulate, acknowledge, and act on her sexual desire. Moreover, she is not determined by emotional attachment, and she also has an intellectual interest in religion.

²See Lynne Tatlock, "Grim Wives' Tales: Mundt's Stieglitz, Stieglitz's Goethe," *Monatshefte* 82 (1990): 467-486.

³Tatlock refers to Mundt's "all too hackneyed description of Charlotte's 'schönen, schneeweißen Glieder' when her body is found," while Ledanff focusses solely on Charlotte's staging of the event, from her "Spiel mit dem Dolch am letzten Tag, ihr letzter Ausgang im schwarzen Kleid und schwarzen Schleier" to her allusion to "eine religiöse Märtyrersymbolik, die die Wirkung der roten Blutstropfen auf dem weißen Kleid genau berechnet" in staging the death scene. See Lynne Tatlock, "The Young Germans in Praise of Famous Women: Ambivalent Advocates," *German Life and Letters* 39.3 (1986): 193-209, 197; Susanne Ledanff, Nachwort, *Charlotte Stieglitz: Geschichte eines Denkmals* (Frankfurt a.M.: Ullstein, 1986) 185-230, 197.

These aspects of her character present a challenge to the construct of the ideal woman. Although her one-time status as a count's future mistress and her extra-marital sexual experience cast her as a fallen woman in social terms, Mundt's narrative does not punish her by death for straying outside the bounds of the feminine, but indeed valorises her sexual experience in specifically religious terms.

Maria's story is one of two narrative strands in *Madonna*, which together present the theoretical formulation and the practical implementation of Mundt's conceptualisation of a "new Christianity." Mundt's re-visioning of Christianity is provided in the narrator's travel journal, which constitutes the second narrative strand. This re-visioning is expressed in the narrator's theory of the "Wiedereinsetzung des Bildes," developed in counterpoint to the Saint Simonian "Emanzipation des Fleisches."⁴ Maria's story in turn presents the attempt to overcome the polarisation of spirit and flesh enforced within Christian doctrine, and to recast sexual practice. My discussion focusses primarily on this narrative strand, and treats only those aspects of the narrator's theoretical reflections that concern the re-visioning of ideal female subjectivity and sexuality. According to the narrator, the transformation of Christianity is effected through the sacralisation of the secular, and the transformation of the

⁴Webber's discussion of Mundt's understanding of myth and history interprets the latter's usage of the category "Bild" in terms of his aesthetic theory, and shows that his ideas differ from those of the Saint Simonians. (Mark Joel Webber, "Spirit of Contradiction: Myth, History and the Young Germans," *Nineteenth Century Germany*, ed., Modris Eksteins and Hildegard Hammerschmidt (Tübingen: Narr, 1983) 28-60. C.f. Butler 259. Meyer writes that "Mundt's tale can be interpreted as an allegorical expression of the author's philosophy of unification of the material and spiritual realms." (145)

The Saint Simonian term "réhabilitation de la matière" (Butler 44), or the "rehabilitation of the flesh" (C.f. Frank E. Manuel, *The Prophets of Paris* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP, 1962) 151), was translated into German variously as the "Emanzipation," "Wiedereinsetzung," "Wiederherstellung" or "Rehabilitation des Fleisches" or "Rehabilitation der Materie." According to Butler, the French regarded the Saint Simonians as a "silly season" subject, while there was a note of "fear" in reporting in Germany: "[T]he theory of the "rehabilitation of the flesh inspired horror and disgust." (64-65). Saint Simonianism was expounded as a doctrine by Bazard in a series of lectures held between 1828-1830, and then by Enfantin in a series of lectures called the "Enseignements" (Butler 37-50) I use the term Saint Simonianism to refer to this doctrine and to distinguish it from Saint Simonism, which refers to the ideas developed in Saint Simon's writings. For overviews of Saint Simonian theories regarding love, marriage, divorce and the emancipation of women, see Butler (4-50) and Manuel (139-158), and especially the extremely critical introduction to the movement by Mundt's contemporary Moritz Veit: *Saint Simon und der Saintsimonismus: Allgemeiner Völkerbund und ewiger Friede* (Brockhaus: Leipzig, 1834).

spirit into flesh.⁵ This new form of secularised Christianity, developed in the course of the narrative and illustrated in Maria's story, links the fall and entry into consciousness with positively valued sexual knowledge.

However, Maria's story also demonstrates the power of normative constructs of woman and the feminine to ensure the unshakeability of the status quo. With the sexually sanitised female ideal as their basis, these assert the dominance of the sexual contract in determining heterosexual relations in the society of the time. The text's subversion of the normative ideal through Maria's story suggests that change is both desirable and possible. However, the fact that she ultimately conforms to the requirements of convention is a concession to the fact that Mundt's re-visioned psychosexual model of female identity faces potentially insurmountable social barriers. Nevertheless, Maria, unlike most other straying heroines, is able to choose to conform, and is successfully recuperated into society. The two parts of her epistolary narrative thus present a significant variation on the plot of the seduced and fallen woman, as described by Lehmann, and her fate contrasts markedly with that of Wally.⁶ The novel's rewriting of conventional modes of the "heroine's plot" in Maria's story by recuperating the fallen woman, and by linking her with the narrator's ambitious re-visioning of Christianity, presents a radically innovative model of female subjectivity for the time.

Maria's story is told in three parts. The first presents her first and only contact with the travelling writer narrator, the "vagabundirender deutscher Schriftsteller" (M 431).⁷ The

⁵ The narrator claims that "der Geist hat sich in [der Welt MV] niedergelassen, und hat Hütten in ihr gebaut. Alles wird weltlich in unserer Zeit und muß es werden, selbst die Religion. Denn es kann nichts Heiligeres mehr geben, als das Weltliche, nichts Geistlicheres, als das Weltliche." (M 141-142)

⁶The basic plot requirements of the paradigm are that there be a heroine who is seduced into pre- or extramarital sex, which brings about her fall and eventual death (Lehmann 10-11). For the three variants of the basic plot see Lehmann (135-145). According to Lehmann, the death of the woman is always also proof that a "promiscuous" woman who finds herself outside the boundaries of patriarchal might and has possibly also been discarded by her seducer has no place in society. Once she has relinquished the status of daughter or wife and mother, and is no longer desired as a lover, she ceases to exist (141). Lehmann argues further that the literary death sentence against "virile, eigensinnige und aus sozialer Bindung strebende Frauen, welche die bürgerlich patriarchalische Gesellschaftsordnung beunruhigen", serves as a confirmation and legitimation of men's power (142).

⁷This status of the narrator is connected to Mundt's reconceptualisation of genre in classifying *Madonna* as a "Buch der Bewegung." I return to this question in the final section of this analysis (II.2.1.v. The Aesthetic of Movement). Further references will be to the narrator.

second and third parts are her two epistolary accounts of her life before and after this meeting. Maria's letters, entitled the "Bekenntnisse einer weltlichen Seele" (M 188-260) and "Madonna schreibt" (M 418-430), are separated by extracts from the narrator's journal. Maria's first letter presents her account of coming to consciousness through sexual experience, while the second presents a woman who has decided to conform to convention. Her second letter is preceded by the narrator's re-telling and extension of the founding myth of Prague, "Bohemiconymphomachia," which functions as a pessimistic commentary on Maria's story and the efficacy of its challenge to the sexual contract. I treat each of these four segments in turn, beginning with Maria's meeting with the narrator, which provides the theoretical underpinning for the first part of her story. Mundt's interweaving of myth, history and religion with Maria's story provides an extensive exploration of the discursive constitution of woman, women, and the feminine, interrogating and reconceptualising the normative ideal.⁸

II.2.1.1. Meeting the Madonna.

The link between Maria and the Catholic Virgin Madonna is asserted from the moment the narrator first sees Maria in a village procession for the feast of the Annunciation. The narrator also establishes further links, firstly to connect Maria to Casanova, as the narrator's journey through Bohemia has just taken him to Casanova's castle in Dux.⁹ Secondly, the narrator establishes a connection between Maria, Casanova and the Virgin Madonna, as the church he visited after the castle in Dux in order to clear his mind of thoughts of Casanova had a very striking altar-piece featuring the Annunciation. The narrator's initial assessment of Maria and his subsequent linking of her with the Virgin

⁸Other strands of the novel's exploration of woman, women and the feminine which provide further interconnecting strands with Maria's story cannot be considered within the framework of the present thesis. These are firstly the narrator's traversal of Bohemia as the female other, and secondly the narrator's association of woman and the city through his feminisation of Prague and through his account of the Libussa legend which is part of the foundation myth of Prague.

⁹Houben notes that a reference to Casanova would still have been considered provocative at the time he himself was writing (1911), and refers to its prominence in the censorship board's report on *Madonna* (*Sturm* 449).

Madonna therefore have a decidedly secular and sexual inflection. When he first notices her, she stands out from all the other young women in both appearance and person:

ganz verschieden von allen übrigen, an Tracht, Gesicht, Wuchs und Gestalt, an Sitte und Anstand. Sie gehörte offenbar ihrem Wesen nach nicht in diese Reihen, von denen sie sich in ihrer ganzen Art so auffallend unterschied" (M 56).

He speculates whether thus "alone of all her sex"¹⁰ she might not be the "Jungfräuliche Madonna" (M 59) herself, and cannot stop thinking about her. However, the latent identity¹¹ the narrator thus brings into play is already invested with sexual significance.

The Mundt scholar Webber interprets the juxtaposition of Maria with Casanova as an indication that Maria has the potential to become the embodiment of a new "total" woman, stating: "Mundt sees Casanova as a total man, a combination of Don Juan and Faust, the male counterpart of the woman Maria may become."¹² According to Saint Simonian theory, the "total man" was "a tripartite man, a being who was at once a rational scientist, a practical Industrialist, and a man of feeling and moral drives, a creature of emotion."¹³ This ideal integrates three different aspects of the psyche, namely rationality, the emotions, and the imagination. The interests and nature of the Maria of the "Bekenntnisse" combine these three aspects, as we shall see: her love of life and sex, and her enjoyment of all aspects of her education incorporate the emotions and the imagination as well as the rational self.¹⁴ Webber's assertion that Mundt views Casanova as "a combination of Don Juan and Faust" is misleading, as Mundt's narrator specifically distances Casanova from the latter two figures.

¹⁰Mundt's treatment of Maria as being isolated from her companions but also marked out as special is similar to the suggestion made in the title of Marina Warner's double resonance in Marina Warner's title of her extensive study of the representation of the Virgin Mary. *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (London: Picador-Pan, 1990).

¹¹C.f. Wülfing's analysis of the latent identity brought into play by contemporaries of Rahel Varnhagen who referred to her simply as Rahel. (See also my discussion of this point in the *Wally* analysis above.) Wülfing, "Mythisierung" 563.

¹²Mark Webber, "Mundt's *Madonna* and Schiller's "Spaziergang:" The City in History and Literature" *Germano-Slavica* 2.2 (1976): 77-86, 80. In a later article, Webber states that "a certain archetypal significance" can be ascribed to figures such as Don Juan and historical personalities such as Casanova and Napoleon ("Spirit" 35).

¹³Manuel 165.

¹⁴Her zest for life is noted by many commentators. e.g. Sammons comments: "She develops at an early age a longing for freedom and real life; she feels that if she had wings, she would fly right into the middle of life." (76)

He presents Casanova as embodying their life-affirming qualities, while being free of their self-destructive aspects:

So ist er [Casanova MV] mir immer wie eine in der Klarheit des Weltmanns ausgesöhnte Mischung von Don Juan und Faust vorgekommen. Die Kritiker haben in letzter Zeit viel von der Verwandtschaftlichkeit beider Mythen gesprochen, während ich dabei immer an Casanova gedacht, der als der Weltmann beider Richtungen dasteht, und mit der Klugheit und Sicherheit eines solchen dieser Polarität, die ihn hin und her zieht, Herr wird, ohne, wie Don Juan und Faust, mit einer tragischen Zerstörung seiner Natur zu endigen. (M 80)

The narrator's highlighting of the life-affirming qualities of Casanova adumbrates the life-affirming choices Maria makes.

The interweaving of the Casanova and Madonna motifs is underlined when the narrator meets Maria again at the house of the schoolmaster while delivering a "long eulogy"¹⁵ on Casanova. It is evident that the daughter of this superstitiously religious old man, the only local "Dorfnotabilität,"¹⁶ clearly feels out of place and unhappy in her father's house. Just as clearly she has enjoyed an education which the father would have been incapable of giving her. The narrator reflects on her bondage in this household, fulfilling the "fromme Pflicht" (M 96) which is the fate of many unmarried women without means. Held captive in family service in return for food and a roof over their head, one day they look in the mirror to find their youth has disappeared and life has passed them by (M 98).

In their late night conversation in the garden (M 101-149), Maria emphasises her pariah status at home and in her village, characterising herself as "eine Verlorene und eine Verstoßene ... aus der Welt" (M 144). She presents her bondage to her father as an extended form of penance, as she is required to provide reparation for past sins and demonstrate her religious devotion by learning the names of all the saints and kissing her father's amulets. As she tells the narrator, she is "ein gottloses Mädchen in einem frommen Lande, und - bei einem frommen Vater!" (M 104) However, she also emphasises her zest for life, and hints at tasted sensual pleasures:

¹⁵Sammons 73.

¹⁶The narrator writes: "Ich verlangte ohne Weiteres diesen großen Gelehrten zu sprechen, da ich auch die Dorfnotabilitäten dieser Gegend nicht übergehen durfte." (M 68) This is a heavily ironic allusion to a manifestation of the celebrity cult of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the custom of visiting local celebrities on one's travels, regardless of their stature.

Ich habe sie [the world M.V.] genossen, sie hat mich gelockt und verführt! ... Und sie lockt mich noch immer. Sie ist schön und läßt mir keine Ruhe! (M 144)

Maria indeed suggests the narrator take her with him disguised as his valet,¹⁷ but "a travelling German writer" has no need of such services (M 145), and she is condemned to stay in her oppressive environment. Maria's story of the negative impact of bigoted and ritualistic Catholicism on her life is juxtaposed to the narrator's reflections on the need to transform Christianity. His inability to contribute materially to her freedom reflects his own entrapment in the present structures: a writer without means can only attempt to effect social change through his writing.

In noting the significance of the garden scene taking place on the evening of the feast of the Annunciation, Manfred Schneider states:

Die Phantasie der Erlösung durch das Wort, die der Autor seiner Maria gewähren will, durchzieht jenes nächtliche Gespräch, das durch seine reichen Anspielungen zu einer "weltlichen" Kontrafaktur der biblischen Heimsuchung Mariä ausgestaltet wurde.¹⁸

I will now look at the import of the messages the narrator has for Maria and their religious significance, namely his re-visioning of the figure of the Virgin Mary as a secular saint.

Historically, according to the narrator, those of the faithful who were incapable of praying to an invisible spirit prayed instead to the Virgin, who thus functioned as the mediator of spirituality in the Catholic church: "Gott war die Wahrheit, und die Madonna war das Bild."¹⁹ (M 124) Webber notes that in Mundt's theory of figuration, as set forth in his

¹⁷Maria suggests: "Ach, ... ich ginge gern als Jockey verkleidet mit auf die Reise, wenn ich nur hinwegkommen könnte aus des Vaters dumpfer Hütte, und von diesen böhmischen Heiligenbildern, die mich bedrückend ansehen, daß ich hier nicht athmen kann und die auf mich herabstürzen, wenn ich sie angstvoll grüße." (M 145) Like Wally, when she likens her impending marriage to a bell-jar, Maria finds the religious atmosphere claustrophobic. The escape route of marriage does not appear to be feasible, given Maria's status as a social outcast.

¹⁸Manfred Schneider 180. Schneider argues that the second part of Maria's education thus begins through the narrator's agency in the Garden scene, and ends with her conversion to Protestantism. He finds: "Der Erzähler-Wunsch der diskursiven Verführung wird an dieser Pointierung des ganzen Textes offenbar. Nicht die leidenschaftlich-revolutionäre, sondern die Reformation durch das Wort des Autors gewährleistet die Emanzipation. In ihr ist das Bild der Erlösung mit dem höheren Verständnis der Liebe, wie sie Maria wünscht, auf merkwürdige Weise zusammengefallen." (180) Schneider's emphasis on the verbal nature of the exchange results from his view that the situation of Maria and the narrator parallels that of Charlotte Stieglitz and Mundt.

¹⁹The narrator's use of the Italian rather than the German name for the Virgin Mary links his discussion of her religious status and function with her representation in Italian Renaissance paintings.

Aesthetik, the term "Bild" is defined as "diese wirklich gewordene Einheit des Endlichen und Unendlichen."²⁰ Webber adds that "the ideal form and prototype" of this concept "Is Jesus as the spirit become flesh."²¹ According to syllogistic reasoning, the narrator would thus be proposing that the Virgin Madonna should embody the same paradox. However, he provides a twist to this syllogism. He claims that the precondition for the Virgin Madonna's original capacity to mediate was her specific state of (un)consciousness, "das jungfräuliche Unbewußte."²² The power of this virginal force has since lost its relevance, and become ineffective,²³ hence the narrator's proposal to secularise her function and sexualise her virginal (un)conscious state. This results in Maria's supersession of the Virgin Madonna as the new sacralised secular "Weltheilige."²⁴ Significantly, the narrator addresses Maria as "eine Weltliche" and then "eine Weltheilige."²⁵ Given that the semantic field of "weltlich" has consistently included the connotations of "unkeusch, lasterhaft, sündhaft,"²⁶ the progression of terms from "eine Weltliche" to secular sainthood makes clear that in her new incarnation in the figure of Maria, the asexual Virgin Madonna is re-visioned as a positively sexualised secular saint. The fact that Maria replaces the Virgin, rather than being viewed as an incarnation of the Virgin, is reflected in the juxtaposition of the Virgin and the saint in the narrative's title: *Madonna. Unterhaltungen mit einer Heiligen*.

Before the narrator's departure, he and Maria agree to an epistolary exchange, whereby Maria will send him an account of her life up to their meeting, and in return the narrator

²⁰Mundt, *Ästhetik* 143, cited in Webber, "Spirit" 34.

²¹Webber, "Spirit" 34.

²²The narrator considers that Rafael was the most successful of Catholic artists in depicting her as the virginal mediator figure in this sense. (M 128)

²³The narrator asserts the Virgin Madonna's irrelevance for present day Christianity by contrasting her with the figure of Christ, saying: "Die Madonna ist in die schöne Vergangenheit der Bilder zurückgetreten, sie lebt am herrlichsten in den Gemälde-Galerieen ... Christus aber schreitet als der Geist der Fortentwicklung durch die Geschichte, und die Religion bildet sich im Geist und in der Wahrheit in die Welt hinein." (M 141)

²⁴Sammons asserts: "The incarnation of sanctified worldliness is the central figure of the book, Maria, the 'Madonna.'" (74)

²⁵Aber tröste dich, Maria! Mit mir tröste Dich! Wahrlich, wahrlich, ich sage Dir, Du kannst keine größere Heilige auf Erden sein, als wenn Du eine Weltliche bist! Schönes Mädchen, ich erwähle Dich zu meiner Heiligen, damit Du nicht zu sehr verzagst an Dir! Ich grüße Dich als meine Heilige, eine Weltheilige! (M 143)

²⁶Grimm, "weltlich" 1633-1641, quotation 1637.

will send her his travel journal.²⁷ This device of exchange means that the insertion of Maria's first letter in the narrative signals a formal change in the narrative structure to encompass two voices in epistolary dialogue. The initial authoritative narrative voice of the traveller narrator is thereby supplemented with another, independent, voice of equal authority. This "provokes," to use Patricia Parker's words from another context, "a double reading in which the text begins to lose the sense of coherent order or unified identity its organization under a single identifiable narrative voice would confer upon the book."²⁸ Mundt further denies the work cohesion under one authoritative narrative voice and destabilises conventional ordering structures by claiming in the "Nachwort zu dem ganzen Buche" that he is simply the editor of this collection of fragments (*M* 431-432).²⁹

The voices of the two narrators and thus the two narrative strands remain separate in a key area, that of the second part of Maria's epistolary self-representation: there is no response from the narrator to her second letter, and because of the fragmentary nature of the work, it is not clear whether the response is simply missing, or whether none had been

²⁷This echoes the agreement Mundt entered into with Charlotte Stieglitz before leaving on the trip, in the summer of 1834, that forms the basis for the narrator's travels in *Madonna*. However, although Mundt sent her his journal and even an autobiographical account of his early years which is now lost (*Houben Sturm* 430, 435), Charlotte did not keep her part of the bargain. She writes (9 September 1834): "Meine 'Kindermemoiren' sind in den verwilschenen Monaten wahrhaft erstickt." (*D* 279).

²⁸Patricia Parker, "The (Self-)Identity of the Literary Text: Property, Proper Place and Proper Name In *Wuthering Heights*," *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, Property* (London: Methuen, 1987): 155-177, 160.

²⁹This fictional editorship, and the resultant separation of the author/narrator of the letters and the editor, Mundt, has been treated in radically different ways by scholars. While Sammons acknowledges the distinctions, referring to the "traveller" (72, 73), and "his [ie Mundt's] narrator" (76), he does not discuss Mundt's separation of author and narrator. Butler and Hömberg tie this question to that of the alleged autobiographical nature of the narrator's encounter with Maria as first suggested by Houben (*Sturm* 447). Butler thus asserts that the separation of the two identities is irrelevant: "The author writes in the first person (we need have no hesitation in calling him Mundt, in spite of the attempt at mystification in the 'Nachwort') (356). The autobiographical nature of the encounter between the narrator and Maria determines her reading of *Madonna* and her account of Mundt's life (352-360). Hömberg, in contrast, not only acknowledges the "literarische Fiktion" of Mundt's editorship of the letters, but also considers its function. Nevertheless, in his discussion of the text he refers to the narrator as Mundt. Hömberg views the fictional editorship as a strategy which enables Mundt to distance himself from the contents if necessary, and one which accounts for the fragmentary nature of some of the letters, lending them authenticity through the idea of being written by a traveller at coachstops on the road (102f). Hömberg emphasises, however, that the reader can have no doubt that the text is strongly autobiographical (103). Walter Hömberg, *Zeitgeist und Idäenschmuggel: Die Kommunikationsstrategie des Jungen Deutschland* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1975).

written. As a result, Maria's second letter completes the narrative. The second part of Maria's story thus remains independent of the narrator's narrative, and most crucially, of his commentary. This silencing of the traveller narrator's authoritative voice on the one hand, and its augmentation by second authoritative narrative voice on the other, is particularly significant for the interpretation of Maria's changed philosophy of life in the second letter, as I argue below. It is doubly significant in light of the narrator's effusively positive response to her first letter.

The narrator's reception of Maria's first letter, her "Bekenntnisse," valorises her account of coming to consciousness through sexual experience. His assessment of her letter precedes the letter itself:

Ja, ja, Du bist eine große Heilige mit Deiner weltlichen Seele. Habe ich Dir nicht gesagt, daß Alles, was eine Geschichte hat, Gott angehört? Und Dein Leben hat eine tiefbedeutende Geschichte. Jede Sylbe darin ein heißer, rother Tropfe Blut aus geöffnetem Herzen. Jedes Wort eine schneidende Wahrheit des Daseins. ... Du hast etwas erlebt in der Welt, Du bist eine Heilige! Gott grüße Dich, Du weltliche Seele! (M 187)

The narrator here asserts that Maria has attained a state of grace and secular sainthood through martyrdom.³⁰ According to the Catholic faith a saint is deemed as free of sin, and is a highly developed moral being, as well as being in a state of grace.³¹ Mundt's narrator confirms here that Maria is the secular saint who is relevant for the present age.

The narrator returns to this figuration of Maria in his final journal entry, which is the penultimate letter in the narrative, as I stated above. Here he most emphatically declares his allegiance to the sanctity of the secular and thus to the Maria of the first letter. He also asserts the difference of his theory from that of the Saint Simonian rehabilitation of the flesh through his usage of the term "Bild," stating:

Ich gebe mich an das Diesseits hin, welches das Bild hat, und zugleich den Geist; den Geist und zugleich das Bild!
Um der Schwachen willen werde ich künftig ... nie mehr von der Wiedereinsetzung des Fleisches reden! Das Fleisch, in das Bild erhoben, erweist sich auch darin schon als das veredelte und geklärte Element, und als die Durchleuchtung des Geistes, der im Bild Fleisch geworden ist." (M 406-407)

³⁰Although the reference to Christ's bleeding heart is quite clear, Geiger does not cite this passage as having been highlighted by the censors. However, his account is not exhaustive. Geiger, *Censur* 75-76.

³¹*Brockhaus*, V: 343.

The narrator then emphasises the link between his theory and his sanctification of Maria, stating: "Ich habe ja auch jetzt nichts als beweisen wollen, daß Du eine Weltheilige bist." (M 414) The narrator's linking of Maria with the Christian Virgin Madonna results in a re-visioning of both female consciousness and Christianity. In his eyes, the sexualised consciousness of this new woman provides the basis for social and religious change.

II.2.1.II. Madonna Maria's confessions.

The title given to Maria's first letter, the "Bekenntnisse einer weltlichen Seele," (M 188-260)³² contextualises it with respect to both the German literary tradition and the tradition of narratives of religious conversion. I first consider the relationship between Madonna's "Bekenntnisse" and those of the Beautiful Soul in the sixth book of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*.³³ In the course of my discussion I then look at the placement of the narrative within a genealogy of increasingly secularised accounts of spiritual struggle and epiphanic experience since Saint Augustine's paradigmatic account.³⁴

According to Marianne Hirsch, the "Beautiful Soul" has been characterised by "traditional criticism" as engaging in "a neurotic form of regression, a flight from adult sexuality."³⁵ However, as Hirsch herself argues, the "Beautiful Soul's" "imaginative creation of a context capable of affirming her deepest needs is a creative response to impoverishing and diminishing social circumstances."³⁶ Hirsch views the "Beautiful Soul" as being at an "impasse."³⁷ She chooses the option of purely internal development, an "absolute subjectivity"³⁸ which isolates her from social intercourse, because the traditional path of

³²In the context of Mundt's fictional editorship of the letter/journal fragments that constitute the narrative of *Madonna* it is difficult to say whether the editor or the narrator provided headings for the letters. The heading of Maria's second letter, "Madonna schreibt," (M 418) suggests that she did *not* provide the titles. This is supported by the letter's contents, discussed below, and its signature, Maria (M 430).

³³Sammons finds that the title is "in parodistic reference, of course, to the sixth book of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*." (76) However, Sammons does not define this further (76).

³⁴See discussion of Wally above: II.1.iv.a. Wally's epiphany.

³⁵Marianne Hirsch, "Spiritual *Bildung*: The Beautiful Soul as Paradigm," Abel, Hirsch, Langland 23-48. Quotations 28 and 32.

³⁶Hirsch "Spiritual" 31.

³⁷Hirsch "Spiritual" 32.

³⁸Hirsch "Spiritual" 32.

female adulthood, marriage and motherhood, prescribed in her nineteenth-century social milieu, represents "confinement, discontinuity and stifling isolation."³⁹ Hirsch makes the further point that the narrative structure of Goethe's novel contains the "Beautiful Soul's" story in two different ways, thus emphasising the fact that the challenge this story presents to conventional notions of womanhood and woman's social role poses a social threat: "Just as the Beautiful Soul herself is ultimately isolated from the children of the next generation, so her narrative is isolated from the novel, safely contained in its form as a posthumous insert."⁴⁰ The Beautiful Soul's story also suggests that a radical social challenge such as hers results in isolation and death.

Maria's "Confessions" counter the narrative of the "Beautiful Soul" in that they represent an interrogation of normative views of woman's social role and female identity in the nineteenth-century through the acknowledgement and valorisation of female sexuality. In doing so they provide a psychosexual model for the constitution of female identity which directly contradicts that posited by Fichte in the "Family Law." This part of her story also provides a contrast to Saint Augustine's accounts of his struggle to overcome sexual desire in order to find belief in God through the denial of sex and the body. Maria's narrative thus presents a multiple challenge, contesting the duality of spirit and flesh, and asserting the existence of female sexual desire and a woman's enjoyment of the sexual act. Moreover, this occurs in a context in which consummation is not linked to marriage in any way, and in which the woman's identity is not presented as being constituted through subjugation to or subsumption by the male. Instead, it presents the possibility of a woman achieving transcendence through the sexual act, a process which is presented as the prerogative of the male in Friedrich Schlegel's *Lucinde*⁴¹, the paradigmatic textual exploration, for the time, of the possibility of transcendence through sexual activity.

³⁹Hirsch "Spiritual" 27.

⁴⁰Hirsch "Spiritual" 29.

⁴¹While some scholarship argues that Schlegel's text disqualifies women from transcendence because of this figuration of the highest stage of love, others argue that both *Lucinde* and *Julius* are able to transcend their previous limitations. Bobsin thus claims: "Wo die Popularphilosophie der Zeit auf ontologisch fixierter Geschlechterpolarität besteht, fordert Schelling - und mit ihm Schlegel - die sukzessive gegenseitige Durchdringung der Pole von Natur und Geist, ihre wechselseitige "Bildung". Die Interaktionen Julius' und Lucindes

The story of Marla's intellectual, spiritual and sexual awakening traces a movement from the Bohemian village to Dresden and back again. Two incidents in her story provide the key to the multiple challenge this literary figure poses. The first occurs when the attractive count, who is the source of her material luxury and her education, attempts to make his first sexual claim on his investment.⁴² She resists and finally escapes the scene of seduction, but not without having become aware of her responsiveness to his sexual power. When he kisses her fingers, she feels "das elektrische Feuer seiner Lippen rieseln," even though she does not find him sexually attractive:

In diesem Moment erfuhr ich zuerst in mir, daß es eine Macht des Mannes gebe, die unserer Natur weit überlegen sei. Er kam mir schön vor in der Glorie des Mannes, wie noch nie (M 227-228).

Maria's "moment of weakness" during the count's attempted rape has been read as one of the more problematic aspects of the novel which "suggests Mundt's own lurking prejudice,"⁴³ or less judgementally, as an indication of Maria's sexual responsiveness.⁴⁴ Most significant is the fact that she is able to distinguish between her positive sexual response and her lack of

gestalten sich nach diesem 'mythologischen' Modell: Julius' ins Endlose gehende Sehnsucht und Reflexion wird durch den 'Anstoß' ... Lucindes - teilweise - gebrochen und daher ins Konkrete, ins Leben, zurück zur Natur gelenkt. Lucinde aber kommt - indem sie begreift, wie Julius sie sieht - zum Bewußtsein ihrer selbst: 'Du hast durch mich die Unendlichkeit des menschlichen Geistes kennen gelernt, und ich habe durch Dich die Ehe und das Leben begriffen und die Herrlichkeit aller Dinge.'" Bobsin's clarification of this point, citing from the text, focusses solely on Julius' development of his full potential: "In der Reflexion seiner Liebe verschmelzen für Julius individuumsbezogene, lustvolle sexuelle Intimität und Lebenssinn. Die Liebe Lucindes bildet ihn zum 'ganzen', sinnlich-geistigen Menschen, der dann auch künstlerisch tätig sein kann: Sein Liebessubjekt sind *Umarmungen*: Die Umarmung des liebenden Paares wird zum zentralen Bild der "Mythologie" Schlegels. Das Leben erscheint Julius plötzlich und im Rückblick als geordnet, seine verworrenen Beziehungen werden ihm zu erzählbaren "Lehrjahren" - die Liebe reduziert die Kontingenz des Daseins zu Sinn: 'Es ward Licht in seinem Innern, er sah und übersah alle Massen seines Lebens und den Gliederbau des Ganzen klar und richtig, weil er in der Mitte stand. Er fühlte, daß er diese Einheit nie verlieren könne, das Rätsel seines Daseins war gelöst, er hatte das Wort gefunden, und alles schien ihm dazu vorherbestimmt und von frühesten Zeiten darauf angelegt, daß er es in der Liebe finden sollte [...] [original emphasis MV].'" Bobsin 181.

⁴²Butler's listing of the improbable aspects of the narrative includes the purpose of Maria's education, Butler finding that "[w]ealthy and aristocratic wrongdoers know shorter cuts than these to the gratification of their desires." Butler 358.

⁴³Marsha Meyer, "The Depictions of Women in Gutzkow's *Wally, die Zweiflerin* and Mundt's *Madonna*," Cocalis and Goodman 135-159, 156.

⁴⁴Butler writes that "the situation held elements of temptation for her. Her education and her temperament made her particularly susceptible to the appeal of the senses, and there was a moment when she was nearly won." (357)

desire for the count. This suggests that not only does she exercise sexual agency, but that her sexual agency is subject to her will. I will return to this point below.

In an aroused state, she escapes, and finds sanctuary with Mellenberg, a student of theology, her former tutor, and object of her desire. Mellenberg had introduced her to Protestantism, which fascinated her, even though his brief had been to teach her modern languages. Although his appearance was unprepossessing, she had started to find him likeable and attractive because of his knowledge and enthusiasm for ideas. She had developed the habit of watching him in the evening after going to bed and putting her light out. He, on the other hand, had been too absorbed in his studies to think of closing his curtains, even when undressing for bed. (M 218f) In these episodes of voyeurism, in which Mellenberg becomes the object in a scopical field dominated by a female gaze, the barely teenage Maria assumes a position usually occupied by men.⁴⁵ These episodes occur after she has been formally presented in society and thus marked as nubile and sexually mature. They also occur at a time when she is presented as being intensely aware of sexual feelings, and after she has been out dancing, which in the codification of the time heightens her sexual awareness and receptivity.⁴⁶

⁴⁵The count's attempted seduction occurs on her fourteenth birthday. The connection between the male gaze as the purveyor of certain knowledge and the constitution, by Freud, of the little girl or the woman as castrated, was first elaborated by Luce Irigaray as "the question of the respective relationships between the gaze and sexual difference, since, he [Freud MV] tells us, you have to see it to believe it." *Speculum of the Other Woman*, trans., Gillian C. Gill (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1985) 47. Despite the more recent "more complicated and nuanced notions of gendered spectatorship" discussed by Martin Jay, the early work by feminist scholars such as Irigaray are appropriate for the present context. See Martin Jay's critical review of early feminist analyses of the gaze in: Introduction, "Vision in Context: Reflections and Refractions," *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1993) 3-11, here 4. C.f. Lewald's *Jenny* and the representation of Wally by the narrator in the opening scene of Gutzkow's novel both thematise the trope of the male gaze as the purveyor of knowledge about woman/women.

⁴⁶Dancing was coded as sexual during the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth. C.f. Rousseau's discussion of public balls in the letter to d'Alembert. These function as showplaces of bourgeois sexual desire which catch and contain the first stirrings of adolescent sexuality and channel them into bourgeois love and marriage. The 'performances' at such public balls fulfil an important social function in manufacturing and sustaining an ideal bourgeois libidinal economy under the surveillance of the public eye. As Rousseau writes: "Man sage mir noch, wo junge, heiratsfähige Leute Gelegenheit haben, Gefallen aneinander zu finden und einander mit mehr Anstand und Behutsamkeit kennenzulernen als in einer Versammlung, wo das immer wache Auge der Öffentlichkeit sie zwingt, sich bescheiden bürgerliche Zurückhalten und mit der größten Sorgfalt auf sich acht zu geben?" (Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Brief an d'Alembert über das Schauspiel," *Schriften*, ed., Henning Ritter

Maria's awakening sexual awareness is described in graphic terms as follows:

Ich fühlte nämlich, daß unwiderstehliche Leidenschaften in mir rege geworden waren, mehr in der allgemeinen heißen Strömung meiner Natur, als daß sie noch einem besondern Gegenstande gegolten hätten, am allerwenigsten aber Dem [i.e. the count MV], welcher sie durch absichtliche, künstliche und immer dringender werdende Mittel in mir hervorzulocken suchte. Es war ein mächtig lodender Funke, den die Kraft meiner Phantasie aus den überschwenglichen Formen des reichen Lebens sich herausgeschlagen und zündend in mein Blut geworfen hatte, und dieses trieb nun stärkere Wellen zu dem Herzen hinauf, welches erbangend und überwältigt nirgend Befriedigung und Frieden für sich ersah. (M 217f)

In the course of her nightly viewings, Maria's sexual desire becomes focussed on Mellenberg:

"die Ehrfurcht ging mir ins Herz über und weckte darin allmählig eine leise Flamme." (M 219) When, after fleeing the count, she arrives in Mellenberg's room in a dishevelled state, with her hair and dress loosened, and her breasts at least partially revealed (M 234), Maria and Mellenberg consummate their desire, despite initially intending to remain chaste.

This mutually desired sexual consummation has vastly different consequences for each participant. Maria returns to her own room, and the morning after their night together, she springs out of bed feeling wonderful, having transcended her previous childlike state:

In allen Teilen meiner Natur fühlte ich mich erquickt und gehoben, und mich dünkte, als riesele in mir ein frischer Strom von Leben durch jede Ader hin. Ich kam mir auf einmal aufgeblühter, entwickelter vor, voller in meinen Formen und reicher in meinen Gedanken, ... Ich war mehr geworden ... Kein harmloses Mädchen, kein unschuldiges Kind mehr, aber gewachsen und erwachsen, gereift und gezeitigt. (M 241)

Her further self-analysis links sexual experience with religion. She adopts the vocabulary the narrator had used to refer to her in the garden scene, describing how this experience has moved her to pray again for the first time since arriving in Dresden:

Ich betete und dankte, daß [mein Gott] mich nicht verlassen,⁴⁷ und daß ich fühle, wie er mit mir sei, und sein geistbefulgender Hauch mich im Innersten durchdringe,

(München: Hanser, 1978) I: 333-474, 465. Eduard Fuchs, in his "history of morals," claims that the "Gesellschaftstanz ist von jeher der erfolgreichste Kuppler gewesen," and further, that "die öffentlichen Tanzlokale sind in der Tat auch heute meist nichts anderes als öffentliche Balzplätze" confirming the continuing link between dancing and sexual activity into the nineteenth century. Fuchs, *Das bürgerliche Zeitalter*, 1912, vol. 3 of *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, 3 vols. (München: Langen, 1909-1912) 428.

⁴⁷This is, of course, a rather crass reference to Christ's words on the cross, according to Matthew: Der Tod Jesu. 27, 45 Von der sechsten Stunde an aber kam eine Finsternis über das ganze Land bis zur neunten Stunde. 27, 46 Und um die neunte Stunde rief Jesus mit lauter Stimme: "Eli, eli, lama sabachtani?", das heißt: Mein Gott, mein Gott, warum hast du mich verlassen? (Matthäusevangelium)

selbst bis in Fleisch und Blut hinein. ... Ich sei eine weltliche Seele. Ein Kind der Welt. Und durch die Welt empfände ich ihn, meinen Gott heraus. [emphasis added, MV] (M 242)

In this self-representation, Maria's sexual experience, which in conventional terms represents her social fall, is valorised as the entry into a new kind of consciousness in which sexual knowledge is positively valued and in which she finds God.⁴⁸ This positive valuation suggests that, as argued above, she represents a radically new model of subjectivity in terms of normative models of female subjectivity and sexual experience. Although this figuration of her state has been interpreted as confirming Mundt's Saint Simonian status,⁴⁹ the present interpretation has shown that it is directly linked to Mundt's own version of the "new Christianity."⁵⁰

In focussing on the transformative power of her experience of Maria's sexual union with Mellenberg, Mundt's narrative further valorises sexual experience, as well as providing for the possibility of a woman fulfilling herself sexually in terms of attaining a mature identity through an act of sexual union which is not contained within the bounds of a conventionally defined love relationship, the ultimate end of which is marriage. The radically new model of female subjectivity embodied by Maria/Madonna thus grants a woman the possibility of an

⁴⁸The use of the present subjunctive form, emphasised in the above quotation, could be interpreted as both an exhortatory, elevated usage, and also as an indication that her adoption of the traveller narrator's vocabulary from the garden scene, and thus his figuration of her in that scene, signify that Maria filters her present experience through the paradigm he established, which valorises the fleshly aspect of the self and human experience. Maria thus presents herself, using the narrator's terms, as having transcended the dichotomy between spirit and flesh by becoming a "weltliche Seele." She has thereby also found her way back to her God. In conventional terms, Maria has sinned, but she asserts that her God has not abandoned her, and that sexual knowledge has mediated her new, positively-inflected identity.

⁴⁹Butler views Mundt's innovativeness, this "unusual attitude towards a 'fallen woman'" as a sign that he was "more truly a Saint-Simonian than he knew." (360) According to Butler, it also "gave his enemies so powerful a handle against him, and ... estranged the Protestant party who might otherwise have defended the book. For Mundt's position was not consistent with Christianity, however enlightened its followers." (359)

⁵⁰Meyer argues that the juxtaposition of the sexual consummation with the attempted rape emphasises the aspect of unification of the spiritual and sensual realms in Maria's experience, writing: "The interpretation Mundt suggests by this series of events is that spiritual (Maria's upbringing) and sensual elements (the attentions of the Count) struggle for domination in her soul, but in her union with Mellenberg, a harmony of flesh and spirit is expressed that anticipates her conversion to Protestantism at the end of the novel. ... The way to spiritual union with the flesh was through the senses and it was for this reason that the worldly saint Maria could candidly admit that she feared no sin in having given expression to her sexuality." (147-148)

autonomous identity through sexual experience without marriage, an identity which is not dependent on a male, as is specified in Fichte's "Family Law." The juxtaposition of the count's attempted seduction and Maria's consummation of desire with Mellenberg also highlights Maria's exercise of will in her choice of sexual partner. In doing so, she casts into question the Augustinian teachings of the Christian church with respect to the myth of the Fall, sexual desire, free will, and human sovereignty.

Elaine Pagels has shown that the myth of the Fall is the site of conflicting exegetical views, and that Saint Augustine was the originator of what were to become the dominant views on sexual desire, free will, and human sovereignty in western culture.⁵¹ She argues that the link between the church, the state and normative Christian morality was forged when Augustine's teaching achieved dominance in the late fourth and the early fifth centuries. She demonstrates that this teaching contested and asserted itself against three centuries of Christian teaching which promoted "the freedom of the will and humanity's original royal dignity."⁵² According to Pagels, Augustine's teaching on "original sin" became dominant in a socio-political context in which the story of Adam and Eve "offered a basic paradigm for ordering human society," and in which his interpretation could be used as a political tool to legitimise the new political agenda which diminished the independence of the individual: Augustine's interpretation of the myth "conformed to this new situation and interpreted the new arrangement of state, church, and believer in ways that, many agreed, made religious sense of the new political realities."⁵³

Pagels states that Augustine's exegesis of the Fall also defined sexual desire as functioning independently of the will. Augustine maintained that the prelapsarian authority of the rational will over body and soul was reversed following Adam and Eve's disobedience, such that desire became independent of the will.⁵⁴ Shame was the inescapable corollary of the disassociation of

⁵¹ Elaine Pagels, *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent* (New York: Random House, 1988).

⁵² Pagels 99.

⁵³ Pagels 99-100, quotation, 100. For greater detail, see 98-126.

⁵⁴ Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, cited by Pagels 110. According to Pagels, "Augustine concludes, 'the sexual desire [*libido*] of our disobedient members arose in those first human beings as a result of the sin of disobedience ... and because a shameless movement [*impudens motus*] resisted the rule of their will, they covered their shameful members.'" (Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, cited by Pagels 111)

desire and the will which in Augustine's thinking characterises sexual excitement.⁵⁵ Pagels emphasises that Augustine's thinking opposes that of his contemporary, John Chrysostom, who taught the reverse, namely that sexual desire may be subject to the will.⁵⁶ Maria deconstructs the Augustinian paradigm in two ways. Firstly, her resistance to the count's advances even though she is receptive to his sexual power demonstrates that her sexual behaviour is subject to her will. Secondly, she experiences no shame after consummating her desire in the sexual act with Mellenberg. Maria also deconstructs Fichte's model of female sexual behaviour in terms of its requirement that a woman is without will or desire of her own in a sexual relationship defined by love. Maria presents a comprehensive challenge to the determination of female self-subordination, lack of autonomy, lack of agency and sexual desire by the sexual contract.

Given that the traveller narrator's philosophy focusses on a reworking of Christianity through overcoming the duality of spirit and flesh, it is possible to view the positive valuation of Maria/Madonna's sexual experience as a valorisation of sexual desire in general terms, and also, more specifically, as a rewriting of the particular figuration of woman and sexuality which is a legacy of dominant interpretations of the Biblical myth of the Fall.⁵⁷ Maria/Madonna's experience could be read as alluding to the Fall, and presenting an exegetical re-working of the implications of the story in a symbolic, philosophical, and religious sense. The valorisation of (female) sexuality and the presentation of an alternative awakening or

⁵⁵Further, "[b]ecause sexual desire is experienced independently of the will, it "naturally involves shame: 'a man by his very nature is ashamed of sexual desire.'" Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, cited in Pagels, 112.

⁵⁶Pagels, 112. Pagels notes that Chrysostom was happily married to the same woman for many years. This contrasts with Augustine's licentiousness and struggle to overcome his fleshly desires before his conversion. For a review of the debates between Augustine and John Chrysostom, see Pagels 98-126.

⁵⁷According to Jules Cashford, some interpretations of the myth of the fall have stigmatised Eve as the temptress, and by association, all women: "Many commentators, both Jewish and Christian, have ... censured Eve for being the first to break the commandments of God and for subsequently misleading Adam Some further commentators, Paul among them, have generalized from the sin of Eve to the character of woman, and have justified the imbalance between men and women by appealing to the hierarchical imbalance between Adam and Eve. "Eve," *An A to Z* 59-60, here 59. Ann Gilroy also focusses on gender-specific aspects of the myth and its interpretations, arguing that these serve to stigmatise sexuality and sexual desire, as well as women. "Original Sin (1)," *An A to Z* 165-167.

coming to consciousness in Maria/Madonna's story is in effect a contestation of the Augustinian view of sexuality and traditional views of gender.

Maria/Madonna's new consciousness differs markedly from the birth of consciousness attendant on the Fall, and results in a radically different form of gnostic experience for her. One of the implications of the myth of the Fall when read as a symbolic account of the birth of consciousness is that:

As symbol, the story dramatizes a tragic vision: the call of a moral destiny as an individual entails a loss of an original wholeness. This loss results from the knowledge of good and evil, temporality and individual mortality.⁵⁸

Maria/Madonna's experience directly contradicts this paradigm, since the birth of her new consciousness enables her to reinstate her relationship with God, and achieve a harmony and unity of being which had until that point been lacking. The birth of her new consciousness is life-affirming, and her experience asserts her wholeness.

However, Maria's rejection of the count means her position in his house is now untenable, and Mellenberg's suicide further prevents her from exploring her new state. Whereas Maria feels she has attained wholeness as a human being upon her union with Mellenberg, he finds he has betrayed her, his God, and his oath of devoting his life to the service of his God. In contrast to Maria, he can no longer pray. Having broken his oath, Mellenberg finds he must take his own life in expiation: "Die irdischen Gedanken sind nun über meine Andacht hergestürzt, und fangen an, mein dem Himmel geweihtes Herz zu verwildern." (*M* 247) According to the orthodox Protestant terms which dictate his view, Mellenberg has succumbed to fleshly desire, and thus lost access to his God. He has also brought about the fall of a virgin whom he cannot hope to save by marrying, as it is beyond his means.

While Mellenberg focusses on the religious aspects of his transgression, he may also be read as having transgressed against the bourgeois sexual moral code. In this second sense, Mellenberg's suicide attempt feminises him further, continuing the process which begins with Maria's acts of voyeurism. His choice of suicide thus mimics the role of the fallen woman and her fate,⁵⁹ and provides an explicit contrast to Maria/Madonna's reaction. As the fallen

⁵⁸Cashford 59.

⁵⁹C.f. Lehmann 135-145. Lehmann's plotting of the "Verführungsroman" provides a template

man, Mellenberg reverses and at the same time confirms the typology Lehmann identifies in her study, that of the heroine's death or suicide after her voluntary or involuntary seduction: "Mit dem Selbstmord gesteht die Heldin ihre Sünde ein und resigniert vor der Aussicht diesseitiger Deklassierung und jenseitiger Bestrafung."⁶⁰ Mellenberg's fall in this sense reflects the social sanctions for men who fail to conform to the bourgeois code of masculinity and thus the sexual moral code for men.

When viewed as arising from a sense of religious transgression, Mellenberg's attempted suicide is the result of excessive religious devotion, serving as an extension of Mundt's criticism of religious zealotry which also seeks to deny sexuality.⁶¹ In this context Sammons remarks that "[t]he Protestant Mellenberg clearly has no notion of the liberating implications that Protestantism had for the Young Germans and also for Maria."⁶² However, as I argue below, the novel does not valorise Protestantism above Catholicism, as argued by Sammons and others.⁶³ Rather, it enacts a critique of extreme or bigoted religious expression regardless of confession, and presents favourably the more liberal tendencies of each.

Coincidentally, the day of Mellenberg's attempted suicide is the tricentennial of the Augsburg Confession, a feast day which was marked in Dresden with a riot provoked by the fact that the Catholic authorities did not officially acknowledge it and allow the Protestant

against which Mundt's creativity and radicality can be assessed with respect to other literary works of the period.

⁶⁰Lehmann 141. Lehmann defines seduction as occurring outside both marriage and prostitution, where the person being seduced is a virgin.

⁶¹C.f. Sammons 78. Houben comments that the figure of Mellenberg, "der nicht fähig ist, das Leben in seiner Weltlichkeit zu ertragen" demonstrates that the novel does not present Protestantism as a religion which embraces freedom. (Houben, *Sturm* 450)

⁶²Sammons 78.

⁶³This issue is discussed mainly with respect to Maria's conversion to Protestantism. Sammons finds: "She wishes she were a Protestant, - a sign in the Young German context that she wishes to become progressive and modern - and she does achieve this, to her great satisfaction, at the end of the novel. (75-76) In the context of Mellenberg's suicide, Sammons does however refer to "all the killing repressiveness of an orthodoxy hostile to the natural vitality of human life.

Burchardt-Dose also refers to the progressive significance of Protestantism in the Young German context, but argues that religious conservatism is oppressive regardless of the confession, as Mellenberg's suicide and the oppressive conditions of Maria's parents' house make clear: "Die falsch verstandene Religion Mellenbergs (259), das süße Gift des Pietismus (D 4) sind in gleicher Weise für ein leidvolles Dasein verantwortlich wie der fromme Unverstand des böhmischen Schulmeisters." (138)

population to celebrate appropriately.⁶⁴ Sammons reads the juxtaposition of the riot with "Mellenberg's suicide and Maria's helpless despair" to be an "effective moment in the novella"⁶⁵ through its "meaningful integration of a private fate and a wider social incongruity such as is rare in Young Germany fiction."⁶⁶ A closer look at the nature of the feast day reveals that the text further reinforces its criticism of religious extremism through the fact that Mellenberg's suicide attempt is made on this particular day. The feast day commemorates the historical moment at which Protestantism first absorbed and reconciled criticism and dissent through the first Augsburg Confession of 1530. Mellenberg presents the face of the dogmatic and fundamentalist approach to religious belief and practice that is critiqued in this novel. In this light, his attempted suicide on this day becomes exemplary for the destructive, life-denying force of such practice.⁶⁷ The fact that the question of his survival is left open by the text would imply that the text does not consider his sexual activity, the reason for the suicide, to be transgressive, and does not punish him for it.⁶⁸ The figure of Mellenberg, the truly fallen man who is punished by himself but not necessarily by the text, serves to underline the radicality of the Madonna/Maria figure in this first part of her story.

II.2.1.III. Women in myth and history.

⁶⁴In Maria's description, the central market square is lit up in a festive manner, to the exclusion of the town hall, and the already tense crowd then explodes when it hears what are apparently ditties mocking their heroes Melanchthon and Luther emanating from the building (*M* 251).

⁶⁵Sammons 79.

⁶⁶Sammons 79-80

⁶⁷The Augsburg Confession has been described as a "Friedensvorschlag," providing the basis for reconciliation of dissenting parties within Protestantism at the time. Significantly, the first document of 1530, which took as its basis articles authored by Melanchthon, was approved of by Luther. A second, Latin, version by Melanchthon appeared ten years later, and contained some significant changes to dogma, but was, however, tacitly approved by Luther. From 1560, this second Augsburg Confession was repeatedly challenged by groups which wanted to reassert the purity of Lutheranism. Such challenges occurred particularly in the 19th century, and were countered in turn by groups which foregrounded the significance of the Confession as a unifying document. *Brockhaus*, I: 505-506, quotation 505.

⁶⁸Maria/Madonna is told that Mellenberg's rescuers still hoped to resuscitate him, as he had been found shortly after entering the water (*M* 254). Maria assumes at the end of her "Bekennnisse" that he is dead, but this is not necessarily the case (*M* 260).

The narrator's retelling of the foundation myth of Prague, "Bohemiconymphomachia" (*M* 302-342),⁶⁹ is placed between Maria's "Bekenntnisse" and her second letter. Although the Greek terms in the title give a literal indication of its content, that is, the war (*machia*) of the Bohemian maids or virgins (*nympho*),⁷⁰ the compound has additional resonances. The term "nymphomachia" evokes not only the young women's war, but also "nymphomanie," which in turn is related to the terms "mannsucht" and "liebeswut."⁷¹ From the late eighteenth century, as Geitner has shown, negative terms that evoke indiscriminate coupling such as "Liebes-" and "Mutterwut," were deployed to suggest hysteria and madness in the case of politically active women.⁷² Mundt's deployment of the term "nymphomachia" may be viewed as a strategic revalorisation of politically active women, as the narrator introduces it to Maria as "der keckste Versuch zur Emanzipation der Frau ..., der in der Geschichte der modernen Zustände sich aufweisen läßt, und der damals in mutigen Amazonentaten sich hervorwagte." (*M* 301) He contrasts it unfavourably with the contemporary Saint Simonian movement, in which "diese Frage nur auf halbphilosophische, theoretisierende und St. Simonistische Weise in der Welt hin und her schwankt." (*M* 301)

⁶⁹Frenzel summarises the different emphases of different versions of the Libussa myth, treatment of the Wlasta figure and War of the Maidens. The second source of the myth, Dalimil (1308/14), would appear to form the basis for Mundt's retelling, as he alters the chronology of the War provided in the first source (Cosmas, app. 1125), placing it after Libussa's death, and presenting it as an uprising against male rule. Elisabeth Frenzel, *Stoffe der Weltliteratur: Ein Lexikon dichtungsgeschichtlicher Längsschnitte* (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1963) 379-381.

The most prominent nineteenth century version which precedes that of Mundt is Clemens Brentano's epic drama *Die Gründung Prags* (1815). This version emphasises the mythical dimensions of the story, and interweaves the Libussa and Wlasta stories by figuring Wlasta as Libussa's rival for Przemysl. Grillparzer's well-known *Libussa* appeared much later (begun 1819/20, published 1872). (Frenzel, 379-381) Burchardt-Dose refers to Mundt's version as a "Gegenstück" to Karl Egon von Ebert's "Wlasta" (1829), citing the narrator's comments on the latter's work as having "sentimental verhunzt" the story of the Maid's War instead of using it to write "eine historisch-komische Novelle." Burchardt-Dose 141.

⁷⁰The tale was commonly referred to in German as the "Amazonen- oder Mägdekrieg Sage." Frenzel 379.

⁷¹Although the word "Nymphe" is itself neutral, denoting "die verhüllten d.i. weiblichen jungfräulichen göttinnen" who represent the forces of nature (Grimms XIII: 1037.), the related term "nymphomanisch" functions as the "adj. und adv. zu nymphomanie, die mannsucht, liebeswut" (Grimms XIII: 1038).

⁷²Geitner "Enragées" especially 202-203, 209. See also discussion of sexuality and space in Fichte analysis. Geitner, Ursula.

The narrator's "Bohemiconymphomachia" thus focusses on women's emancipation, but it is not simply "a vehicle to discuss the Saint-Simonian issue," as Sammons claims.⁷³ Besides providing an account of the mythical Bohemian Maids' Struggle for equality, Wlasta's vision provides an even-handed review of women's status through the ages. It emphasises that the status of women in the state has always been the same, whether in myth or history,⁷⁴ but places a positive emphasis on the continuity between Libussa's and Theodor Gottlob von Hippel's ideas and some aspects of Saint Simonian doctrine. In addition, the story of Libussa's Maids forms a parallel to Maria's story. Both trace a process in which women move from relative freedom and independence of mind through to a state of war which ends with final capitulation to "das biblische Wort" (M 341). The fate of the Bohemian Maids who survived the war, were married off and "gelobten Treue und Gehorsam, und ein sanftes Gemüth" (M 342) foreshadows Maria's capitulation to the patriarchal order of the sexual contract and the "Ästhetik unsers [i.e. women's MV] Herzens."⁷⁵ The failure of the young women of the myth is replicated in the failure of women throughout history to gain equal rights and autonomous subject status in society, as recounted in Wlasta's vision. However, both the story of the Maids' War and Wlasta's vision valorise continued struggle.

Wlasta's vision reviews women's anomalous status in the Age of Chivalry, in which they were idolised but not free (M 317), and the bourgeois age in which women are ascribed a position of importance but not granted freedom: "das Familienglück, das bürgerliche Zeitalter und das Bücherschreiben machen unser Geschlecht nicht frei." (M 318f) The vision draws attention to the paradox of Joan of Arc fighting for her "Vaterland," even though "[d]as Weib

⁷³Sammons 46.

⁷⁴C.f. Webber: "The 'Bohemiconymphomachia' is seen as a paradigm of the struggle for women's rights and perhaps also of its inevitable failure." "Mundt's *Madonna* and Schiller's "Spaziergang:" The City in History and Literature," *Germano-Slavica* 2.2 (1976): 77-86, 80.

⁷⁵Maria's state of war would be the period after her return to her father's house. This parallel has not been noted by the scholarship. Burchardt-Dose asserts that in Young German works, conservative female figures die, whereas radical women live. She assesses Maria as a conservative female figure who is the exception to this rule, as she does not die. Similarly, the Bohemian Maids are also exceptional, since they, as radical figures, do die. This interpretation is problematic because of her failure to perceive the radical nature of the Maria figure, and also because it fails to take into account the Bohemian maids who remain alive and apparently convert to conservative views (147).

hat kein Vaterland." (M 317)⁷⁶ Wlasta's vision also refers to the debate by learned churchmen on the human status of women (M 318). The more positive emphasis of the vision identifies Hippel as the man who wrote "über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Weiber, und über die Ehe," and strongly asserted women's equality with men: "Er will, daß das Weib ein Vaterland haben solle, und eine Stelle im Staat, und seinen schönen Theil an aller Freiheit der öffentlichen Bewegung." (M 319) This positive presentation of Hippel's views reveals a profound shift in Mundt's thinking about women and their place in society from an earlier review article (1830) of Hippel's life and work.⁷⁷

The review of Saint Simonianism that ends Wlasta's vision concludes with the assessment that while the doctrine is confused,⁷⁸ it also expresses truths established during centuries of

⁷⁶This is echoed in the dinner party discussion in Lewald's *Clementine*, in which the liberal-minded men also assert that a woman has no "Vaterland," since her allegiance is to her husband (C 81).

⁷⁷Theodor Mundt, "Theodor Gottlob von Hippel's Lebenslauf nach aufsteigender Linie: Eine biographisch-literarische Skizze," *Kritische Wälder zur Beurteilung der Literatur, Kunst und Wissenschaft unserer Zeit* (Leipzig: Wolbrecht, 1833) 195-252. The essay was first published in the *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*. In this article Mundt compares the first (1774) and third (1792) editions of Hippel's *Ueber die Ehe*, stating that these already express "jöne[n] seltsame[n] Ideen" that Hippel later set down in *Ueber die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Weiber* (1792). (Mundt, "Lebenslauf" 243f.) Mundt's critical review of this text asserts that Hippel here misunderstood "den weiblichen Charakter" and had "eine falsche Ansicht von dessen Bedeutung und Beruf." (244) Mundt warns that the consequence of Hippel's ideas would be the disappearance of "der Gegensatz der Geschlechter als ein bedeutsamer aus der Welt." (245) Mundt adds that Hippel's views on the "bürgerliche Verbesserung der Weiber," which see women participating "an der Rechtspflege, Staatsverwaltung, Staatshaushaltung und allen Fakultäten," are quite "artig und witzig ausgeführt." (245) Although this could lead the reader to think it is all meant ironically, "es war Hippel's barer Ernst." (245) The only suggestion of Hippel's that Mundt finds acceptable is that women should practise medicine "weil hier eine natürliche Anlage des Geschlechts mit im Spiele wäre." (245) Lewald may be alluding to this in *Clementine* when the doctor Meining, who is otherwise against women's emancipation, expresses a similar view. Fanny Lewald, *Clementine*, 1843, *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 8 (Berlin: Brockhaus, 1872) 83. Butler's understated summary finds that "[t]hey seemed to him curious ideas, and on the whole he condemned them for a characteristic reason: their adoption would mean the destruction of one of life's greatest pleasures." Eliza Marian Butler, *The Saint-Simonian Religion in Germany: A Study of the Young German Movement* (1926; New York: Fertig, 1968) 329. See Hull's contemporary feminist review of the three editions of Hippel's text on marriage (*Sexuality* 323-32). She states that "[i]n the first two editions ... Hippel had been more concerned to anchor the husband's domestic power than to explore the impetuses for equality inside marriage. By the third edition ... Hippel piped a different, more egalitarian tune. In place of the flip aphorisms of the cavalier, one discovers a more rigorous evaluation of marriage according to both legal, liberal principles and to tolerance as the foundation of civil society. (*Sexuality* 324)

⁷⁸The vision focusses on the theatrical symbolism and more ridiculous sides of Infantinian Saint Simonianism such as their costumes, or the much-ridiculed search to the Far East for the free woman, the Supreme Mother ("la Femme Messie") who was to partner Infantin. The

thought (*M* 321).⁷⁹ It presents positively the doctrine of the couple as the fundamental social unit, summarised as "*L'élévation de l'épouse au niveau de l'époux!* [original emphasis, MV]" (*M* 320). Wlasta notes that this view of marriage grants women equality in the public sphere and enables them to hold public positions as proposed by Hippel and Libussa:

Es gibt eine gesellschaftliche Person, das ist nicht mehr der Mann allein, sondern Mann und Frau, und alle Geschäfte des Lebens werden daher paarweise verrichtet. Dieses Paaren ist die Ehe, und in ihr nimmt die Frau Antheil an den Geschäften des Mannes. (*M* 320f)

This statement provides the impetus for the Bohemian Maids' initial attempt to gain equality in the state through marriage (*M* 323f), while *Enfantin's* doctrine of constant and inconstant natures is satirised as follows:

Der kühne Vater *Enfantin* aber hebt die Freiheit des Weibes noch über die Ehe hinaus, und erklärt die Ehe nicht für geschlossen. Ein so freies Weib aber will sich gar nicht finden lassen. (*M* 321)

Thus the Saint Simonian echoes of Hippel's and Libussa's thoughts are positively regarded, while Wlasta's vision critiques *Enfantin's* doctrinal excesses in the name of individual freedom, and emphasises women's vulnerability in the face of theories which fail to provide a sound basis to underpin the radical social changes they propose.⁸⁰ Wlasta's vision thus

vision has no regard to chronological accuracy, and thus describes the *Enfantinian* group in the rue Taitbout as already dressed in the costume they first adopted in their sojourn at Ménilmontant (319-320). See Manuel (185) and Butler (29) for an account of the costume's symbolic significance. Once internal disagreements prompted the gradual disintegration of the group, and public interest and sympathy turned to ridicule, *Enfantin* resorted to increasingly theatrical displays to assert his leadership and the solidarity of the remaining members. C.f. Butler (11-50); Manuel (185) and Veit (135-36)

⁷⁹Sammons refers to the vision's account of "Saint-Simonism and its confusions." (76) Butler finds the movement is more negatively judged: "This very interesting account of the Saint-Simonians and the 'free woman' shows the mixture of sympathy and amusement with which Mundt contemplated their feminist ideals. He did not deny that they contained much that was true, but he considered them on the whole rather absurd, and was not at one with *Enfantin's* views on marriage (355-356).

⁸⁰C.f. Möhrmann's critique of the Saint Simonians' emphasis on the "Emanzipation der Sinne ohne gesellschaftliche Rückkoppelung," citing the suicide of the young Saint Simonian woman Claire Démar as confirmation that the promulgators of the doctrine did not pay sufficient attention to other social changes which would need to be made in order to accommodate the new moral code (48).

While there have been studies which present a selection of Saint Simonian views on women's emancipation (Bulciolu), or the achievements of women inspired by the doctrine (Linnhoff), there is to my knowledge no systematic study of the construction of women and female subjectivity which informs views expressed in Saint Simonian texts and mouthpieces of Saint Simonianism such as *Le Globe*. (María Teresa Bulciolu, *L'École Saint-Simonienne et la Femme: Notes et documents pour une histoire du rôle de la femme dans la société saint-simonienne 1828-1833* (Pisa: Goliardica, 1980); Ursula Linnhoff, "Zur Freiheit, oh, zur

emphasises that women's freedom must be guaranteed in both the public and the private spheres. The references to parallels with Hippel and Libussa emphasise aspects of socio-political emancipation which are contingent on citizenship, while the additional focus in the Saint Simonian part of the vision is on the need for women's equality to men within marriage. The vision thus addresses all aspects of women's social existence. Its identification of the need for women's equal status to men in both the public and private spheres in other words expresses the need to dismantle the structures that support the sexual contract.

The young women's attempt to establish a separatist state occurs in an oppressive social system, in which they are dominated by unintelligent men who further their own interests instead of the good of the whole.⁸¹ The satirical presentation of Przemysl and Hinchvoch, the leadership of the country, contrasts with the increasing radicalisation and ultimate violence of the women.⁸² Significantly, not just the leadership of the country is presented as a grotesque aberration. The separatist state of the young women is likewise presented as unnatural, as it relies on self-mutilation and the perversion of women's generative capacity. The women's defeat shows they are weaker and therefore ultimately dependent on men for their freedom: if men withhold their cooperation, women cannot attain freedom, either within marriage or outside it. However, the ultimate message of "Bohemiconymphomachia" is that it is only stupid, lazy and uneducated men who would deny women autonomy and equality.

II.2.1.IV. The aesthetic of confinement.

einzig wahren - : "Schreibende Frauen kämpfen um ihre Rechte (Köln: Kiepenheuer, 1979).

⁸¹Burchard-Dose reads this as a political allegory of the oppression exercised by the absolutist state, and more particularly, the German Confederation in this period (146). Burchardt-Dose offers two slightly contradictory interpretations of the Maids' War firstly stating that the young women who desire freedom are thwarted by the ruler as well as the common people, neither of whom have respect for education (146). Her second allegorical reading equates the young women with the underprivileged masses, and links the question of women's emancipation to the attainment of democracy and the emancipation of the masses from oppressive rule. The desire of Libussa's young women for equality within marriage, and the concomitant undermining of sole male authority and thus of traditional authoritarian structures in the private sphere, would have paved the way for democracy, had they become reality (146).

⁸²Sammons states that "the women, having been denied the intellectual, cultural, and social equality they had enjoyed under Libussa's rule, become increasingly radical, and are gradually transformed into heartless Amazons and defeated after a bloody war (76)."

Maria's second letter presents her move to Munich and her integration into a familial situation ("in einem schönen häuslichen Kreise" *M* 420) with long lost relatives, her adoption of the aesthetic of confinement, and her conversion to Protestantism. While Mundt scholarship has viewed her move and religious conversion positively, it has ignored the description of the new aesthetic determining her life.⁸³ I will show that this new aesthetic has an enormous impact on the presentation of the character, and requires a reevaluation of her religious conversion as well as the significance of her story in terms of the narrative as a whole.

Maria places great emphasis on her new-found happiness. She contrasts herself in her previous state as "das seltsame, eckige, von der Leidenschaft des Unglücks hingerissene Mädchen" (*M* 418) with her present equilibrium as "ein frohes, ausgesöhntes Geschöpf, froh mit den Menschen, froh mit Gott, froh mit meinem ganzen Leben!" (*M* 419) Maria's new aesthetic of life, the "Aesthetik unsres [ie women's MV] Herzens" (*M* 425), requires "*eine von innen heraus geschaffene Begränzung* [emphasis added M.V.]" (*M* 423) This new practice of life as a "schöne Kunst" is thus the express product of self-discipline:

Keine schöne Kunst ... vermag ohne *eine von innen heraus geschaffene Begränzung* zu bestehen [emphasis added, MV], und wer weiß nicht, daß die ganze schöne Kunst unsres Frauenlebens nur in der Begränzung liegt! In der Begränzung siedeln wir unser Glück an, ... finden und erfüllen wir unsern Beruf, ... sind wir für uns und für die andern ein harmonisches, in sich befriedigtes Gebild. (*M* 423)

Significantly, Maria's declaration comes after a passage in which she emphasises her need for "Glück," and provides an unreservedly negative judgement of "Bohemiconymphomachia," viewing Wlasta as "ein wahres tragisches Exempel des verfehlten weiblichen Berufs." (*M* 425)

Maria's definition of the "schöne Kunst des Frauenlebens" echoes the formulations in Campe's *Väterlicher Rat an meine Tochter* (1789) which, as I stated above, can be viewed as the practical manual for the implementation of Fichte's sexual contract.⁸⁴ This influential pedagogical manual of the time for the instruction of young girls in their social

⁸³E.g. Sammons, whose discussion of these sections of her story concludes that "[i]t has some claim to be, I believe, the best of all Young German novellas." (76)

⁸⁴See introduction.

responsibilities clearly provides the subtext for Maria's new aesthetic.⁸⁵ A brief summary of fundamental aspects of Campe's "advice" shows that it readily provides the basis for Maria's negative assessment of Wlasta, as well as for her own aesthetic of containment. Campe's text reveals women's education to be a disciplinary mechanism, fitting them for the tripartite "Bestimmung des Weibes," defined by the classic formula of "Hausfrau, Gattin, Mutter."⁸⁶ Campe's ideal is characterised by "Geduld, Sanftmut, Biagsamkeit und Selbstverleugnung,"⁸⁷ qualities typical of the normative ideal of womanhood. These are cultivated by means of Maria's above expressed "von innen heraus geschaffene Begränzung." Campe asserts:

daß das Geschlecht, zu dem du gehörst, nach unserer dermaligen Weltverfassung, in einem abhängigen und auf geistige sowol als körperliche Schwäche abzielenden Zustande lebt, und, so lange jene Weltverfassung die nämliche bleibt, nothwendig leben muß.⁸⁸

The only way the daughter can tolerate her condition of dependence ("einer, zwar durch äusserliche Zeichen der Hochachtung markirten, aber nichts desto weniger sehr reellen, vielleicht gar etwas drückenden Abhängigkeit")⁸⁹ is to practice utter self-abnegation: "Thue Verzicht auf einen unabhängigen Willen, vornehmlich auf eigene Launen und auf jede Art von Widersetzlichkeit."⁹⁰ Her only weapons are "Nachgiebigkeit, Sanftmuth, Bitten und zärtliche Liebkosungen: dann mein Kind, kann und wird der abhängige Zustand, wozu du gebohren bist, nie drückend für dich werden können."⁹¹

Contradicting Fichte's normative model of ideal womanhood, Maria's aesthetic, like Campe's pedagogy, emphasises that ideal womanhood is a product of art rather than nature, or in other words, a product of conscious effort and self-discipline. Accordingly, Maria emphasises the role of the ratio:

⁸⁵See introduction; c.f. Gerhard *Verhältnisse* 127.

⁸⁶Blochmann argues that Campe is the first to use this expression as a pedagogical category, while Gerhard maintains the expression had a long tradition of usage in the "Hausväterliteratur." Blochmann emphasises the continuity between Campe and earlier dogma on women's role as articulated in the "Hausväterliteratur." Important in this context is the new-found resonance of the formulation in this period and its continuing influence into the 19th century. Blochmann 32; Gerhard *Verhältnisse* 128.

⁸⁷Campe 186.

⁸⁸Campe 19.

⁸⁹Campe 23.

⁹⁰Campe 248.

⁹¹Campe 249.

Diese Reflexionen - *verzeih' das Reflectiren, denn es gehört mit zu der Begränzungs- und Einfriedigungs-Kunst unsres Geschlechts!* - sind mir der einzige Trost gegen Deinen böhmischen Mädekrieg, der, wie gesagt, mich wahrhaft empört hat [emphasis added MV]. (M 423)

Maria's coy request for forgiveness underscores the fact that her adoption of this aesthetic is a reasoned choice.

This is supported by her emphasis on the primacy of happiness for a woman: "Bei einem Mädchenherzen kommt viel darauf an, ob es glücklich ist oder nicht." (M 424) Maria contrasts the possibilities for women, as opposed to the options open to men:

Ein Mann, denke ich, kann vielleicht des Glücks ganz entbehren, und in der rastlosen Begeisterung seines Strebens und Arbeitens dennoch zu einer ihm gemäßen Bildung und Befriedigung kräftig gedeihen. Ein Weib, ich habe es gefühlt, muß durch Unglück immer aus seinen Fugen gerissen werden. (M 424)

Maria is resigned to the fact that she does not have access to education or work, and cannot strive to achieve goals which lie outside the domain in which women are confined. She adds: "Siehst du, ich hasche nach Glück!" (M 424) She must therefore become a true daughter of Campe, and concentrate on achieving happiness in the one arena allowed her, an arena in which she unfortunately remains dependent on others for her well-being.⁹² Her experience in the village after her return from Dresden as a stigmatised woman has taught her that if she wants "Glück," she must accommodate herself to society's requirements: in this case, to the normative requirements of the ideal of womanhood.

In her new state of "Glück," Maria alleges that she is too happy to write the continuation of the "Bekenntnisse der weltlichen Seele" (M 421). She states that she would rather just tell him the rest of her story. Referring to Rahel as "eine große Unglückliche," (M, 421) Maria claims that writing is not a natural activity for women, and that unhappiness is a precondition for women who write:

Ein Weib hat wenig Talent zum Schreiben und zum Darstellen von der Natur erhalten, und nur, wenn es recht unglücklich ist, wird es etwas Besonderes hervorbringen und zu leisten verstehen. Nur ein Weib, das unglücklich ist, sollte schreiben. (M 421)

⁹²As Sammons points out, Maria's desire for security, comfort and pleasure leads her to accept her ambiguous situation in her aunt's household. He states that "[e]ven as a child she is quick-witted enough to figure out what is going on," but that she at the same time "takes genuine pleasure in the advantages she enjoys; she is delighted to be educated, to live in comfort, to have all the material objects and pleasurable outings she desires." (79)

Although Maria imposes normative criteria for womanhood in asserting women's lack of writing ability, she does assess Rahel's contribution positively: "und sie [i.e. Rahel MV] schrieb den erhabnen Geist ihres Unglücks ab in ihren Briefen, und schrieb Briefe, wie sie kein Weib je geschrieben hat." (M 421)

In this context, Mundt's two reviews of Rahel's "Ein Buch des Andenkens an ihre Freunde" are of interest.⁹³ His reviews of the unpublished manuscript (1833) and the published work (1835) present successive shifts away from the opinions he expressed in 1830 on women's gender role and social place in his review article on Hippel.⁹⁴ Mundt's first article acknowledges Rahel's stature ("Sie gehörte der großen ewigen Weltentwicklung an, in der sie mitlebte") and lasting contribution ("in diesem höchsten Sinne ist der Ertrag ihres Geistes ... doch dauernd und unverlierbar").⁹⁵ However, he nevertheless asserts: "Es ist indes auch nicht zu vergessen" that she balanced "jenes geistige Ueberwogen" through the "*wohlthuende Begränzung* [original emphasis MV]" of "sinniges Schaffen und Pflichterfüllen im Kreise des Hauses."⁹⁶ It is difficult to say whether Mundt's emphasis on Rahel's balanced life and the fact that she did not neglect her housewifely duties arises from a perception that he needs to defend her in the public eye, or whether the emphasis reproduces what Mundt feels is right and proper. It is clear, however, that Maria's deployment of the term "Begränzung" in the context of the "Begränzungs- und Einfriedigungs-Kunst unsres Geschlechts" (M 423) is, in 1834, already laden with self-irony.

Mundt's second review article (1835) presents a clearly positive evaluation of Rahel's ideas on Saint Simonianism and women's estate. He asserts that Rahel's Saint Simonian ideas on the need to change social conditions and institutionalised religion in fact predated the Saint Simonians.⁹⁷ Mundt's sympathetic discussion highlights Rahel's critique of an institution

⁹³Theodor Mundt, "Rahel: Ein Buch des Andenkens für ihre Freunde," (Als Handschrift,) Berlin, 1833, *Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik* (71, Oktober 1833, 563-566; 72, Oktober 1833, 569-573; 73, Oktober 1833, 577-582; 74, Oktober 1833, 585-588); --, "Rahel: Ein Buch des Andenkens für ihre Freunde," Berlin, 1834, *Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik* (112, Juni 1835, 905-911; 113, Juni 1835, 913-920; 114, Juni 1835, 918-924).

⁹⁴See discussion above.

⁹⁵"Rahel Handschrift" 558.

⁹⁶"Rahel Handschrift" 586.

⁹⁷"Rahel" 909.

which requires a woman to bear a child within a loveless marriage,⁹⁸ and his extensive citation of Rahel's passionately argued plea for recognising the humanity of women no longer defends conventional notions of women's place:

Hier tritt bei Rahel zugleich die Empfindung der beengten Sphäre weiblichen Berufs mit ins Spiel, an die das Bewußtsein großartiger und selbständiger Kraft sich betrübt muß gefangen geben, und so deutet sie schon ... für jene *Emanzipation der Frauen* [original emphasis MV], deren nachher der St. Simonismus mit abenteuerlicher Theorie sich anzunehmen sucht, die heftigsten, aus dem Leben sprechenden Argumente an: - kann ein Frauenzimmer dafür, wenn es auch ein Mensch ist?⁹⁹

By 1835, Mundt is able to make an unambiguously positive assessment of Rahel's work.

As suggested above, the nature of Maria's piety adds a nuance of ambiguity to her religious conversion. Mundt scholarship has regarded her conversion to Protestantism as unalloyedly positive in keeping with what is viewed as a privileging of Protestantism by Mundt and the Young Germans in general.¹⁰⁰ Maria's valuation of Protestantism in her "Bekenntnisse" also supports this view,¹⁰¹ as her concluding words refer to Protestantism: "es ist mir dann, als warte diese Klarheit, zugleich mit einem zukünftigen Glück, noch in schöner Ferne auf mich." (M 260) At this point Maria's hopes for a better future are based in Protestantism as the religion of clarity. However, she also acknowledges that she does not fully comprehend Mellenberg's religion when she thinks of his death.¹⁰² At these times "schlagen ernstredende Stimmen in mir empor, die von unverstandener Liebe und von unverstandener Religion sprechen." (M 259) In order to further contextualise Mellenberg's death, as well as Maria's account of her conversion and the nature of her faith, I look briefly at the figures of

⁹⁸"[F]ürchterlich ist die Natur darin, daß eine Frau gemißbraucht werden kann, und wider Lust und Willen einen Menschen erzeugen kann." "Rahel" 915.

⁹⁹"Rahel" 915f., quotation 916.

¹⁰⁰Sammons 78.

¹⁰¹When the narrator reveals his religious background, she cries: "Nun, sein Sie nur Protestant, sein Sie Protestant! Wie oft, wie oft habe ich in meinem stillen Kämmerlein ausgerufen: O könnte auch ich es sein!" (M 113) As a result of her secret instruction by Mellenberg while he was to tutor her in modern languages, she becomes a secret Protestant, having immediately grasped the essence of Protestantism: "Ich wurde aus ganzem Herzen Protestantin, fühlte mich klar, frisch und gesund dabei." (M 204-205)

¹⁰²Maria faints when she sees rescuers carrying Mellenberg's body from the river. When she comes to she is lost, as she has been carried by the momentum of the crowd.

Mellenberg and Maria's father. I also consider the critique of established religion enacted by the traveller narrator in the course of his travels.

Mellenberg's orthodox Protestantism, which may be Pietistically inflected,¹⁰³ is contrasted with the narrator's critical stance towards religion. The latter's travel journal provides an extensive critique of Pietism and Protestant orthodoxy (*M* 357ff), which includes a description of Pietism as expressive of a "spießbürgerliches Verhältnis zu Gott." (*M* 359) Mellenberg and Maria's father are emblematic of the narrator's critique of established religions, representing extreme, life-denying, and destructive forms of Protestant and Catholic orthodoxy and religious zealotry respectively.¹⁰⁴ At the same time, Catholicism is presented as having the potential to change through the agency of thinkers like Anton Günther, an influential radical Catholic philosopher and theologian whom Mundt, like *Madonna's* narrator (*M* 362), met in Vienna.¹⁰⁵ Günther attempted to fuse Catholic thought with intellectual currents of the time in order to revitalise it,¹⁰⁶ and although the narrator is

¹⁰³Nipperdey's discussion of the different strands of Protestantism in the period 1815-1848 concludes that manifestations of Pietism ultimately could not be readily distinguished from manifestations of Protestant orthodoxy, as characteristics from both converge and merge in different ways in different groups: "die einen übernehmen die Erlebnis- und Gefühlsfrommigkeit, die anderen die dogmatischen Lehren und Formeln, nicht überall ausgeglichen und überall in unterschiedlicher Mischung." (425)

¹⁰⁴C.f. Burchard-Dose refers to Mellenberg's "false religious understanding" and its consequences, as well as the repressive conditions in Maria's home, and states that Mundt portrays the joyless existence of all people who give Christian religious obeisance definitive status in their lives (138).

¹⁰⁵Karl Möckel, *Der Gedanke der Menschheitsentwicklung im Jungen Deutschland*, diss., U Leipzig, 1916 (Leipzig: Wießler, 1916) 109, fn. 1. Möckel states that Mundt and Günther remained "in regem persönlichen Verkehr." (109)

¹⁰⁶Günther (1783-1863), born in Bohemia, was a professor of theology in Bonn who attempted to reconcile science and religious faith by reconceptualising Catholic belief on the basis of Kant's philosophy. His writings were placed on the index by the Catholic church in 1835. Nipperdey 407. See Nipperdey for discussion of the three progressive trends in German Catholicism in the early to mid-nineteenth century (407-410). Christopher Clark, in contrast, focusses on what he identifies as the phase of religious revival of German Catholicism during the period 1815-1848, stating that: "In Bavaria from the 1820s, the clergy used liturgical innovations, pilgrimages and processions to encourage and deepen public participation and to replace the rationalist ethics of the Catholic Enlightenment with a respect for mystery and miracle." He views this revival as promoting the rise of ultramontanism. ("Germany 1815-1848: Restoration or pre-March?" Mary Fulbrook, ed., *German History since 1800* (London: Arnold, 1997): 38-60, 57. The question of whether progressive or conservative movements were dominant in the period is clearly a complex one, and the answers would have to differ for each state in the German Confederation. A review article by Margaret Lavinia Anderson indicates that the field is still very much subject to exploration and reassessment. "Piety and Politics: Recent Work on German Catholicism," *Journal of Modern History* 63 (1991): 681-716.

pessimistic about Günther's chances of effecting any change in the Catholic church establishment, he asserts: "Ich nenne Günther einen Bewegungsmann des Katholizismus, denn wo Geist ist, da wird Bewegung" (M 362).¹⁰⁷ Since Möckel's (1916) identification of the significance of Günther for Mundt's thought, late twentieth century scholarship has focussed principally on the influence of Heine and/or Saint Simon and Saint Simonianism,¹⁰⁸ with some discussion of Mundt's intellectual debt to Hegel.¹⁰⁹

In terms of the general valorisation of Protestantism by Young Germany, and in the context of attempts in the Pre-March period to replace Vienna with Munich as the intellectual centre of Catholicism,¹¹⁰ Maria's conversion from Catholicism to Protestantism in Munich could be viewed as a provocative act on Mundt's part. However, given the Enlightened character of the Catholic priesthood in the southwest of Germany in the period to 1848,¹¹¹ the location of the conversion could also arguably emphasise Mundt's desire for the fusion of intellectual clarity with religious belief. The positive valuation of Anton Günther in the novel, in tandem with the emphasis on the need for change, or "Bewegung," demonstrates clearly that Mundt's interest

¹⁰⁷Möckel 109ff, here 109. See discussion below for the significance of the term "Bewegung." See discussion below: II.2.1.v. The aesthetic of movement.

¹⁰⁸Butler, for example, asserts that while he himself insisted that he was a Christian, in *Madonna* "Mundt's position was not consistent with Christianity, however enlightened its followers. ... In spite of his condemnation of Enfantin's theory of marriage, he held the same view of freedom in love, and the story of *Madonna* shows clearly that he was more truly a Saint Simonian than he knew. (359-360) Burchardt-Dose, however, considers that Butler overemphasises the influence of Saint Simonianism. She asserts Heine's influence was stronger in this novel: "Heines Ausführungen über den Sensualismus kamen eindeutig Mundt für seine Reflexionen über das Zerwürfnis von Welt und Geist zur Hilfe" (240-46, quotation 244).

In this context it pays to consider the view that the Saint Simonians were themselves influenced by German philosophers. Mundt's contemporary Veit thus criticises the derivative nature of Saint Simonian thought, emphasising its origins in German speculative philosophy (116), and Manuel later makes a similar point: "One group of Saint-Simonians had been exposed to German intellectual influences, particularly Gustave d'Eichthal and Eugène Rodrigues, and through them the amorphous pantheism of eighteenth century religious thought infiltrated France." (163) Möckel details a number of influences on Mundt's thought, drawing attention to differences as well as commonalities with, for example, Saint Simonianism and Hegel (98ff.). He finds that Mundt went his own way with respect to the Saint Simonians, but that his metaphysics, like theirs, was pantheistic. (98)

¹⁰⁹Annemarie Gethmann-Siefert, "Hegelsches gegen Hegel: Zu Theodor Mundts anti-hegelschem Entwurf einer Ästhetik," *Hegel-Studien* 15 (1980): 271-78; Walter Grupe, *Mundts und Kühnes Verhältnis zu Hegel und seinen Gegnern*, 1928 (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1973).

¹¹⁰Nipperdey 408.

¹¹¹Nipperdey 407f.

in theology and church politics goes beyond traditional representations of the church and established religion.

In fact, the interesting aspect of this process is not so much Maria's conversion to Protestantism, but her conversion to piety. Her conversion must be considered in terms of Maria's assertion of new-found piety and her new aesthetic of life, the former defined with respect to her newly-asserted gender role. Moreover, she emphasises that in assuming the right to devoutness, she is not competing with men for the possession of reason:

Ich bin glücklich, und ich bin fromm! Ja, ich bin auch fromm! Ich glaube, ein Frauenherz kann und darf fromm sein, und auch hier will ich den Männern gern die Überlegenheit des Geistes einräumen, eines Geistes, der auch in der Andachtslosigkeit und in der Lostrennung von einem bestimmten religiösen Bekenntniß sich noch immer eigenthümlich und selbständig zu gestalten vermag. (M 425-426)

Her formal conversion to Protestantism thus occurs in radically different terms to those she imagined in the "Confessions,"¹¹² and her new faith does not correspond with the religion she had found intellectually stimulating when first exposed to ideas of Protestantism. Maria's piety is instead a carefully constructed gender-specific expression of faith. It commits her to an emotionally-driven practice which, like her new femininity, does not transgress gender boundaries into the male-coded realm of intellectual endeavour. The declaration of piety could thus be viewed as yet another pragmatic decision in her new life.¹¹³

This interpretation is confirmed in the description of Maria's actions on the morning of her conversion, when she removes "[e]in kleines, schönes Madonnenbild, das ich noch bis jetzt in einem goldenen Medaillon nur als Schmuck getragen ... aber mit einem Kuß" (M 427). This is the only reference to the "Madonnenbild" in the novel, and there is no indication where or when she might have acquired it, but clearly the act of removal can be identified as

¹¹²Meyer's linking of her conversion to Protestantism at the end of the novel with her feelings on her sexual union with Mellenberg does not take the shifts I have just presented into account. Meyer finds that "in her [Maria's MV] union with Mellenberg, a harmony of flesh and spirit is expressed that anticipates her conversion to Protestantism at the end of the novel." (148)

¹¹³Maria's conversion has been interpreted in radically different ways, e.g. Burchardt-Dose, who claims for Maria a "konservative Gesinnung," takes at face value Maria's new aesthetic of the heart, and her insistence on being "fromm." (138) In contrast, Butler finds that the conversion "seems rather too apt an illustration of the theories in this book to be accepted without scepticism. Psychologically it is an anticlimax and although life is so full of these, this particular one seems particularly unreal." (358f)

the literal, visual shedding of the identity associated with the Madonna, and her transition to another persona. I will now look further at the significance of the "Madonnenbild" itself, the fact that it is described as "only jewellery," and the status of the kiss.

The term "Madonnenbild" distinguishes the image in Maria's locket from the traditional religious token of the "Marienbild" popular at the time, according to Grimms' dictionary. The entry for the latter term includes references to contemporary usage by Goethe, Kleist, and Höltz,¹¹⁴ but has no entry for "Madonnenbild." The term "Madonnenbild" is therefore most strongly associated with the narrator's representation of Maria as the secular saint, and her adoption of this identity in her first letter. It suggests that the acquisition of the locket was connected in some way to the Madonna identity conferred on her by the narrator, and that its setting aside likewise signifies the setting aside of this identity.

The description of the locket as "only jewellery," which gives the "Madonnenbild" a markedly secular meaning, contrasts with the religious use of amulets by Maria's father, who constantly kisses an amulet on the narrator's first visit, and also presents Maria with one on her departure for Dresden (*M* 193). Her aunt's response when Maria shows her the amulet causes her to throw it away in embarrassment, along with the unsuitable clothes she has brought with her (*M* 198). This act of discarding these now meaningless things from her old life was prompted by her aunt's reaction. In contrast, the setting aside of the "Madonnenbild" with a kiss occurs of her own volition. Here, her association with this old identity is shed, but gently and with affection.

Maria sets aside the locket with care, but her act of kissing the image is rather more ambiguous, expressed as "*aber mit einem Kuß* [emphasis added MV]." The strong religious association of a kiss with betrayal is present in this context, as Maria betrays the narrator's hopes when she succumbs to convention. However, the narrative in its entirety shows clearly that she could not survive outside the proscriptions of the sexual contract. She herself has no means, and the traveller narrator, who is her only male supporter, cannot provide for her financially either. There is no suggestion that she engages in the ritualistic superstitious

¹¹⁴Grimms XII,1626.

behaviour of kissing amulets. Setting the locket aside with a kiss would therefore be consistent with her adoption of a new identity to go with her new life: In this context she clearly cannot sustain the Madonna-identity. Her survival in her new familial milieu requires her to cast aside her previous identity, but significantly, she does not repudiate it, either by discarding the locket, or by refusing any more contact with the narrator. Instead she is insistent that the narrator visit her in her new surroundings (M 418).

Maria's description of Munich, the site of her new life and her conversion to Protestantism, emphatically asserts her desire to disassociate herself from the past. She contrasts her view of Munich with the narrator's description of Prague as a city defined by its history, and links herself with the new city, emphasising that she wants to make a new start in a city without a past:

Denn auch ich mag mich gern als losgetrennt von der Vergangenheit ansehen, ich mag nicht zurückblicken in die Vergangenheit, in der ich schwarze und gräßliche Bilder meines Daseins begraben habe. Ich habe viele Ursache, das Vergangene vergangen, ja verblichen sein zu lassen. (M 423)

She figures herself as being given the opportunity to start anew, with a blank slate, in a context in which: "[n]eue Häuser, neue Paläste, neue Museen, ja neue Straßen entstehen hier unaufhörlich rings um mich" (M 423). The absence of "Hütten" in Munich indicates she can finally separate herself from the poverty and social backwardness of her Bohemian past.¹¹⁵

Maria's move from Bohemia to Munich is also emancipatory in the broader sense: Bohemia and its capital Prague are distinguished by a history of oppression, whereas Munich is a city which still remains undefined, and therefore a city of possibility. Here she is not ostracised from society as a godless woman, but is integrated in a familial environment which she clearly views as providing the potential for a better life. Wülfing emphasises the positive significance of Munich for Maria, but also finds that she, like the Young Germans as a group, has an "Abneigung gegenüber der Vergangenheit [original emphasis MV]."¹¹⁶ He finds:

Für die "Heilige" beginnt jetzt ein neuer Abschnitt ihres Lebens, und die Stadt soll bildhaft darstellen, daß auch in Ihrem "Herzen ganz neue Häuser und neue Straßen

¹¹⁵Maria refers to "des Vaters dumpfer Hütte" (M 145) when she asks the writer to take her away with him.

¹¹⁶Wülfing, *Schlagworte des Jungen Deutschland: Mit einer Einführung in die Schlagwortforschung* (Berlin: Schmidt, 1982) 119.

angebaut" werden [original emphasis MV]. Aber es scheint, als habe nur ein Jungdeutscher so begeistert dem Gefühl der Freiheit Ausdruck geben können, das ihn dort überwältigt, wo es keine *Vergangenheit* gibt.¹¹⁷

The preceding discussion shows that while Maria indeed does want to start anew, she clearly distinguishes between negative and positive experiences in her past.

Webber's interpretation of the narrator's "antischillerschen Spaziergang" (M 291) suggests that the work as a whole provides a more complex reading of history and the past than that asserted by Wülfing in the above reading of Maria's statement.¹¹⁸ Webber finds that in his "Stadtelegie" (M 280) the narrator valorises "the present age, the period of consciousness, sin, and the city."¹¹⁹ Webber argues further that

Mundt reinterprets the myth of the Fall by making the city the central attribute of modern man, the symbol of his consciousness and freedom, and the medium through which he can regain his lost paradise: "Sie mehrten sich, und ihre Städte blühten, denn der Eifer und Drang der Menschen war groß und unendlich, er reichte bis an den Himmel und bis an das verlorene Paradies zurück." (M 283)¹²⁰

According to Webber, Mundt's Madonna thus presents the view "that the lost paradise can or must be reattained through sinfulness."¹²¹ This also incorporates the idea that the present condition of "Zerrissenheit" may be overcome in the chaos and activity which defines city life, and harmony and psychological unity be reattained.¹²² On the basis of Webber's discussion and the argument I have presented above with respect to Maria's "Fall," it can be argued that the text as a whole valorises sexual experience and Maria's Madonna identity.¹²³ At the same time the text demonstrates that it is unsustainable in the present circumstances, thus also supporting the narrator's insistence on the need for change in the social, political and religious spheres.

I now return to the formal presentation of Maria's two letters in Mundt's text. The first, as stated above, is received extremely positively by the narrator, and Maria adopts the his

¹¹⁷Wülfing, *Schlagworte* 120.

¹¹⁸Mark Joel Webber, "Mundt's *Madonna* and Schiller's "Spaziergang": The City in History and Literature," *Germano-Slavica* 2.2 (1976): 77-86.

¹¹⁹Webber, "Spaziergang" 82.

¹²⁰Webber, "Spaziergang" 82-83.

¹²¹Webber, "Spaziergang" 83.

¹²²Webber, "Spaziergang" 83.

¹²³In the "Bekanntnisse" Maria describes herself as a "weltliche Seele" and "[e]in Kind der Welt" (M 242).

vocabulary in her description of herself, emphatically assuming the persona of the "Weltheilige." This is clear, even though the letter is a fragment with no ending and thus no signature. The second letter begins as a fragment (M 418). It consequently lacks an introduction by the narrator, contrasting with his emphatically positive reception of the first letter. Its fragmentary nature also means that the reader does not have access to the entirety of Maria's account of her changed circumstances. The title of this letter, "Madonna schreibt," contradicts the contents of the letter, which present a movement away from this identity. It is signed "Maria." The contrast between the narrator's effusive reception of the first letter and the absence of his commentary with respect to the second is suggestive. Whereas the first letter represents the fulfilment of the ideal of the "Weltheilige," the absence of commentary on the second allows it to be interpreted literally as Maria's rejection of the Madonna identity, or as a considered retreat to the socially acceptable form of womanhood. In the absence of supporting structures in society, Maria clearly cannot sustain the identity of the "Weltheilige," and survival dictates the pragmatic choices she makes. Mundt's narrative thus presents a thorough questioning of the structures that support the sexual contract in terms of its determination of women's psyche and their destiny. While asserting that change is possible, it also demonstrates that social change is needed in order to support women's autonomy and sexual freedom.

II.2.1.v. The aesthetic of movement.

Mundt's generic classification of *Madonna* as a "Buch der Bewegung" (M 434) supports the interrogative and contestatory nature of Maria's story. The formal structure of the work classifies it as an epistolary travel novel according to the conventions of the time,¹²⁴ yet Mundt resists the text's inscription into any one conventional generic category, claiming: "Ich

¹²⁴C.f. Hömberg, *Zeitgeist* 63; c.f. also Walter Hömberg, "Literarisch-publizistische Strategien der Jungdeutschen und Vormärz-Literaten," *Witte* 83-98, 85. This genre was particularly favoured by the broader spectrum of Young German writers, including Börne, Heine, Gutzkow, Laube, as a vehicle for political commentary. While others also assert that the mixture of generic forms in *Madonna* is typical of the genre of the epistolary travel novel and its politicised nature in the Vormärz period (Draeger 63, fn. 1). This mixture and Mundt's own classification of the novel have been regarded as a sign of authorial incompetence (Geiger, *Zensur* 70) or viewed it with impatience (Sammons 71).

erkläre mit feierlicher Resignation, daß es eigentlich gar kein Buch ist, das ich herausgebe, sondern bloß ein Stück Leben" (*M* 433). This classification of *Madonna* represents the provocative appropriation and deployment of an already politicised word, as confirmed by von Beyme, a former Minister of State and a Mundt sympathiser. After *Madonna* was censored, the former wrote to Mundt saying it was a pity he had had to label *Madonna* a "Buch der Bewegung," as this alone was enough, "allgemeines Schrecken zu verbreiten."¹²⁵ By raising the question of genre and politicising it through the use of the word "Bewegung,"¹²⁶ Mundt foregrounds the ideological functioning of narrative structure as well as the socio-political and cultural significance of literature. *Madonna's* story is thus embedded in a text which its "editor" proclaims to be politically and generically subversive: his explicitly stated intention of disrupting generic ordering structures is related to the concurrent destabilisation of the conventional "heroine's plot" in Maria's story.

In terms of "das Modell Clarissa," the depiction in *Madonna* of an active female sexuality which is not punished by death or ostracism, and which is 'let loose,' if only in the house, and if only for a short time, already poses a threat to the normative conceptualisation of female subjectivity. It is significant that Maria at no point repudiates or denies her sexual experience or the identity of the "Weltheilige," but indeed invites the narrator to visit her in her new circumstances. Most importantly, she does not renounce her past by repenting, as would perhaps be expected of one who has a new-found "Frömmigkeit." Moreover, Maria is not stigmatised as sick or mad, demonised, or killed off in punishment for straying beyond the boundaries of normative female behaviour. However one may wish to evaluate her conversion, her new life in Munich does indicate her acceptance into society, which is different from the ostracism she suffers on her return to her village after the Dresden episode. Even in her pious Protestant incarnation, Maria represents a potential new woman who subverts the ideal stereotype; one who has had her status as the "angel in the house" reaffirmed, yet one who

¹²⁵Letter from von Beyme to Mundt (27 June 1835), cited by Draeger 64, see also Houben, *Sturm* 450.

¹²⁶Wülfing reviews the association of the term "Bewegung" with anti-monarchist liberal political activity as well as discussing its significance for Young German writers in general (*Schlagworte* 201-217) and Mundt's *Madonna* in particular (*Schlagworte* 209-210).

nevertheless embodies the potential for change. Through Maria's story Mundt presents a re-visioning of the nineteenth-century version of a woman's fall. The narrator's "Bohemiconymphomachia" supports and expands Maria's story through its advocacy of women's equality in the public sphere as well as in marriage. The young women's attempts to gain equality in the public and private spheres, together with the critique of powerful but stupid and short-sighted men, the valorisation in Wlasta's vision of Libussa and Hippel, and the even-handed valuation of Saint Simonianism, all demonstrate that *Madonna* advocates sweeping social change.

The refiguring of female sexuality and subjectivity in the first part of Maria's story constitutes a radical departure from convention and the sexual contract. However, at the same time the text demonstrates that any such change in female consciousness and behaviour must be accompanied by equally radical social change, which includes a change in men's attitudes. The refiguration of female sexuality, subjectivity and desire in the first part of Maria's story must remain ineffectual when the new woman is confined within the limits of a society that does not support the independent and autonomous female subject, but is instead bound by the limitations of the sexual contract.

II.2.2. *Charlotte Stieglitz, ein Denkmal.*

While Mundt's fictional Maria/Madonna presents the possibility of radical change outside the boundaries of the sexual contract, the life and suicide of the textual Charlotte Stieglitz presents a radicalisation of the model of ideal womanhood within its boundaries. Although Mundt's *Denkmal* contains two voices, that of Charlotte is subordinated to the authoritative narrative voice of Mundt in his combined role as author/editor.¹ During the writing of *Denkmal* Mundt established his authority as the custodian of Charlotte's public memory in a victorious battle with her widower Heinrich Stieglitz, silencing the latter's dissident voice.² This, together with Mundt's organisation of Charlotte's papers and his account of her story, ensured that the narratives of the three key players, Charlotte, Heinrich, and Mundt himself, are presented from the latter's perspective.³ Mundt's (auto-)biographical textual memorial asserts a particular representation of Charlotte's life and death, which valorises her act of suicide by universalising its meaning.

¹The framework of the present thesis does not permit me to consider *Denkmal* as an (auto-)biographical text. I do, however, emphasise Mundt's personal interest in his representation of Charlotte's life, suicide, and relationships with others, as well as in his presentation of his own role.

²Mundt's dispute with Heinrich Stieglitz, and the latter's silencing, is related by Ludwig Geiger in his discussion of a letter from Mundt to Stieglitz (21 April, 1835). *Dichter und Frauen*, (Berlin: Paetel, 1896) 246-265; for Mundt's letter, see 250-255. Mundt damns Heinrich as a man, a husband, and a poet in this letter, written after the latter had returned the first part of Mundt's manuscript of *Denkmal* with sections defaced to the point where they were illegible. An angry Mundt makes it clear that the psychological reading of Charlotte's character which would provide the key to her suicide must include their "eheliches Zusammenleben bis in die kleinsten Details hinein." Geiger *Dichter* 251. Susanne Ledanff discusses the way in which the sexual rivalry of the two men manifested itself in Mundt's determined unveiling of Stieglitz's alleged impotence and thus his failure as a man. See Nachwort, *Charlotte Stieglitz: Geschichte eines Denkmals*. (Frankfurt a.M.: Ullstein, 1986) 185-230, 186-87. This was the subject not only of general discussion by contemporaries, but also verses at Heinrich's expense such as Grabbe's "Hätt'st du der Frau ein Kind gemacht, sie hätte sich nicht umgebracht." (Ledanff 197)

³Heinrich's assessment of *Denkmal* finds that while Charlotte is presented "im reinen Glanz weiblicher Vollendung, ... [m]eine eigenen Züge fand ich dagegen etwas verzerrt und verschoben," and that Mundt's view on his and Charlotte's relationship differs significantly from how it appeared to Heinrich himself. (Curtze 250) Mundt's contemporaries Marggraff and Keller thought that he was not in a position to provide an impartial account. (See Curtze fn. 46, 486-87). Ledanff discusses Mundt's emotional attachment to Charlotte and his sexual rivalry with Heinrich (186-87), but nevertheless views *Denkmal* as "eine in erster Linie aus 'Selbstverleugnung' geschriebene Huldigung an die Freundin. Huldigung auch ihrer dunklen Seiten." (189)

II.2.2.1. Public reception.

Mundt's public reading of Charlotte's suicide as a product of the socio-political chaos and uncertainty of the period on the one hand,⁴ and as a result of the inadequacies of her marital relationship on the other,⁵ was complemented by many other interpretations. Although Marggraff attempted to cast it in a positive light,⁶ other contemporaries viewed it as a delusional or transgressive act.⁷ Menzel's view of the "Unnatur" of the act explicitly targeted the Young German "Schule jener poetischen Ueberreizung und unersättlicher Begehrlichkeit" which promoted unnatural behaviour, threatened social mores and perverted literary enterprise.⁸ In his outraged judgements, Menzel treated the manifold scandal of Charlotte's act as an affront to religion, morality, women, female and human nature, and marriage.⁹ Menzel's outrage was echoed in the widely different reactions of those contemporaries who also judged Charlotte's act to be the result of a disturbance of true female nature, and viewed her as providing evidence of the "überreizte[r] Reflexion unserer Zeit und d[er] feinste[n] Sophistik," and of the "krankhafteste[n] Ueberspannung." These were considered products

⁴C.f. the much quoted exhortation to his contemporaries to use the suicide as a prompt to cast "einen tieferen Blick in unsere verirrtten und unnatürlichen Einrichtungen, in die Zustände unserer Ehen, unserer Liebe, unserer Freundschaft." (D 311)

⁵See concluding chapter to *Denkmal* (D 311-314) for Mundt's wide-ranging explanations for the "Weltereignis" (D 311) of Charlotte's suicide. These revolve around the universal significance of her deed, and its significance in literary and personal terms. He does attempt to defend her from the wrath of the church by stating that she died "mit dem festen und freudigen Glauben an ein ewiges Leben und an die Unsterblichkeit ihrer Seele." (D 314)

⁶in the context of the spate of suicides in the early nineteenth century, Hermann Marggraff views Charlotte's as rising "mit einer Art Heiligenschein über die Schar der gewöhnlichen Selbstvernichtungen hinweg, soweit man einem Selbstmorde die Glorie der Heiligkeit zugestehen darf." *Deutschland's jüngste Literatur- und Culturepoche: Charakteristiken von Hermann Marggraff* (Leipzig: Engelmann, 1839) 138.

⁷The priest officiating at the funeral made two points, firstly that there should be no mistaking the self-delusion which brought Charlotte to commit suicide in an attempt to bring about something which only God can grant. However, and secondly, "kommt alles darauf an, daß wir sie nicht richten, nicht verdammen." (cited in *Selbstbiographie* 482-485, quotation 484) Commentators interpreted the priest's words as confirming either that the priest withheld judgement and thus refused to indict her, or that he stressed that she would ultimately be judged by God, the implication being that she would not be able to escape ultimate indictment. *Selbstbiographie* 481-82.

Barthel views the suicide as a "Verbrechen" and "nur der letzte Ausbruch einer langen Reihe sittlicher Verirrungen." Barthel (1851), cited in *Selbstbiographie* 490, fn. 48.

⁸Wolfgang Menzel, *Deutsche Literaturgeschichte*, 1836, 2nd ed., IV: 263, cited in *Selbstbiographie* 460, fn. 40.

⁹Menzel also views the attack on marriage as arising from misguided and recent (Saint Simonian) ideas about women's emancipation. See *Selbstbiographie* 458, fn. 40.

either of the time, or more specifically, of the depraved higher echelons of Berlin society.¹⁰ Gutzkow also modified his initial celebration of the act as a "Tat" to read it as an "Irrtum,"¹¹ and Laube found that "[e]s handelt sich viel mehr um einen merkwürdigen Charakter als um ein Zeugniß unserer Tage."¹²

Charlotte's suicide has also been contextualised with respect to other literary suicides, whether enacted by women, or by literary figures of both sexes, such as Karoline Günderrode,¹³ Henriette Vogel,¹⁴ Lucretia,¹⁵ Emilia Galotti,¹⁶ Otilie,¹⁷ and Werther.¹⁸ It is only more recently that Charlotte's citation of the heroic code and that of the holy martyr has been subjected to closer critical scrutiny.

Mundt's public reading of Charlotte's suicide inaugurated what were to become two dominant motifs of readings of the act. Most commentators assert the confluence of the inadequacies of her personal situation in the marital relationship with the restricted possibilities for women in the era, and look at her citation of literary motifs in the manner of her death as well as its professed intention to effect Heinrich's regeneration as a poet by means of Charlotte's self-sacrificial "Kaiserschnitt." (D 208) Promies considers that her life and death are emblematic of the social position of women in the nineteenth century, and

¹⁰The *Conversations-Lexikon der Gegenwart* (1840) finds the case to be "ein Product überreizter Reflexion unerer Zeit und der feinsten Sophistik, die sich eines edlen Gemüths bemächtigen kann." Cited in *Selbstbiographie* 459, fn 40. Barthels (1851) views Charlotte as providing "einen tragischen Beweis der krankhaftesten Ueberspannung, wie sie überhaupt damals in den vornehmsten Kreisen Berlins zu Hause war." Cited in *Selbstbiographie* 459, fn. 40.

¹¹See discussion above.

¹²Heinrich Laube, cited in *Selbstbiographie* 459, fn 40. Laube does commend *Denkmal* as Mundt's best work, asserting that Mundt's personal friendship with Charlotte gave him the opportunity to write on "die modern-wichtige Frage über das Weib." (490, fn. 48) See also Ledanff's review of contemporary opinion on "Die Kulturtragödie" (217-226).

¹³Gutzkow "Zypressen." See discussion above for the significance of Gutzkow's slip in naming Charlotte Karoline.

¹⁴Promies 570.

¹⁵Olaf Briese, "Von der Unmöglichkeit, Held zu sein: Das Lucretia-Motiv im Vormärz," *Weimarer Beiträge* 38.3 (1992): 407-418; Promies 570.

¹⁶Promies 570.

¹⁷Mundt refers to Charlotte wanting to choose Otilie's death and refusing food (D 20), but as Tatlock says, it is not clear whether the reference to Otilie was first made by Mundt, or whether Charlotte framed her actions in this way when relating them to him. Tatlock notes that the significance of this is that "it suggests that Charlotte lived according to literary models." Tatlock, "Tales" 470.

¹⁸Gutzkow, "Cypressen" 189; Ledanff 196.

concludes that she is in fact a victim of two ideologies dominant in the period which both require passive receptivity of women, that of model womanhood, and that of the artist and art.¹⁹ Ledanff shows how Charlotte might have been susceptible to suicide as a solution to her problems because of the Stieglitz's fascination with death,²⁰ and her "Opferphantasien" which were coupled with the belief in "die gesinnungsschaffende Kraft des Dichterworts."²¹ However, Ledanff asserts that Heinrich's advanced manic-depressive illness ultimately drove Charlotte to commit suicide.²² Ledanff refers to the deliberation and calculation involved in Charlotte's self-representation on her deathbed, noting the literary allusions to Goethe's *Werther* as well as to "religiöse Märtyrersymbolik" in the staging of her death.²³ Tatlock and Bronfen have since examined Charlotte's employment of cultural and specifically literary codes to argue that Charlotte's act was not simply a self-abnegatory self-sacrifice.

Tatlock's reading of Charlotte's suicide provides a corrective to prior scholarship which had neglected discussion of Charlotte's agency in favour of presenting her as a victim of her relationship and of socio-cultural circumstances. Tatlock asserts that "[a]lthough the suicide was highly visible, its real cultural significance, a woman's angry insistence on the importance of her self, remained invisible, a tragic failure which 'sank unwept into oblivion.'²⁴ She states that "[b]y the end of 1834 Charlotte was threatened on all fronts with the likelihood of the failure of her life project, her own insignificance and invisibility. Sustaining her vision of a meaningful self required a radical act."²⁵ Arguing thus that Charlotte's act arose out of desperation and a desire to signify, Tatlock concludes:

To focus on the martyrdom, the ostensible self-abnegation, is to deny the fury and bitterness behind this willful act, to deny the implicit indictment of social structures. ... [T]o dismiss Charlotte simply as a fantastic, attune to the highly-strung register of a sentimental age, is to ignore the significance of the codes she uses. ... For those who

¹⁹Promies 560-61.

²⁰Ledanff 193.

²¹Ledanff 196.

²²Ledanff 196.

²³ Ledanff 196. Briese, in contrast, promotes the idea of Charlotte's self-sacrifice. (Briese, "Unmöglichkeit" 411.

²⁴Tatlock, "Tales" 469.

²⁵Tatlock, "Tales" 480.

can read the language of mortal sublimation Charlotte's death bespeaks not self-sacrifice but a relentless struggle for a version of self.²⁶

Bronfen has since read Charlotte's final desperate attempt to "liberate" her poet husband's "petrified powers"²⁷ as an act of greater ambiguity, arguing that it presents a "disturbing twist ... to the relationship between artist and muse," namely "the suggestion that poetic renewal - the birth of the poet - necessarily entails someone else's death."²⁸ Bronfen emphasises the contradictory mixture of "delusions" and "calculation" inherent in Charlotte's suicide, as well as her apparently naïve belief in heroic codes of conduct derived from literary models. This leads to "the doubling of deluded victim and consciously responsible actress. For she exposes the conventions of feminine self-sacrifice at exactly the same moment that she fatally enacts them."²⁹ Bronfen finds Charlotte's "self-sacrifice ... so disquieting because it is both an imitation of cultural clichés, hovering between Irony and kitsch, and a self-conscious effort to make herself into an object of discourse."³⁰

II.2.2.ii. Permutation of the sexual contract.

My argument in the present reading of Charlotte's life and death from the perspective of the sexual contract builds on Ledanff's, Tatlock's and Bronfen's insights. I show that Charlotte's suicide is indeed ambiguous, but that this ambiguity, like Charlotte's agency, arises from her conflation of the desire to figure with her desire to fulfil the self-abnegatory model of ideal female behaviour determined by the sexual contract. I show further, that Charlotte's permutation of the model developed by Fichte also clearly pre-scribes her suicide.

The trajectory of Charlotte's life from girlhood and marriage to suicide can be viewed as the logical fulfilment of a model of desire Charlotte first articulated in a journal entry, and then refined in a later letter to Heinrich, written a year before their marriage. In the earlier

²⁶Tatlock, "Tales" 483.

²⁷Elisabeth Bronfen, *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and The Aesthetic* (New York: Routledge, 1992) 360.

²⁸Bronfen, *Body* 362.

²⁹Bronfen, *Body* 361.

³⁰Bronfen, *Body* 361.

journal entry Charlotte presents and also questions the model of desire inculcated by her mother:

Nichts wollen, nichts wünschen, als Lieben; sich selbst vergessen im Glück des geliebten Wesens, ohne Erwiederung zu hoffen oder zu wünschen, stellt uns den Engeln gleich, ist Vorgefühl himmlischen Glücks! So lehrtest Du mich, meine Mutter! Warum bin ich denn nicht glücklich? Warum treibt unwillkürliche Unruhe mich rastlos umher? Warum beklemmt meine Brust ein Wünschen, ein etwas Erwarten von der nächsten Minute, für das ich sogar nicht einen Namen habe? (D 8)

She then presents her own, severely circumscribed, desire:

Könnte ich nur einmal recht Großes, recht Schweres für ihn vollbringen, ohne daß er ahndete, von wo es ausginge! Könnte ich ungesehen von ihm ein trübes Geschick, ein großes Unheil von seinem geliebten Haupte auf das meinige lenken, und dann in mich geschmiegt und still aus meinem Dunkel hinauf zu ihm blicken und mich in seinem freudigen Lächeln sonnen! Dann, dünkt mich, wäre ich ruhig und glücklich für mein ganzes übriges Leben. (D 8-9)

Both Schneider and Tatlock view the the model inculcated by Charlotte's mother as confirming a pietist influence.³¹ In essence, the ideal of self-abnegation and self-sacrifice conforms to that articulated by Fichte as the woman's role in the marital love relationship. It also corresponds with the feminine ideal of submissive self-abnegation to the point of potential self-destruction propagated since Wobeser's *Elisa, oder das Weib wie es seyn sollte* (1795).³² Charlotte's augmentation of this model by wishing to perform a great deed for the beloved remains within the model of self-abnegation. Her anonymous retreat back into "her" darkness becomes a metaphor for the negation of the female self according to this model. Charlotte's entrapment within its parameters is significant, as she is on the one hand able to

³¹Where Schneider's focus is on the origin of Charlotte's model of desire, Tatlock's is on Charlotte's questioning of the model. Schneider thus emphasizes Charlotte's mother's prescriptive rendering of pietistic desire: "Der Wechselkurs und die Währung ihres Begehrens sind Charlotte von pietistischen Erlösungs- und Opferideen vorgegeben, die ihr nicht nur durch den Lehrer, wie Mundt berichtet (D 3f), sondern, so sagt es der Text aus, durch die Mutter eingeflößt worden sind." (159) Tatlock states: "The anticipation for which she has no name is her own desire." ("Tales" 476) Mundt notes the influence of Charlotte's religious instruction teacher: "Ein Lehrer an der Bürgerschule hatte durch seinen Religionsunterricht in den jungen Gemüthern eine Stimmung erweckt, die pietistischer Schwärmerei ziemlich nahe kam." (D 3)

³²According to Möhrmann, this second influential "Frauenroman" provided a corrective to the first, Sophie von la Roche's *Das Fräulein von Sternheim* (1771), which promoted women's equality and independence (22-23). See Volker Hoffmann, "Elisa und Robert oder das Weib und der Mann, wie sie sein sollten: Anmerkungen zur Geschlechtercharakteristik der Goethezeit," *Klassik und Moderne: Die Weimarer Klassik als historisches Ereignis und Herausforderung im kulturgeschichtlichen Prozeß*, ed., Karl Richter and Jörg Schönert (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1983) 80-97.

articulate the despair she feels when contemplating the ideal of absolute self-abnegation in the interests of the male beloved's happiness. On the other hand, like Gutzkow's Wally, she is unable to conceptualise a self-affirming alternative.

This is even more clearly evident when she articulates her desire in a letter to Heinrich (16 July 1827).³³ In this letter, she optimistically expresses the belief that her wish to undertake a great and fulfilling "Aufgabe" through love has been granted: "Wie schön liegt jetzt das Leben vor mir!" (D 29) However, she also reveals the alternative model of desire she had conceived for herself as a fourteen or fifteen year old:

[I]ch wollte eine Aufgabe im Leben lösen, und zwar keine geringe; sonst - das ist wahr - wollte ich lieber sterben und konnte mich dann selbst glühend darnach sehnen, *aber auch nur dann*. Ja, von großer hoher Liebe habe ich doch wohl schon damals geträumt, darum dieser zu frühe Ernst. (D 29)³⁴

She adds that although she had not been able to imagine her wish would be fulfilled, she had nevertheless carried these thoughts in her mind, judging this retrospectively as "ein Ahnen kommender Seligkeit." (D 29) Charlotte's view of the constitution of female identity through the medium of love, and thus through the male beloved, in both statements, is congruent with Fichte's model. However, Charlotte's later revelation provides two additional pieces of information. Firstly, it makes very plain that Charlotte thinks she has found a way to ensure the fulfilment of her own desire from within the bounds of ideal womanhood.³⁵ Secondly, it posits the consequences of failure. If her self-abnegation according to this model fails to gain

³³They married on 20 July 1828. C. f. Ledanff 177.

³⁴C.f. Curtze 225-26. The idea of "hohe Liebe" was a common trope of the period, and Lewald describes her ideal of love and marriage in similar language: "Es lebte in mir ein großer, starker Glaube an eine hohe Liebe und an eine idealische Ehe, die mir ein Heiliges war." (ML II, 137) Lewald provides an interesting contrast to Charlotte.

³⁵This also accounts for Ledanff's anomalous presentation of Charlotte's desire. In two separate statements Ledanff firstly writes, regarding Charlotte's desire to achieve public recognition, that in view of her staging of her death, there may be "Verbindungslinien ... zu ihrem kindlichen Ringen um Anerkennung, auf jeden Fall aber zu ihrer frühen Opfervorstellung." (197) In a second statement she maintains that Charlotte, unlike Rahel and Bettina, "war nicht ... auf öffentliche Wirksamkeit bedacht." (216) The precise nature of Charlotte's desire to signify is not explored by Ledanff. Charlotte's singing also demonstrates this desire to figure, but not in a public role. Thus, while her talent for singing is clear from a young age (D 6), and she receives some voice training, she only performs with a church choir. On the occasion she sings the solo part of the angel Gabriel in Haydn's "Jahreszeiten," she returns "blaß, aber mit seeligen, freundlichen Blicken, unter Ihre Verwandten und Freunde, die erstaunt ahnten, was sie an diesem Kind besaßen." (D 16) She thus makes a public impact in a context that does not cause her to transgress the conventional restrictions on ideal female behaviour, singing for God's rather than her own glory.

her her desire, the consequence is death. Charlotte thus fulfils the terms of Fichte's model of marital love, but at the same time adapts them to her own purpose. She thus acquiesces to the requirement that a woman abnegate herself in the service of the male beloved in the sense that she subsumes her desire to his, but at the same time Charlotte also requires that the beloved's desire be the same as hers. In other words, if female desire can only be a function of the desire of the male partner, Charlotte's model of desire requires a partner with whose desire she can identify: the relationship with the poet aspiring to greatness fulfils this criterion.³⁶ This scenario enables her to achieve greatness as a woman through self-abnegation in the service of her poet husband.

Charlotte's marriage signals her assumption of a double identity, that of "die Dichtersgattin"³⁷ who is not only a wife, but the wife of a poet, and thus of a higher standing than mere mortals. Tatlock writes that Charlotte "seeks a connection which surpasses that possible in a human relationship. As a

Dichtersfrau" she pursues more than a relationship with a human being, rather she seeks a connection to the divine that will invest her life with greater meaning.³⁸

However, for Charlotte, the connection with the divine is in fact the connection with her own desire, as I demonstrate below. The relationship "with a human being" who is her husband is her only means to achieving this desire. When they live together, Charlotte imposes her desire for fulfilment upon an increasingly impotent Heinrich, who is less and less able to

³⁶C.f. Manfred Schneider's psychoanalytic reading of the symbiotic nature of the attraction which formed the basis of their relationship, and the degree to which each at least initially found that the (projected) other could to a large degree fulfil their respective desire, also develops this idea (144). My point is that Charlotte herself formulated such a model of desire in conformity with the pre-scription of the model of female love determined by the sexual contract. Ledanff comments on Heinrich's absolute lack of insight into his mediocrity (194-5).

³⁷Charlotte figures herself in this way, e.g. as "Die glückliche Dichtersgattin!" in a letter to Heinrich written after she has read something of his. (22 July 1833, *D* 141) Mundt repeatedly uses this term to describe her, e.g. "die junge Dichtersfrau" (*D* 39). After his trip in the summer of 1834, he uses the superlative: "Liebe holde Dichtersfrau" in a letter. In this letter he writes: "Durch die lange Ferne sind Sie mir ordentlich ehrwürdig geworden, wie eine zu himmelsweiten entrückte und doch unsichtbar nahe Göttin. Ich möchte zu Ihnen beten. Ich könnte in diesem Brief fast nicht bloß Charlottel zu Ihnen sagen, noch weniger aber Frau Doctorin!" (26 October 1834, Houben, *Sturm* 438)

³⁸Tatlock "Tales" 479. In an otherwise insightful analysis of Charlotte's personality, Manfred Schneider finds merely that Charlotte experienced a "naive Freude" in calling herself a "Dichtersgattin," thus failing to take note of Charlotte's desire and its significance in an analysis which aims to do just that (160).

perform in all senses of the word.³⁹ His manic-depressive illness worsens during their marriage, culminating in psychosis in the final months of her life. It is no accident that his health improved after her death.⁴⁰ Although Charlotte chose a man through whom she appeared to be able to satisfy both her own desire and the feminine ideal according to the sexual contract, Heinrich's inability to realise his own desire and realise himself as a poet thus thwarted her self-realisation as well.⁴¹

Charlotte's idea of self is thus determined by the antithetical aims of fulfilling the requirements of the sexual contract and also those of her own desire. The latter determines that self-abnegation must occur in the context of fulfilling a great task. Her model of desire is further complicated by the predetermined notion that failure automatically entails death. Unfortunately, Charlotte's optimism predates her realisation that Heinrich might in fact be incapable of fulfilling her desire.⁴² Once her chosen vessel proved inadequate, she ultimately found herself forced to take the less desirable default option. Charlotte's suicide on the failure of her relationship with Heinrich is thus pre-scripted even more explicitly than has been identified by previous scholars.

My emphasis is on Charlotte's "relentless struggle"⁴³ to reconcile two antithetical aims, that of the desire to signify which was first identified by Tatlock,⁴⁴ and that of the equally

³⁹Mundt claims in his letter to Heinrich (21 April, 1835) that in the Stieglitz's marriage "die physische Natur dabei zu wenig zu ihrem Recht gekommen, woher die krankhafte geistige Ueberreizung." Geiger, *Dichter* 251. As Susanne Ledanff writes, the letter, "ein wahrer Ausbruch und natürlich auch das Ende einer Freundschaft," demonstrates clearly "gegen wen sich Mundts dokumentarische Spurensuche richtet, nämlich gegen den unwürdigen Adressaten von Charlottes Opfer, dessen krankhaftes Verhalten zu Mundts Entsetzen besonders deutlich zutage getreten war." (187) Ledanff focusses on the way in which the sexual rivalry of the two men manifested itself in Mundt's determined unveiling of the couple's difficulties, which Mundt and future commentators decided must hinge on Stieglitz's alleged impotence and thus his failure as a man. This was the subject not only of general discussion by contemporaries, but also satirical verses at Heinrich's expense (197).

⁴⁰C.f. Manfred Schneider argues that Heinrich's illness is not due to the rigours of the workplace, but to his marriage with Charlotte (156).

⁴¹Although Tatlock also writes that Charlotte sought to fulfil herself through Heinrich, my point is that she did so by attempting to weld the model of normative desire to her own desire.

⁴²Charlotte and Heinrich met in 1822, were engaged in 1826, and married in 1828. However, Heinrich's visits to Charlotte were few and far between during their courtship and engagement, which included one gap of 15 months. Manfred Schneider's discussion shows how Charlotte could not have become aware of Heinrich's illness before their marriage (152-54). See also Ledanff (195-96).

⁴³C.f. quotation above, Tatlock, "Tales" 483.

strong impulse that her behaviour remain within acceptable boundaries of womanhood. It is not that Charlotte had no other options, or that she simply uses the codes that will enable her to signify: instead, her desire is defined by the wish to accomplish two contradictory aims. During her lifetime and through her marriage she constructs an aporetic situation for herself, attempting to fashion an escape route from within the feminine which requires her to remain within it. When this backfires, Charlotte comes full circle. She is forced by her model of self-constitution to choose the path of death. Her suicide is the ultimate expression of a behavioural model that allows female agency only as self-negation.

The prevailing theme of letters and notes from Charlotte to Heinrich in *Denkmal* is her urging him with varying degrees of insistence to focus on his aspirations, and write. From an early point, her messages to Heinrich reveal not only her fear that Heinrich will disappoint the combined ambition driving the partnership. They also show that his manic episodes literally inspire fear in her. After they had been married four months, Charlotte writes a letter (20 November 1828) with a note contained under a sub-heading referring to the date of Heinrich's birthday: "Zum 22. Februar." The note contains both a threat and a warning:

Laß mich dich erst anders wieder sehen, ehe Du Viel von mir verlangst; ich fürchte, meine unbegrenzte Liebe könnte Dich dießmal schmerzlich verwunden. ... *Wehe Dir und mir*, daß Du Dich zum Dichter berufen glaubtest, wenn Du in der Anwendung Aller Deiner Kräfte nicht schon Befriedigung findest! - in Freudigkeit muß Du schaffen; und was dawider, das ist vom Uebel. Stellst Du Dir aber eine Aufgabe über Deine Kräfte, so erscheint mir dieß sündlich, denn nach Vollendung derselben wird der Geist wahrscheinlich krank zusammensinken und der Körper dazu. Lebwohl! [emphasis added, MV]" (D 31)

Mundt does not comment on the dating of the letter, and Geiger assumes that the note was written on the 20 November 1828 but dated for Heinrich's birthday ("Zum 22. Februar"), thus representing "ein eigenthümliches Geburtstagsgeschenk für Stieglitz."⁴⁵ This would not be so unlikely in light of the manipulative games Charlotte played with Heinrich, as I show below. Whether Charlotte had in fact written the note before their marriage and decided to suppress it, or whether she wrote it in November and dated it for his coming birthday in order to give it greater significance, it identifies what would be the on-going problems of

⁴⁴This was first identified by Tatlock ("Tales").

⁴⁵Geiger, *Dichter* 256.

their relationship. These are an excess of love on her part of a kind Heinrich could not deal with,⁴⁶ a sense of foreboding about possible consequences of Heinrich's incapacity to realise their combined desire, and most significantly, the premonition that his failure will have negative repercussions for them both. Her identification of the consequences of setting himself a task beyond his capacity is pragmatic. At the same time, her view of the gravity of these repercussions for herself as well as for Heinrich demonstrates her entrapment within her permutation of the model of the sexual contract.

Following this note is a longer letter dated 27 February 1828 (*D* 31-35), that is, before their marriage in July that year. This letter gives further indication of Charlotte's clarity of perception and analytical capacity, and also articulates her very real fear of Heinrich's mood swings and unpredictability:

[I]ch kenne meinen Heinrich den Dichter gar zu gut, weiß, wie unendlich oft er sich schon *zur Lust hindurchgewunden* [emphasis in original, MV], habe aber nicht die Grenze dieses Kampfes kennengelernt. (*D* 32)

She states that she can watch happily as long as he maintains the struggle, but then refers to an incident in which he had given her cause for fear. She ends on a warning note: "Das sind auch längst verklungene Erinnerungen, die sich vielleicht im Leben nicht wieder erneuern; nicht wahr, Du mein starker Held?" (*D* 32)

Heinrich's manic-depressive illness was to take its toll on Charlotte, and *Denkmal* traces the decline in her physical and mental health. Her marital episodes of ill-health commenced with "Anfälle[n] körperlichen Unwohlseins" on the honeymoon, which Mundt relates directly to Heinrich's desire to undertake "übermüthige[n] Studentenmärsche," and other manic episodes that also resulted in their coachman, who had been engaged for the entire honeymoon journey, breaking his contract and leaving (*D* 24). In addition, her description of the first morning after their marriage, according to Mundt, reveals her "Herzerstarrung vor der Wirklichkeit" (*D* 23) as they sit "[s]tumm und fremd" opposite each other in their honeymoon coach (*D* 23).⁴⁷ Over the years Charlotte repeatedly rescued Heinrich from the

⁴⁶I return to her figuration of her excess of love below.

⁴⁷The story is related to him by a Charlotte who is smiling "aber mit dunkelm Purpur auf dem Gesicht," which reveals not only the status of her marital sexual relationship, but confirms the great intimacy of her relationship with Mundt, expressed though it was in the

alleged rigours of the workplace, and then from the responsibility of providing for them as a couple.⁴⁸ However, when Heinrich's condition worsened after their return from their final spa trip to Kissingen, Charlotte was bereft of ideas about how to help him.⁴⁹ She herself had had an adverse reaction to the spa cure, and her health deteriorated rapidly after their return in October 1834 (*D* 268, 293).

Previous interpretations of Charlotte's suicide which have emphasised either her victim status or her agency have tended to focus on Heinrich's worsening condition while neglecting to examine Charlotte's mental and physical state. Her letters to Mundt in the final three months of her life reveal a downward spiral during which she desperately attempts to assert her will in the face of Heinrich's and, increasingly, her own deteriorating capacity to continue their struggle. On 16 September 1834 she states that the spa cure had negatively affected her health, prompting the recurrence of "alte Brustleiden" (*D* 280). A letter from 13 December 1834 begins by recounting Heinrich's latest lapse, then relates her own misery:

Alte längst vernarbte Wunden stechen wieder, wenn das Wetter umschlägt; auch In meinem Nervenleben ist seit einiger Zeit wechselndes Wetter und die alten niedergerungenen Dämonen erstehen wieder, mich mit glühenden Feueraugen doch nur zur tiefsten Ruhe zu verlocken! (*D* 283)

Her letters reveal her desperate state as she identifies that she herself is in crisis but attempts at the same time to deny it. In her penultimate letter to Mundt, dated 20 December, Charlotte insists that recent symptoms of "krankhafte Aufgeregtheit" were simply the signs of a "körperliche Verstimmung," caused by the spring waters she had drunk which acted

discourse of "Seelenfreundschaft." (Ledanff 201) Mundt here describes in detail how a bridegroom should behave in order to win the "so zart verschämte Blume" which is "die weibliche Gunst" (*D*, 23), a passage that is clearly intended to shame Heinrich, given their exchange of letters on the subject of Heinrich's sexual behaviour, and his open accusation of Heinrich's impotence in the letter to Heinrich of 21 April 1835 (Geiger, *Dichter* 246-265, 250-255). See Ledanff's discussion (187ff), and Promies (571). Tatlock points out that although "Heinrich's shortcomings must be and have been acknowledged, to insist on the role of male unworthiness - impotence, an inability to write poetry - is to imply that some man, more artful or crafty, *would* have been deserving of unquestioning admiration and selfless support, worthy perhaps of suicide." ("Tales" 477-78)

⁴⁸Tatlock emphasises Charlotte's activity on Heinrich's behalf, stating that "with her delicately-phrased (and undeniably manipulative) letters, she is able to cultivate Heinrich's wealthy uncle as a patron." Tatlock, "Tales" 477.

⁴⁹Stieglitz reaches a nadir on 28 November 1834 (*D* 303).

"wahrhaft wie Gift auf meine ganze Organisation." She exhorts Mundt: "[H]alten Sie es nicht für Seelenstimmung ... sondern nur körperliche Ermattung." (D 286) Her suicide finally frees her from herself and her unsatisfied desire, leaving Heinrich to be scorned by his contemporaries but with the sense that he was worthy of this sacrifice.⁵⁰

Charlotte returns to the theme of excessive love shortly before her death, in a letter to Mundt in which she defensively asserts her religious faith. When the two statements in which she thematises her excess of love are considered together, it is clear that this excess of love is in actuality her desire. It is excessive because it goes beyond the bounds of what is acceptable in women. In the above cited statement Charlotte writes that she will withhold her love from Heinrich until he becomes "anders" (D 31), and expresses fear that her love will prove too much for him to bear: "meine unbegrenzte Liebe könnte Dich dießmal schmerzlich verwunden" (D 31). In the letter to Mundt (15 December 1834) written shortly before she ends her life, Charlotte refers to her excessive love in the context of expressing frustration at the constraining conventions that determine behaviour. These do not recognise the currency she wishes to trade, namely that of this "übersinnliche[r] Liebe:"

Zu große Fülle *übersinnlicher* Liebe ist es, welche die engenden Banden dann und wann sprengen möchte! Ich wußte es nie, und weiß es noch nicht, wo ich *mit meiner Liebe* hin soll; die Welt braucht sie nicht, kein Mensch bedarf sie in dem Maaße, als ich sie zu geben habe, daher denn die gesteigerte Sehnsucht des Ueberfließens meiner Liebe in Gott in das Unbegrenzte, Maßlose! Ich bin müde zuweilen des ewigen Zurückdrängens meines Heiligsten; der Verstand soll hier herrschen, die Klugheit regieren, und die Liebe darf nicht Liebe sein! Der Mensch muß sein Krone niederlegen und muß zum Bettler werden, sein Heiligstes muß er zu Grabe läuten und Sparpfennige weiser Erziehung mit sich herumschleppen, die er auch noch haushälterisch auszugeben gelernt. Die Münze versteht jeder, sie klappert und klimpört von Hand zu Hand, glebt man etwas Anderes aus, so ist man ein Narr! [emphasis added, MV] (D 285)

As I have shown above, in the early and optimistic stages of her relationship with Stieglitz, Charlotte was able to view her love for him and her desire for greatness as congruent. Throughout her life and in her death, Charlotte continued to figure her desire according to the convention that defined women's desire as love. When Heinrich proved incapable of absorbing this love, she could only sublimate it further: "daher denn die gesteigerte Sehnsucht des Ueberfließens meiner Liebe in Gott in das Unbegrenzte, Maßlose" (D 285). According to

⁵⁰C.f. Geiger, *Dichter* 256-65; Ledanff 199-200. After her death Heinrich's health improved markedly but not his poetic production. C.f. Ledanff, 198-200.

Grimms' definition, Charlotte's love is "das, was sinnlich nicht erfaßbar ist, geistig, transzendent, metaphysisch."⁵¹

In the posthumously published *Selbstbiographie*, Stieglitz juxtaposes Charlotte's articulation of her excessive love with her optimistic view, expressed in the above-cited letter to Heinrich (16 July 1827), that she has managed to link her self-imposed "Aufgabe" with "großer hoher Liebe."⁵² Stieglitz reads her statement as an indictment of himself, stating: "Ich hatte mich selbst, und somit auch sie mich verloren."⁵³ Stieglitz formulates his responsibility clearly in terms of the model of the sexual contract: "Das alte Glück, von welchem sie geträumt und das sie gefunden, war ihr verloren gegangen und darum maßlos ihr Schmerz wie ihre Liebe."⁵⁴ He recognises that loss of self in the male of necessity also entails loss of self in the woman whose identity is constituted through him.⁵⁵

Commentators such as Promies and Doderer interpret Charlotte's reference to "übersinnliche[r] Liebe" as denoting a more earthly, if not earthy form of love.⁵⁶ More recent feminist scholars such as Ledanff and Tatlock have introduced alternative and more sophisticated analyses than those simply attributing Charlotte's ills to her lack of sexual fulfilment. Ledanff reads the statement as an expression of Charlotte's general sensibility, and considers it with respect to Mundt's Invitation in his concluding chapter to *Denkmal*, that Charlotte's suicide should lead his contemporaries to examine more closely the social context of their lives, loves, and marriages (*D* 311).⁵⁷ Ledanff finds that Charlotte's "zur Selbstverleugnung tendierende Natur" is intensified by the "Herabwürdigungen der

⁵¹This is the only sense of "übersinnlich" provided by Grimm. The entry includes examples from the following: "Fr. H Jacobi - das thier vernimmt nur sinnliches, der ... mensch auch übersinnliches ..."; "Schiller - es ist ordentlich krankheit, wie er (Humboldt) mitten in Rom nach dem übersinnlichen und unsinnlichen schmachtet"; "Droste-Hülshoff - verkehr mit der übersinnlichen Welt". Grimm, XXIII, 559.

⁵²Curtze 224-26.

⁵³Curtze 225.

⁵⁴Curtze 225.

⁵⁵Ledanff considers that Stieglitz's response emanates from the feeling that Mundt's *Denkmal* was his "Jury." (189)

⁵⁶Wolfgang Promies, "Der ungereimte Tod, oder wie man Dichter macht: Zum 150. Todestag von Charlotte Stieglitz," *Akzente* 32.6 (1985): 560-575, 567. Klaus Doderer cites passages out of context in order to "cast light" on Charlotte's alleged sexual frustration. "Heinrich Stieglitz," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 74 (1955): 185-190, 186.

⁵⁷Ledanff 188.

Persönlichkeit in unserer Zeit" that Mundt identifies.⁵⁸ She comments that Charlotte's silent suffering and the incapacity of the two men closest to her to recognise it alert us to "die Mängel in den zwischenmenschlichen Beziehungen."⁵⁹ However, she does not explore the multivalent meanings of love in Charlotte's usage, writing that some of Charlotte's statements confirm "daß sie ihre übermäßige unerfüllte Liebesehnsucht in einer empfindungslosen Umwelt besonders schwer ertrug."⁶⁰ Ledanff considers that Mundt, through his "Sittenkritik" and "Verklärung weiblicher Empfindungsfähigkeit," used Charlotte's reference to her excessive love to accuse Heinrich and the rigidified conventions of the time in equal measure.⁶¹

It is clear that the period of greatest crisis in the Stieglitz relationship after their return from Kissingen coincides with Mundt's return from his Viennese and Bohemian adventures. While *Denkmal* clearly depicts the negative impact of Charlotte's relationship with Heinrich, Mundt's account of his own involvement with Charlotte remains incomplete. As Houben and Ledanff show, he suppresses or alters passages from her letters during and after the summer of 1834.⁶² In addition, Mundt's correspondence to Charlotte from Vienna, written in the first flush of his formulation of his new ideas, is lost, together with the autobiography he wrote for Charlotte during his travels.⁶³ As suggested by scholars, the extant letters indicate that he himself was placing her under increasing pressure to acknowledge the failure of her relationship with Heinrich, and to recognise him as a suitable life and sexual partner. They also show that Charlotte was preoccupied with her marital relationship in a way which excluded Mundt.

⁵⁸Ledanff 188-89.

⁵⁹Ledanff 188.

⁶⁰Ledanff 189.

⁶¹Ledanff 189. Citing Stieglitz's response to Charlotte's formulation of her "übersinnliche Liebe," Ledanff writes that Heinrich must have felt *Denkmal* to be his "Jury" (189).

⁶²Houben, *Sturm* 435, 454; Ledanff 203-204. Ledanff's material is additional to Houben's. Houben provides exact details of Mundt's letters to Charlotte to which he had access, and asserts confidently that he has accounted for all expurgated sections. He also rather protectively insists that since everything concerning the relationship between the two is now available, "jedes Schnüffeln" will provide no further information (*Sturm* 397-398).

⁶³Houben mentions that "ein Brief oder eine Tagebuchnotiz aus Wien hatte wieder eine kleine Verstimmung zuwege gebracht." (*Sturm* 432) He also states that a "Beilage" for Charlotte, which contained autobiographical information, is missing (*Sturm* 435).

Mundt's new attitude is clearly expressed in October 1834, when he exclaims: "Gott sei Dank, daß ich die Welt jetzt mit freieren und keckeren Blicken betrachte, als jemals!"⁶⁴ He advocates that the couple keep in touch with contemporary events and live life, while encouraging Charlotte to adopt his newly acquired perspective on life, as expressed in *Madonna*.⁶⁵ Charlotte's response on reading *Madonna* reveals the inadequacy and ultimate insensitivity of Mundt's attempts to revivify her. In this passage which Mundt suppressed from *Denkmal*. (D 284-286), she writes:

Bei dem Vertiefen in Ihre Arbeit (gleichsam ein freundliches Ahnden) kam wenig darauf an, ob sie zu Stande kam oder nicht, und welches ein andres Motiv als bloß Furcht verkannt zu werden bewegte mich überhaupt zu den Zeilen. Wir vergessen oft daß wir es mit einem Manne zu thun haben und wenn er der edelste ist - in unserm zartesten Motiven versteht uns doch nur eine Frau; es ist auch ganz unnöthig, der Mann hat dafür ganz andre Eigenschaften. (letter Charlotte to Mundt, 15 December 1834)⁶⁶

Ledanff's discussion of the manifest limitations of Mundt's attempts to cure Charlotte's "beschädigte Innerlichkeit"⁶⁷ conclude that "die therapeutischen Maßnahmen von einem "Mann" stammen, bei dem sich nun schon ein neues literarisches Sendungsbewußtsein mit der Eifersucht seiner Rolle als Dritter in einem zukunftsweisenden Dreierverbund vermischt."⁶⁸ In response to Mundt's view that "Charlotte's tragedy lay precisely in her inability to reconcile spirit and flesh,"⁶⁹ Tatlock states that although "women did lack sexual freedom," his "assumption that women's problems are defined principally by the way in which they relate sexually to men is erroneously phallogocentric and his avocation of liberation of flesh a bit self-serving."⁷⁰

⁶⁴Houben, *Sturm* 437.

⁶⁵Houben, *Sturm* 454-460. Although Houben and scholars after him propose that Mundt's journey confirmed him as a Saint Simonian, my discussion of *Madonna* has shown that the journey enabled him to in fact develop his own ideas of the reconciliation of spirit and flesh. My discussion of the narrative has also shown that Mundt was clearly sensitive to the broader issues of women's emancipation and the negative impact on women of structures associated with the sexual contract. However, he clearly did not display this subtlety in his dealings with Charlotte.

⁶⁶Houben, *Sturm* 454.

⁶⁷Ledanff 206.

⁶⁸Ledanff 205-06.

⁶⁹Tatlock, "Tales" 480. Tatlock notes Butler's claim that "Mundt's marked coldness toward Charlotte in December of 1834 contributed not a little to her despair." Butler 338-39, cited by Tatlock, "Tales" 480.

⁷⁰Tatlock does acknowledge Mundt's "concern that women are not likely to take kindly to the remedies offered by Saint Simonism." D 67, cited by Tatlock, "Tales" 480.

II.2.2.iii. The Ideal and the Real.

As I have argued in the above reading of *Madonna*, Mundt had by the end of 1834 developed his own much wider-ranging model for the reconciliation of spirit and flesh, which also acknowledged the difficulties of effecting change within the society of his time. Although Mundt was alert to the constraining effects of the sexual contract on women, *Madonna* provided a pessimistic assessment of the possibilities for change. In the valedictory *Denkmal*, Mundt's representation of the woman he had known and loved was clearly determined by very different aims. These included the desire to depict her and the unholy nature of her suicide in a positive light, and to acknowledge her frustrations while presenting her as fulfilling the role of the ideal woman. In addition, his need to come to terms with his own emotional response to the suicide included a desire to mask his own part in events. Mundt's three letters to his close friend Kühne after Charlotte's suicide attest to his very strong feelings for her, as well as feelings of guilt and complicity in her suicide. While the first letter asserts his love for her, the second implies her suicide was the result of a love triangle, and the third presents an implicit denial of the second, attempting to recast his feelings for her in the mould of respectful friendship.⁷¹ As argued by Butler and Ledanff, it is clear that Charlotte's

⁷¹The first letter (30 December 1834), written the day after her suicide, declares his love for her. He states: "Ich habe an ihr so viel verloren, dass ich es nicht sagen kann! Ich habe so viel an ihr besessen, als Du nie ahnen konntest! Das Verhältniss zu ihr, das schönste, herrlichste, edelste, erhielt mich aufrecht und heiter! Jetzt ist eine ganze Blüthenstelle in meinem Menschen für immer verödet! Sie war die herrlichste Seele, die gelebt hat! ... Ich habe sie geliebt!" Eduard Pierson, ed., *Gustav Kühne, sein Lebensbild und Briefwechsel mit Zeitgenossen* (Dresden: Pierson's Verlag, n.d. [c. 1889]) 22-23.) In the second letter (spring 1835), Mundt asserts mysteriously that her relationship with him might have played a significant role in her suicide: "Denn mit dem 'Opfertod,' den der unselige und gottverlassene Stieglitz bereits zu einer *Phrase* gemacht hat, habe ich im Innersten meiner Gedanken nie einverstanden sein können, und *ich* konnte es am allerwenigsten. Mein Verhältniss zu ihr kann und darf ich nicht darstellen, und doch spielt es nur zu bedeutsam auch in ihren - Tod hinein." (Pierson 23) The third letter (n.d. 1835) seeks to retract the previous statements: "Ich kenne keine geheimere Motive von Charlottens Tod, ich wage keine zu kennen. Sie starb an ihrem Mann und an ihrem Herzen und an der Welt. ... Dass *ich* sie geliebt habe? Ich verweise auf das Buch. ... Ich gestehe, sie war mir eine Heilige, und ich habe niemals einen unreinen Gedanken zu ihr gefasst, aber an Keckheit dessen, was ich ihr von meinen Gefühlen *sagen* und *bekennen* durfte, hat es vielleicht niemals ein grossartigeres und geistigeres Verhältniss gegeben. ... Ein Verhältniss der reinsten Sympathie, das der Humanität unseres Geschlechts nur zur Ehre gereichen könnte!" (Pierson 25, 26, 28)

friendship with Mundt did not interfere with her self-perception of her status as Heinrich's wife.⁷²

Leaving Mundt's personal feelings aside, his psychological analysis of Charlotte's articulation of dissatisfaction with the model of female and feminine desire as defined by convention is very perceptive. His strategy is to assert Charlotte's femininity in order to defuse her resistance to convention and her frustrations at the limitations of women's social role. He thus strategically prefaces the journal entries and letters produced during Charlotte's marriage with a discussion of the feminine and Charlotte's place within it which asserts her femininity in clichéd terms (*D* 54-68). According to Mundt's review, there are three classically feminine types, "die süße Magdsnatur," "das Mütterliche," and "das Beglückende," all three of which predispose women to the service of others, from limitless giving without thought of return, to presenting oneself as eternally happy and beautiful. Each demonstrates "der sorgliche Haushaltungstrieb des Welbes." (*D* 55) Charlotte is presented as the pinnacle of femininity, possessing all of these qualities in abundance, that is "jedes Edelste, Höchste und Lieblichste weiblichen Geschlechts" (*D* 56), and "die Hoheit der Liebe selbst, die in weiblicher Schönheit in die irdische Erscheinung getreten" (*D* 57). In appearance she also fulfils the conventional definition of beauty, possessing ruby lips, a gleaming row of pearly teeth, and small feet (*D* 58).⁷³ In addition, she is characterised as extremely sensitive, as she is subject (often) to "Herzklopfen,"⁷⁴ and she is also linked to the ethereal realm, as her speaking voice is "zu geistig, um recht körperhaft zu werden." In

⁷²Butler contends that Charlotte's diary entry on her excess of "übersinnliche[r] Liebe" "certainly suggests" that Charlotte might have been in love with Mundt. On this basis Butler states that even this hint would have been enough for Mundt, in his "vanity," to have speculated "that her love for him had helped to send her to her death." (341) However, Butler does not suggest that Charlotte acted on her feelings. Butler does conclude Mundt soon fell in love with Charlotte (331), although she finds that the latter did not reciprocate his feelings (334). Ledanff's nuanced reading of their relationship suggests Charlotte enjoyed the friendship and was indeed emotionally dependent on Mundt, but that she also kept him at bay (200-203).

⁷³The latter two characteristics bring her into the ambit of Hahn-Hahn's heroines, who are all similarly blessed. (e.g. Gräfin Faustine, Ilda Schönholm, Cornelia). Tatlock notes the clichés and stylised description but does not consider the broader context which reveals the strategic impulse behind Mundt's description ("Praise" 196-197).

⁷⁴I would suggest this susceptibility was a socially acceptable psychosomatic reaction to her stressful situation.

contrast, her strong singing voice is the also conduit of her soul (*D* 59). Finally, however, Charlotte is also depicted as possessing masculine qualities, such as "tiefinnere Stärke bei so zartgewebter Schönheit," as well as "eine außerordentliche Thatkraft" and the capacity to act "mit männlicher Sicherheit und Scharfblick." (*D* 61)⁷⁵

In addition to being the embodiment of the feminine and a superlative housewife however, Charlotte sometimes did confess the wish to have been born male (*D* 66). Although Mundt stresses that she quickly reconciled herself to her lot after such outbursts, he does at this juncture refer to "die vielverschlungene Kette der Emancipationsfragen," namely the difficulties and prejudices women face and have faced historically, reduced to their biological functions and denied the human status granted to men (*D* 66). In this context Mundt cites Charlotte's much-quoted recognition of women's helplessness, and the inadequacy and repellent nature of the Saint-Simonian solution:

'Denn was kann eine Frau thun?' rief Charlotte selbst einmal aus; 'sie kann höchstens vor Kränkung sterben!' Und was der St. Simonismus, dieser Wunderdoctor der kranken Weltinstitutionen, hier angeboten hat, um der socialen Verhältnisse Emancipation zu vollbringen, möchte am allerwenigsten von den Frauen selbst annehmbar gefunden sein. (*D* 67)

Mundt then asserts Charlotte's longstanding and fervent Christian faith, and her inclination to self-sacrifice. (*D* 68) *Denkmal* documents a wealth of evidence, much of it in Charlotte's own words, of her frustration at women's estate. The text consistently acknowledges and supports the reasons for Charlotte's frustration, while proclaiming her adherence to the conventions defining the female ideal, a strategy that is crucial in Mundt's attempt to make the fact of her suicide acceptable.

⁷⁵Lewald adopted a similar strategy in her life, asserting her housewifely skills as well as her capability as an author and public advocate of women. Her self-representation contrasts with her representation of the literary figure of Jenny, who is depicted as an amalgamation of feminine and masculine qualities, asserting that a woman's capacity to think does not masculinise her. Lewald exercises greater freedom in the representation of the literary figure than her own self-representation. This could partly be due to the fact that she felt a greater freedom to challenge the status quo in her literary representations than in real life. It could also be due to the fact that she was older and more conservative when she was running the household with Stahr, and therefore more concerned to be seen to be upholding the status quo. However, Lewald consistently pursued a strategy whereby she adhered to convention in most areas while issuing challenges in others, as demonstrated during her long publicly visible de facto relationship with Stahr before he obtained a divorce from his wife.

One area in which Mundt does not challenge the status quo is that of the requirement that a woman subordinate herself to her husband. Mundt consistently presents Charlotte as the greater authority, the more gifted of the two, and as the final arbiter of Heinrich's work, discussing details of her authorship of some of Stieglitz's work.⁷⁶ However, he claims:

Auch der hochbegabteste Frauengeist beugt sich gern in irgend ein secundaires Verhältniß hinab, und der Trieb demüthigen Dienens bei aller Lust des Herrschens, welcher Gegensatz die ächtteste Bewegung aller Weiblichkeit bildet, gewährt ihnen jene traulich waltende Befriedigung, in der sie sich *meistentheils* mit der socialen Umgränztheit ihres Berufs versöhnen [emphasis added MV]. (D 17)

Although the highlighted qualification above indicates the recognition that not all women derive satisfaction in self-subordination, he presents it as an inescapable part of women's "Beruf."

However, Mundt encouraged Charlotte to write, and a repeated motif of his letters to her during the summer of 1834 is that she write more letters to him and also an account of her early childhood. In response, Charlotte claims: "Wie unrecht haben Sie doch, Lieber, zu behaupten, ich könne schreiben; träumen kann ich, aber nicht schreiben; wieviel habe ich in Gedanken mit Ihnen gesprochen, aber das Wort fehlt mir noch sehr, auch die Klarheit es herauszuprägen." (9 September 1834, D 279) She also states that her "Kindermemoiren" sind in den verwischenen Monaten wahrhaft erstickt." (9 September 1834, D 279)⁷⁷ When Charlotte authors passages in Heinrich's works, she does not assume the public role of writer, and thus does not write for her self as a public person. While she writes letters, critical assessments of literary works, poems to Heinrich, and aphoristic statements, this

⁷⁶In preparation for her destiny as a "Poetenhausfrau" Charlotte as Stieglitz's fiancée helps him with his poems, transcribing them, and writing comments and suggestions for their improvement. Mundt asserts that indeed she "traf selbst oft die einsichtlgsten Aenderungen." (D 17) As Stieglitz's wife, and even while protesting to Mundt that she is not a writer and has no wish to write ("Sie war nicht und wollte nicht sein Schriftstellerin" (D 69)), Charlotte authors passages in Heinrich's works in order to speed the process of creation when he cannot write. According to Mundt, Charlotte wrote a section of the first volume of "Bilder des Orients," and a scene in Stieglitz's play "Sultan Sellm" (1830) (D 42). Manfred Schneider's psychoanalytic reading of Heinrich's inability to complete a scene in the latter play dealing with mother love views his inadequacy here as reflecting Heinrich's unsatisfactory relationship with his mother (155-56). However, Charlotte consistently refuses to assume authorship in her own person, and Mundt laments the loss of the thoughts which remain unwritten (D 69).

⁷⁷This echoes in reverse the claim made by Maria in *Madonna* that she cannot write but would rather recount the remainder of her story. See discussion above.

occurs only in contexts which the prevailing codes of conduct permit women to write without transgressing the feminine. The self-conscious and deliberate writing of herself which her own memoirs would entail is clearly a context which threatens her identity not only in terms of the conventional ideal, but also as a "Dichtersfrau" whose identity is ineluctably bound to her husband's artistic production.

Mundt's presentation of the Stieglitz's partnership is also nuanced, while still not questioning the basic requirement of female self-subordination. In terms of his model, Charlotte, the better poet with the greater desire to write poetry is in the last instance nevertheless a mere woman who conforms to the natural order and sublimates her desire in her love for a man:

So wurde Charlotten statt der Poesie, zu der ihr ganzes Wesen ... fast gewaltsam hinstrebte, ein Poet zugetheilt. Die Kraft der Dichtung, die ihr aus den wunderbar schönen Augen blitzte, ... ging auf einmal ächt weiblich in die Liebe zu einem Dichter über. (D 9)

He does, however, recognise the element of self-interest as well as her desperation in the choice she makes:

[D]er Drang der Dichterin ging auf in der Liebe zu einem Dichter. Sie liebte die Poesie in ihrem Dichter, den sie sich erkoren hatte, und hing sich daher mit der Macht ihrer ganzen Seele, als gelte es die Rettung ihres Lebens, an ihn. (D 10)

Besides recognising that Charlotte's love for a poet is not at all accidental,⁷⁸ he also acknowledges that Charlotte's choice combines self-interest with the choices she is allowed within the terms of the sexual contract. Both Charlotte's articulation of her desire in the quotation above, and Mundt's analysis of the inescapable logic of her choice of mate demonstrate the implications of Fichte's model of ideal love: a woman must subsume her self and her own desire in her husband, whose desire then becomes her own desire. Even though Charlotte's creative activity in authoring sections of Stieglitz's projects that he was unable to complete occurred strictly from within her subordinate role as wife, Mundt makes the additional point that Charlotte's intellectual self-development would have been denied her had Heinrich not been an "erst Werdend[er]." (D 41) A man with an already defined path and

⁷⁸Mundt repeatedly returns to the motif of Charlotte's sublimated desire to be a poet in his letters to her, e.g. referring to "die geheime Poetin Charlotte." Letter to Charlotte 12 July 1834. Houben, *Sturm* 430.

identity would have insisted on "ein bloß häusliches Glück" as being appropriate for his wife. (D 41)⁷⁹

Charlotte certainly had no interest in fulfilling the socio-biological demands of the gender stereotype, stating:

Manche Kinder lieben keine neuen Puppen, manche Mütter ihre neugeborenen Kinder nicht; ich glaube, mir würde es auch so gehen - was ich aufgedrungen lieben soll, kann ich nicht lieben! (letter to Mundt, 7 January 1834, D 265)

Mundt writes supportively of her belief that "eigene Kinder zu haben, sie an der Freiheit in Leben und geistiger Entwicklung viel einbüßen lassen werde, und mit Recht." (D 301) In the face of Charlotte's evident resentment of carrying out duties allocated to women, and her modified compliance with the requirement of self-abnegation and self-denial, there is every likelihood, as Tatlock speculates, that she "must have been at least dimly aware that it was not only Heinrich who would suffer under the exigencies of a bourgeois ménage."⁸⁰ Charlotte's experience of caring for her sister and sister's children during the former's illness forces upon her the experience of self-abnegation in service of others that is part of the traditional female role. She views the lack of freedom that this self-abnegatory activity brings as unbearable (letter to Stieglitz, 16 July 1827):

Höre, Heinrich, es ist etwas ganz Eigenes auf die Länge der Zeit, wenn man sich selbst so ganz verläugnen, so ganz aufgeben muß an Menschen, von denen man weder gekannt noch verstanden wird. Ich würde dieß nie so drückend fühlen können, so lange mir die Freiheit gegeben ist allein zu sein wenn ich will; da finde ich Ersatz, und habe ihn schon in frühen Jahren gefunden für die Stunden, in denen ich mich selbst ganz in den Hintergrund stellen muß, um denen erfreulich und angenehm zu sein, für die ich Liebe und Pflichten habe. (D 28)⁸¹

⁷⁹Mundt emphasises Heinrich's moodiness, and also includes mention of the "unwillkürliche Seelenqual" which Charlotte's love caused him (D 40). Charlotte and Heinrich found common ground in their efforts to nurture his poetic talent, "bei fast gänzlicher Entsagung aller andern Beziehungen der Ehe." (D 41) In this environment Charlotte, "[d]ie holde Dichterhausfrau ... ergriff mit aller Macht ihres bildsamen Geistes diesen poetischen Grund und Boden, auf den sie sich nun lediglich versetzt und angewiesen sah, und lernte ihr eigenes Lebenselement ... immer mehr verstehn." (D 41) Mundt stresses that she would have been destroyed "in jedem andern, bloß ökonomischen Hausfrauenverhältniß," given her "wundersame[n] Organisation." After a hard and unfulfilled childhood, her talents and personality required a relationship in which "ihr innerstes und verborgenstes Sein sich Geltung und Herrschaft gewinnen konnte." (D 41)

⁸⁰Tatlock, "Tales" 470.

⁸¹Tatlock views this letter as "remarkably adolescent" in tone. However, this statement merely reinforces Charlotte's reluctance to engage in any self-abnegation that does not contribute to her own project in life. Tatlock, "Tales" 476.

Tatlock argues that the example of Charlotte's sister, Julie Sickmann, with whom she lived after her father's death, would have shown her the rigours of marriage firsthand, namely: "increased responsibility, childbearing, death, and, above all, expendability."⁸² Julie died young, leaving a child in Charlotte's care (*D* 19). Upon the painful death of this child soon after, her brother-in-law promptly remarried (*D* 19), as was the custom at the time.⁸³

During her marriage Charlotte certainly had to defend herself from being judged by conventional standards and reduced to the biological functions of "das Geschlecht," as a note from Charlotte to Heinrich reveals. Mundt recounts that a visit from a friend of Heinrich's provoked an argument between the couple. Not only did Heinrich insist on maintaining the friendship, but he also attempted to silence her with anger. This prompted Charlotte to defend herself as follows: "Ist es denn so unverzeihlich, wenn die Frau, die keine Kinder zu erziehen, also gar keine Thaten aufzuweisen hat, die irgend für sie zeugen, nicht gerne in die Reihe der Beischläferinnen gezählt werden will?" (3. Februar 1833, Sonnabend abends, *D* 49)

Mundt also indicates that Charlotte's resentment of the self-abnegatory service role women were expected to play could manifest itself in psychosomatic suffering when she felt obliged to be polite to somebody at a social gathering:

Sie war ... in ihren Nerven so erregbar, daß sie im eigentlichen Sinne körperlich unwohl werden konnte, wenn sie von einem durchaus langweiligen Menschen mit der gewöhnlichen gesellschaftlichen Unterhaltung belästigt wurde. (*D* 60)

However, she at the same time experiences conflict between her own desire and the desire to fulfil the obligations of her social role (*D* 60). Charlotte's internalisation of the need to be polite combines with resentment at the everyday occurrence of people imposing on her because she is a woman, and thus to be imposed upon. Her lack of interest in motherhood, her impatience in the company of people who did not interest her, and her resistance to being

⁸²Tatlock, "Tales" 470. Tatlock refers to a letter of Charlotte's to her mother-in-law in 1833, in which Charlotte writes that "having seen early on the troubles her sisters had with their children, she had always associated children with sickness and worry." Letter to Frau Friederike Stieglitz in Arolsen, 5 February 1833, *D* 189-191. Tatlock, "Praise" 470. Tatlock mistakenly identifies the letter as being to Charlotte's mother, who actually died while Charlotte was still a child. Charlotte addresses her mother-in-law as "Mutter" according to convention (*D* 189).

⁸³C.f. Karin Hausen, "... eine Ulme für das schwankende Efeu: Ehepaare im deutschen Bildungsbürgertum: Ideale und Wirklichkeit im späten 18. und 19. Jahrhundert," Frevert, *Bürgerinnen und Bürger*, 85-117, 98.

viewed in terms of her biological capacity, all attest to the frustration inspired by the straitjacket of the feminine.

II.2.2.IV. Failure of the Beautiful Soul.

While scholars have discussed Charlotte's adoption of literary models for her own behaviour,⁸⁴ *Denkmal* reveals her desire to conform to the aestheticised form of the feminine ideal formulated in Schiller's concept of the "schöne Seele." This is evident from an incident recounted by Mundt in his account of his last day with her. On this Sunday, a group which included Mundt and the Stieglitzs took a walk before lunch, and the group criticised aspects of the couple's domestic life. In response, Charlotte observed "mit einem leisen Anflug von Bitterkeit: es sei ein Talent, sich das Leben angenehm zu gestalten!" (D 304) When Mundt, with allegedly ironic intent, followed with an observation that "Schöne Seelen wirken durch ihr Sein!" he observed that Charlotte "schrak ... sichtlich und gewaltsam, ohne es verbergen zu können, zusammen, und wurde nachdenkend und tief still." (D 304) There is no doubt that Mundt would have been referring to Schiller's concept of the "schöne Seele" in Schiller's "Anmut und Würde."⁸⁵ In this conceptualisation of the moral ideal, desire and the will unite so that even when actions are determined by the affect, they do not counter the will. As a result, not only the actions, but the entire character of the Beautiful Soul is morally pure. Mundt's allusion above is hence to the conclusion: "Die schöne Seele hat kein anderes Verdienst, als daß sie ist."⁸⁶ Schiller also makes specific reference to self-sacrificial actions by the Beautiful Soul, which carries out "der Menschheit peinlichsten Pflichten" as though by instinct, so that "das heldenmüthigste Opfer, daß sie dem Naturtrieb abgewinnt, fällt, wie eine freiwillige Wirkung eben dieses Triebes, in die Augen."⁸⁷ Thus, in the Beautiful Soul, "Sinnlichkeit und Vernunft, Pflicht und Neigung harmonieren, und Grazie ist ihr Ausdruck in der Erscheinung."⁸⁸ As Duden has pointed out, Schiller's "schöne Seele" features a conflation

⁸⁴Ledanff 228; Tatlock, "Tales" 470.

⁸⁵Friedrich von Schiller, "Über Anmut und Würde," *Schillers Werke: Nationalausgabe* (Weimar: Böhlau Nachfolger, 1962) vol. 20, 251-308.

⁸⁶Schiller, "Anmut" 287.

⁸⁷Schiller, "Anmut" 287.

⁸⁸Schiller, "Anmut" 288.

of "Natur" and "Vernunft" corresponding to that which occurs in Fichte's concept of "love," in which duty and affect are also united so that the performance of one's duty is similarly a function of desire.⁸⁹

Mundt's reference to the thus aestheticised form of ideal femininity would have been particularly damning to a woman who had spent her entire existence constrained by its conventions, and was at that point mulling over her failure to mould it to her satisfaction, despite all her attempts to conform. Mundt's comment came when Charlotte had already planned her suicide, which in itself was a concession of failure according to the two trajectories she had mapped out for herself before her marriage. She had failed to nurture Heinrich's genius through love and self-sacrifice, which meant she had failed as his wife, and therefore as a woman. According to Charlotte's pre-scribed trajectory discussed above, the consequence of such failure was death.

Tatlock asserts that "[a]s is well known, Heinrich showed Charlotte the way out" by recounting to her his dream in which she died and he "found himself again and was able to work."⁹⁰ However, Heinrich's supposed final self-assertion through his unconscious may also be seen as taking to their logical conclusion the games Charlotte played with him to try and retain his hold on reality, to imprint her significance onto him, and to make him fear her loss. In this sense it could be argued that she pre-scripted his suggestion.

Mundt relates how Charlotte would attempt to rouse Heinrich from his crises, using "immer die verschiedensten Weisen der Behandlung in Liebe und Strenge ... meistens mit einer großen wirksamen geistigen Gewalt über ihn." (D 44) He describes how Heinrich once became completely self-absorbed on a walk, and was no longer aware of Charlotte walking beside him. She stole away,

⁸⁹Duden 137. Bovenschen points out that the "schöne Seele" is not absolutely gender specific, although it tends to be associated with women. Bovenschen 249.

⁹⁰Tatlock, "Tales" 480. Heinrich related his dream of the previous night on 19 December 1834, and on 29 December she took her own life. Heinrich's dream that he has lost her concludes with the dead Charlotte whispering the promise that he would "durch den Verlust des Besten im unsäglichsten Unglück wieder[...]gewinnen, was er verloren hatte, nämlich: *sich selbst*. [original emphasis MV]" (D 289)

um ihn dadurch, daß er sie plötzlich vermisse, wieder zum Erwachen und zu sich selber zu bringen, selbst unwillkürlich immer mit dem Gedanken umgehend, daß Trennung nicht bloß Trennung sei, sondern auf ewige Nähe ziele. (D 44)

In the final phase after their return from Klissingen, a dominant motif of their relationship was that Heinrich, when faced with the idea of her loss or the suggestion that she might become ill, would work himself into "einen Zustand der heftigsten Bewegung und Wildheit" (D 298). Mundt relates that Charlotte once said to Heinrich she was confident that, if she were to be suddenly taken from him he would be able to transcend his illness and become strong again (D 298).

By 19 December 1834, when Heinrich revealed his dream to her, it would appear that he had taken up her suggestion. Charlotte's rehearsal of these scenarios of loss with Heinrich reveal that even as she lost the identity of the "Dichtergattin" she had fought to maintain, and therefore had to admit the failure of her two-fold "life project," she still managed to cast the suicide she had pre-scripted for herself much earlier as an instruction from her husband. In her suicide she thus fulfilled her brief as the obedient and self-abnegatory wife by obeying Heinrich. However, in her farewell letter she made it clear that her death should inspire his poetic production:

Unglücklicher konntest Du nicht werden, Vielgeliebter! Wohl aber glücklicher im wahrhaften Unglück! In dem unglücklich sein liegt oft ein wunderbarer Segen, er wird sicher über Dich kommen!!!! (D 310)

Charlotte's dramatic "Kaiserschnitt" may in this sense be seen as a last, desperate attempt to attain her own spiritual rebirth, as Tatlock argues,⁹¹ but ironically, it was her agency that gained them both a place in history.

Thus Charlotte's suicide is an act which is consistent with the destiny she determined for herself before her marriage, and with the role she established for herself through her

⁹¹Tatlock's discussion of the violent birth metaphor Charlotte uses in talking to Heinrich when wishing to be able to effect his spiritual rebirth ("und wär es durch einen Kaiserschnitt - aber wenn er mißlänge?!" (D 208)) emphasises that Charlotte "seeks not only Heinrich's spiritual rebirth but also in a sense her own." (Tatlock, "Tales" 481) She thus views Charlotte as the childless woman functioning as mother and midwife, and in this double function putting "her stamp on the child [emphasis in original MV]." In this vein, Tatlock sees the suicide as Charlotte's attempt to control Heinrich beyond her death, as "his future production would be attributed to her courageous selflessness [emphasis in original MV]." (Tatlock, "Tales" 481)

manipulative games with Heinrich. However, it is an abject admission of failure, and her farewell letter to Heinrich reveals the desire to put an end to her own suffering, even as she asserts the pietistic belief that they will meet again in the beyond:

Wir litten beide ein Lelden, Du weißt es, wie Ich in mir selber litt; nie komme ein Vorwurf über Dich, Du hast mich viel geliebt! Es wird besser mit Dir werden, viel besser jetzt, warum? ich fühle es, ohne Worte dafür zu haben. Wir werden uns einst wieder begegnen, freier, gelöster! (D 310)

Despite her protestations, her suicide reasserts her individuality, and separates her from him and their relationship.

II.2.2.v. Dramaturgies of suicide.

The act of authorship involved in Mundt's posthumous textualisation of Charlotte's self-representation has been overlooked in previous scholarship, which focusses on her staging of her own death. Mundt presents the scene as a "Todesbild" in which order prevailed despite the terrible nature of the occurrence. Transformed into an ordered and orderly artwork by Mundt, the act of suicide is removed from reality:

Wunderbar war ihr *edles, züchtiges, in kräftiger Ordnung* daliegendes Todesbild, das in solcher Ruhe und einem so sichern Frieden der Haltung sich darstellte, daß die Wunde, an der sie hingeschieden war, selbst von dem herbeigerufenen Arzt erst später entdeckt wurde. An der ganzen Lage des Körpers war *keine Spur eines gewaltsamen Sterbekrampfes* wahrzunehmen. Die *schönen schneeweißen Glieder* lagen in *sanfter Eintracht* hingestreckt. Die Wange war noch roth, die Hände leise heruntergezogen, nur einige Finger *wenig gekrämpt*. Sie hatte gelüstig vollendet. Nur um den einen Mundwinkel zeichnete sich ein scharfer trüber Zug, der Wehe ausrief über die Jämmerlichkeit einer Welt, in der die tiefste Liebe nicht in so frohe Blüthe treten darf, sondern vor Gram in den Tod geht! [emphasis added, MV]" (D 309)

The image of sovereignty over the self and the body in death, and of harmony, health, purity, and beauty in which the wound becomes invisible, is produced with recourse to common clichés of the feminine.⁹² In his representation of her death, as in his representation of her life, Mundt insists on Charlotte's femininity, while at the same time characterising her as a

⁹²Tatlock remarks after citing Mundt's description of Charlotte's appearance (D 58-59): "This totally conventional description raises doubts about Mundt's perception of his subject, who, after all, was a close friend. It is finally with disbelief that we read his all too hackneyed description of Charlotte's 'schönen, schneeweißen Glieder' when her body is found." (D 309) ("Praise" 197)

woman driven by her intellect rather than her emotions. Charlotte's final suffering is depicted as having been caused by the state of the world rather than the process of death.

Ledanff's discussion of Charlotte's final appearance emphasises its staged nature, but mistakenly attributes sole authorship of our knowledge of this event, and thus its final representation, to Charlotte. Ledanff thus writes that Charlotte's staging of her death alludes to "eine religiöse Märtyrersymbolik, die die Wirkung der roten Blutstropfen auf dem weißen Kleid genau berechnet."⁹³ This description does something that Mundt's re-presentation of Charlotte's death scrupulously avoids, namely it introduces blood. Although it is highly likely that the reality doubtless was bloody, Mundt and Stieglitz, despite their differences, colluded in producing a sanitised and apparently bloodless textual corpse of their muse.⁹⁴ The seamless representation of a peaceful, harmonious, transfigured, and above all feminine corpse recalls the "schöne Leiche"⁹⁵ that affirms the status quo. Mundt found it necessary to aestheticise and transform the corpse into an artwork of beauty that transcends death and affirms the social order precisely because the death represented a manifold questioning of this order. In conventional terms it presented an affront to religious mores and conventional notions about the place of women, and more particularly, wives, in that period, as demonstrated by Menzel's exclamation: "Aber sie war Gattin! Welche Unnatur"⁹⁶

However, the ordered calm and self-control projected by Charlotte's letter and Mundt's re-presentation of her corpse and the wound, is fractured by other aspects of Mundt's reconstruction of Charlotte's final two hours after she had sent Heinrich to the Beethoven concert (*D* 307-309). Mundt declares: "Beispiellos ist die Ruhe und klare Umsicht, mit der sie noch Manches, was die häuslichen Dinge anging, ordnete und einrichtete." (*D* 307) However, Charlotte's coat and boa were lying on the floor where they had been thrown with

⁹³Ledanff 197.

⁹⁴Stieglitz confirms that in Mundt's representation of Charlotte's last days (*D* 289-310) "*die Lichtgestalt Charlottens schon hier verklärt in treuester Wahrheit hindurchschreitet, ist ganz unübertrefflich dargestellt, mit den einfachsten zugleich und eindringlichsten Farben; nie würde ich mir erlauben, diesen Moment anders zu berühren als mit Mundts eigenen Worten in buchstäblicher Aufführung [emphasis added, MV].*" *Selbstbiographie* 199.

⁹⁵C.f. Bronfen, "Leiche."

⁹⁶Menzel, cited in *Selbstbiographie* 460, fn. 40.

some force.⁹⁷ Their abandonment on the floor of the room which housed the desk, and the tear-stained letter of farewell placed on the desk (*D* 308) introduce slight notes of disorder into the narrative of considered calm which Mundt otherwise maintains.

The elements of disorder confirm that in her death as in her life, Charlotte attempted to impose a discipline which was antithetical to her nature and her desire, and thus to her own self. Her attempts at negotiating an identity for herself by manipulating the female behavioural code imposed by the sexual contract failed to fulfil her desire. She thus did not attain the ideal of "große[r] hohe[r] Liebe" as a "Dichtergattin" according to the terms of her own model for her destiny. She also felt she had failed as a muse and "schöne Seele" in her chosen domain of the "Dichtergattin," her presence having failed to exercise a beneficial effect on Heinrich. Mundt's text, precisely because of its contradictions, reveals Charlotte's ambivalent negotiation of the sexual contract. It thus emphasises the negative impact of a model of womanhood which attempts to abolish female desire and asserts that a woman's identity is determined by the beloved male. In doing so it reveals the destructive nature and the corruption inherent in the model of ideal female subjectivity and sexuality determined by the sexual contract.

Both *Madonna* and *Denkmal* demonstrate the pervasive effect of the sexual contract in determining women's physical and psychic subjugation to the order it enforces. Through Maria's story, *Madonna* demonstrates the artificiality of the female psychosexual ideal and heterosexual practice enforced by the sexual contract. Further, Maria's response to her sexual experience interrogates and presents an alternative to the dominant psychosexual model of subjectivity in Western Christian culture that links sexual experience with sin and the Fall. In valorising sex as providing a positive experience of coming to knowledge and consciousness, the first part of Maria's story presents a positive alternative. However, the narrative asserts that this alternative is not viable in Mundt's present. The second part of Maria's story, like the narrator's retelling of the founding myth of Prague, asserts that

⁹⁷Mundt surmises that after writing her farewell letter to Heinrich "muß sie der Dämon ihrer That, der ihr dabei lauend über die Schulter blickte, jetzt auf Einmal hastig ergriffen haben, sodaß sie einen kleinen Pelzmantel, den sie trug, und die Boa geschwind von sich warf und an die Erde schleuderte, wo sie auf der Mitte des Fußbodens gefunden wurden." (*D* 308)

comprehensive social change would be necessary to support new models of subjectivity and sexual practice. The tale of "Bohemiconymphomachia" demonstrates that such change would require the dismantling of patriarchal order, encompassing far-reaching changes in men's attitudes and existing power structures. The narrative demonstrates that history has shown the unlikelihood of such changes, but emphasises the desirability of continuing struggle. In this context, Maria's capacity to think and act outside the constraints of convention, and the fact that she is not only allowed to live, but to become reintegrated into society, symbolises the capacity and desirability for change. In this context, the story of Charlotte Stieglitz is a cautionary tale of a woman who creates an aporetic situation for herself in attempting to reconcile the antithetical demands of her desire and the sexual contract. Charlotte's incapacity to challenge the structures that deny her fulfilment as an individual is married to her incapacity to reconcile herself to them. The resulting schism leads to her breakdown and suicide. The contrast between Charlotte and Maria shows that where dissent is not coupled with challenge, the repressive heterosexual order enforced through the sexual contract results in the destruction not only of female individuality, but also the individual female.

II.3. Fanny Lewald: *Jenny* (1843), *Eine Lebensfrage* (1845).

II.3.1. *Jenny*.

Lewald's second novel presents multiple challenges to the sexual contract. The female protagonist's intellectual and emotional development, her love relationships, and the decisions she makes about her destiny, all constitute a profound inquiry into the status of women as the embodiment of the feminine and their social place. In addition, the text reveals the interdependence of normative constructs of femininity and masculinity, casting particular light on the regulation of femininity and thus of women through the duelling code.

Jenny's development questions stereotypical definitions of womanhood. It deconstructs normative gender definitions, and contests the notion of marriage as a social duty. In the course of her love relationship with Reinhard Jenny gradually achieves a radically egalitarian view of marriage, demonstrating that a woman's identity is not dependent on and constituted by the beloved male. Rather, she shows that she is capable of independent intellectual inquiry and of asserting a belief system which contradicts that of Reinhard. The radical nature of Jenny's development is underlined by the text's incorporation of conservative male points of view such as her brother's and Reinhard's with respect to women's social place.

Jenny's activism within the private familial sphere also interrogates behavioural codes that seek to assert normative bourgeois notions of women's identity and their proper place by stating that women cannot express an interest in political issues or appear in public without a chaperone. Her participation in a series of "lebende Bilder" at her family home and her performance of Byron's song "Das Mädchen von Juda" at a salon-gathering during the spa season assert her right as a woman to make political statements. Her rescue of a poor woman suffering heatstroke at the roadside attests to Jenny's preparedness to contest rigid behavioural codes that seek to contain women within the private familial sphere by sexualising any activity that does not conform to the ideal. Jenny's acceptance of Walter's marriage proposal serves as a final challenge to conventions governing both the personal union in the marital relationship, and its external, or public significance. The proposed

marriage between a son of one of Germany's oldest houses and a Jewish woman shows most clearly the political nature of marriage as a social alliance, and demonstrates that the personal is indeed very political.

The exploration of Jenny's story from within the framework of the sexual contract is made more complex since it requires consideration of Jenny's ethnicity and religion as well as her gender. Her identity evolves in the course of her contestatory negotiation of a multiplicity of behavioural codes. Jenny's ethnicity and social positioning as a female in a Jewish bourgeois assimilationist family living in Christian society mean she is subject to regulation by behavioural codes that are imposed by her family and their social milieu as well as by bourgeois Christian society. These include the codes that support the sexual contract and thus ideal gender identity within Christian society. In the course of the discussion I look at similarities and differences between Jewish and Christian behavioural codes determining female gender identity and social destiny. My examination of the behavioural codes that determine Jenny's religious and ethnic identity as a female explores the intersections of Jewish and Christian codes where this is relevant to her experience. In coming to a sense of her gendered, ethnic and emotional/ intellectual/ spiritual identity, Jenny negotiates a multiplicity of codes. My exploration of Jenny's story and its contestation of the sexual contract thus also considers ways in which it illustrates commonalities in the Jewish and Christian conceptualisation of woman's gender role which transcend the ethnic and religious divide between Christian and Jewish Germans.

I proceed from the assumption that Jenny is subject to Jewish and Christian gender codes that define her as a person of secondary status in both communities. These codes determine her behaviour and being in the emotional, spiritual and intellectual realms. In addition, the Jewish and Christian communities each position her differently: within the former, her status as the daughter of a wealthy merchant defines her as superior to the "Ostjuden" represented by Steinheim.¹ In her interactions with Christian friends of her brother Eduard,

¹Their inferior status is made clear when they pay a surprise visit to the Meier's during Clara Horn's visit: "Jenny schämte sich des unschönen Betragens, das Gäste ihres Hauses vor Clara an den Tag gelegt hatten." (J 96) Irene Stocksieker di Maio views the representation of Steinheim and his mother as an example of the process of stigmatisation within the Jewish

or with Therese and Reinhard, she is not discriminated against on the basis of class or race. The Christian community in turn positions Jenny in terms of her race, religion, class and gender. Whereas she is socially inferior to the Horns, her status with respect to Therese and Reinhard is more ambiguous. Although she is clearly superior to them in terms of wealth, and they are in the employ of her family, her ethnicity defines her as inferior. However, her consciousness of this racially defined inferiority is not as significant in the relationship with Reinhard as it is with Count Walter.

Möhrmann and Marion A. Kaplan both refer to the double oppression of Jewish women in the Christian community. While Möhrmann refers to the "doppelte Unterdrückung" of Lewald's experience as a woman and a Jew in Christian German society,² Marion A. Kaplan's exposition of Jewish women's position of "double jeopardy" goes a step further. According to Kaplan, Jewish women experienced "double jeopardy as a result of their religion and sex: as Jews and as women they endured discrimination in Germany, and as women they suffered from second-class citizenship in their own Jewish community."³ Lewald's novel provides a picture of even greater complexity, as it presents neither the Christian nor the Jewish community as an homogenous entity but rather emphasises differences in class, religious belief, and intellectual conviction within each group. It specifically thematises ways in which Jenny's liberal assimilationist parents break with Jewish traditions not only in the practice

ethnic group which Sander Gilman analyses as Jewish "self-hatred." "Jewish Emancipation and Integration: Fanny Lewald's Narrative Strategies," *Autoren damals und heute: literaturgeschichtliche Beispiele veränderter Wirkungshorizonte*, ed., Gerhard P. Knapp, *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur neueren Germanistik* 31-33, 1990/91 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1991) 273-301, 280. Todd Kontje, also following Gilman, refers in this context to the "split between an acculturated, secular German Jew and the crass mannerisms of the Ostjuden." *Women, the Novel, and the German Nation 1771-1871: Domestic Fiction in the Fatherland* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998) 158. Kontje remarks that "[i]n developing positive Jewish role models, ... Lewald distances her protagonists from negative Jewish stereotypes. Only from this perspective do the otherwise puzzling anti-Semitic caricatures in *Jenny* make sense." (157-58) However, both of Steinheim's appearances in the novel provide a disturbing reminder of Jenny's and Eduard's "otherness," with respect to their German-Christian romantic interests. His second appearance explicitly foreshadows future events. See discussion below: II.3.2.vi. Love and honour.

²Möhrmann 121.

³Marion A. Kaplan, *The Jewish Feminist Movement in Germany: The Campaigns of the Jüdischer Frauenbund, 1904-1938* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 1979) 3. This definition of "double jeopardy" is no less valid for the fact that the period of Kaplan's study is the early twentieth century.

of religion, but also in terms of Jenny's education and upbringing, and the aspirations they have for their daughter. Jenny herself then in turn contests those behavioural guidelines her family does put in place, and in the course of her development also contests the behavioural codes imposed by Christian society. Her struggle against inscription by these codes demonstrates the negative impact of externally imposed behavioural codes on a woman's psyche. At the same time, her assertion of an identity formed in resistance to such codes demonstrates the possibility for change on the level of the individual.

The complexities of Lewald's own family life and upbringing also attest to the many divergent and contradictory codes governing the practice of everyday life.⁴ Her father determined the secular enlightened atmosphere of their house in which Jewish ritual was not observed, and in which her brothers converted to Christianity in their early teens for practical reasons (ML I, 195). However, her father forbade her mother, "die so gern Christin geworden wäre," (ML I, 196) to convert, and she was buried according to Jewish ceremonial law. He also forbade Fanny herself to convert when she first desired to, stating that this would limit her options.⁵ She was fascinated from an early age by aspects of Jewish ritual she observed visiting other houses. Lewald's knowledge of Jewish religious tradition and practice was limited,⁶ and her family life was influenced by both secular Jewish and Christian practice. However, she never lost sight of her ethnicity or her outsider status.

In the discussion of Lewald's double heritage, scholars highlight the central significance of Lewald's Jewish identity. Pazi also notes the contradictions of Lewald's upbringing in a

⁴See Lewald's autobiography, *Meine Lebensgeschichte*. For discussions of the influence of Lewald's Jewish heritage and the intermingling of Jewish and Christian tradition, see Margarita Pazi, "Fanny Lewald-Stahr (1811-1989): Eine bruchlose Assimilation?" *Akten des VIII. Internationalen Germanisten-Kongresses: Begegnung mit dem 'Fremden.'* (München: Iudicium, 1991) X: 40-49; Brigitta van Rheinberg, *Fanny Lewald - Geschichte einer Emanzipation: Eine historische Biographie mit besonderer Berücksichtigung des Emanzipationsgedankens*, diss., U Tübingen, 1987 (Tübingen: Selbstverlag, 1987) 169ff; Gabriele Schneider, *Vom Zeitroman zum "stylisierten" Roman: Die Erzählerin Fanny Lewald* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1993) 70-75. See Stocksieker di Maio for discussion of the interplay between Lewald's life and fiction.

⁵Lewald wished to convert at the same time as her brothers but her father did not allow her to do so. He stated that whereas the act of conversion granted her brothers personal and professional freedom, a Jewish woman's conversion was contingent upon marriage to a Christian, since she could choose "weder ihren Beruf noch ihren Mann" (ML I, 196).

⁶Stocksieker di Maio 279.

context in which the children would say the Lord's Prayer every night and attend Christian religious instruction, but in which her father did not allow her to convert when she first asked.⁷ Pazi argues that Lewald's "conversion without inner conviction" resulted in a continuing "Gefühl der Fremdheit" throughout her life, despite her happy marriage with Stahr.⁸ Pazi cites Lewald's feelings of belonging to "allem geistig Jüdischen" asserting that Lewald gives up her "oft bemühte Objektivität ..., wenn sie von dem jüdischen Anteil an der Revolution, dem geistigen Leben überhaupt, spricht."⁹ Stocksieker di Maio, who emphasises Lewald's pursuit of "integrative" strategies,¹⁰ also points out that "we need to be conscious that Jewish identity was an essential component of Lewald's psyche that shaped her world view."¹¹

Such a view of the manifold and contradictory influences on Lewald together with the central consciousness of Jewish identity informs my exploration of Jenny's negotiation of multiple behavioural codes, as outlined above. The focus of Lewald's novel is thus on the intellectual, emotional and spiritual development of a Jewish German girl growing up in a wealthy bourgeois liberal assimilationist Jewish family. Her love relationships with two Christian Germans provide the starting points for the exploration of gender, ethnic, religious and class differences. Schneider has recently contested Jenny's status as "die alleinige Titelheldin,"¹² criticising an alleged "overvaluation" and "false assessment" of the figure in previous scholarship,¹³ and claiming that Eduard's story is of equal importance.¹⁴ It is true that the politics of his professional life contextualises Jenny's social place, and that his romantic involvement with the Christian Clara Horn provides an illuminating foil to Jenny's

⁷Pazi, "Assimilation" 41-45, examples 43.

⁸Pazi maintains that although Lewald never explicitly formulates such feelings, they are discernable from "zahlreiche Hinweise" the author made. "Assimilation" 47.

⁹Pazi, "Assimilation" 47. Pazi here cites Lewald's pride in the fact that the "Nationalversammlung" had boasted two Jews in the position of Vice President, Gabriel Riesser and Eduard Simson.

¹⁰Stocksieker di Maio 276.

¹¹Stocksieker di Maio 274.

¹²Gabriele Schneider 86.

¹³Gabriele Schneider 86.

¹⁴Gabriele Schneider seeks to demonstrate this through an "additive Analyse" of both figures (95, fn. 23).

relationship with Gustav Reinhard. However, he is consigned to the background of the narrative after the breakdown of the latter relationship and during Jenny's involvement with Graf Walter.¹⁵ I demonstrate that the overarching significance of Eduard's role in the narrative is to provide the counter-pole to Jenny in two areas. Firstly, his repressive views on women's status clarify the radicality of Jenny's challenge to gender norms. Secondly, his activism in the movement for the emancipation of Jews within the German state provides insight into the family's social status and aids in understanding the significance of the social challenge Jenny issues when she accepts Walter's marriage proposal. Eduard's story thus underscores the significance of the private sphere for the public sphere. Moreover, it also reveals the active contribution of men to the policing of the private sphere through the mechanism of normative femininity, thereby also demonstrating the interdependence of normative models of femininity and masculinity.

II.3.1.1. Jenny's story.

Jenny's story, as a "fiction of female development," presents three distinct stages in the development of the eponymous heroine's identity. Jenny matures in a strongly patriarchal context, firstly as a young girl under the familial tutelage of father and brother, then as a young woman engaged to her former teacher, Gustav Reinhard. In these first two phases, her identity is constituted in interaction with powerful male figures, with whom she is in a subordinate and dependent relationship. However, while Reinhard attempts to mould her according to his concept of the ideal woman,¹⁶ her family tolerates Jenny's infringements of the norm, and indeed to some degree encourages them. In the third phase of her development, she gradually frees herself from the constraints of the unmarried daughter's role as defined within the sexual contract, and develops according to the male model of "Bildung." She travels, reads, and paints, and her identity develops independently of a lover or husband, or

¹⁵Gabriele Schneider views Eduard and Jenny as models of two different types of "Akkulturation: nationales Bekenntnis ohne Aufgabe jüdischer Konfession (Eduard) und säkularisierte Konversion als Deklaration sozialer und ideeller/ weltanschaulicher Zugehörigkeit (Jenny)." (81)

¹⁶C.f. Gabriele Schneider 87.

the need to find one. She does remain in her father's house, but her relationship with him develops to allow her considerable independence.¹⁷

Her development is explicitly figured in terms of sexual role and function, echoing the definition of women and the possible trajectory of their development, within the sexual contract: Jenny passes from the virginal, still untouched stage, to a kind of immaculate widowhood lasting eight years. These years are described as a period which she had spent "mit der Idee, >entsagt zu haben<, wie mit einem Witwenschleier *geschmückt* [emphasis added MV]." (248) This juxtaposition of the concept of renunciation with that of widowhood as an adornment, or even enhancement of Jenny's being,¹⁸ highlights the unusual and specific deployment of both terms. Both renunciation and widowhood are presented as a freeing of the self from the need to engage sexually with men and thus compromise one's identity and freedom.

In each phase of development Jenny contests the sexual contract in different ways. In the relationship with Reinhard she challenges the definition of female identity as constituted in a love relationship with a male. As well, she undermines the notion that the trajectory of a woman's life is set by courtship, marriage and motherhood. The narrative can be viewed as a challenge to this pattern, identified by Miller as the "female plot" that "the culture has always already inscribed for woman."¹⁹ Miller states that the narratology of "female-authored literature" is structured in opposition to this, and

¹⁷Jenny's relationship with her father, and the authority he wields over her, are discussed below. According to the provisions of the ALR, the unmarried daughter remained absolutely dependent on her father (under "väterlicher Gewalt") until she married. Marianne Weber, *Ehefrau und Mutter in der Rechtsentwicklung*, 1907 (Aalen: Scientia, 1971) 337. Weber stresses the daughter's dependence in contrast to that of the son, whose dependence is merely economic: "[S]o lange der Sohn nicht so viel verdient, daß er einen eigenen Haushalt führen kann, soll er überhaupt dem Vater gegenüber keine selbständige Persönlichkeit sein, und die ledige Tochter soll es überhaupt niemals werden" (338).

¹⁸Ulrike Helmer remarks that Jenny wears an "unsichtbaren Witwenschleier," thus overlooking the unusual description of the veil as adornment. Einleitung, *Jenny*, by Fanny Lewald, ed., Ulrike Helmer (Frankfurt a.M.: Helmer, 1988) 7-26, 18.

¹⁹Miller, *Subject 208*. Miller refers to "the heroine's engagement with the dominant ideology," and refers to scenarios that end in "marriage in the eighteenth century novel, and stories of marriage gone wrong in the nineteenth." (*Subject 208*)

generally questions the costs and overdetermination of this particular narrative economy with an insistence such that the fictions engendered provide an internal, dissenting commentary on female plot itself. They thereby solicit a reading that takes into account the ideology at work in this map of female experience.²⁰

Jenny's story consistently interrogates the heroine's "obligatory insertion"²¹ into the prescribed developmental trajectory.

II.3.1.II. Jenny in the public eye.

The interdependence of the public and private spheres is evident in Jenny's first appearance in the narrative. She is first si(gh)ted at a performance of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, and thus in the ambiguously coded public space of the theatre. She then becomes the object of discussion in a pub conversation conducted by her brother Eduard's Christian friends and associates. She is thus first viewed through the male public eye in a public space of her social milieu.²²

This representation of Jenny foregrounds questions of (Jewish) female identity, and its constitution in sexual and moral terms through the (Christian) male gaze in a public space. Even though she does not overstep the boundaries of propriety with her appearance in the theatre, this simple action nevertheless means that Jenny's person becomes public property. She is sexualised simply by having presented herself to public view, a fact underscored by the men's comparison of her with the Italian actress Giovanolla.²³ On view in the box in the theatre, Jenny is reduced to a stereotype, a cipher of femininity, sexuality and Jewishness.

Schneider notes the significance of her representation in terms of the stereotype of "oriental" beauty, "den Topos der dunklen, geheimnisvollen Schönheit, der im Gegensatz zur blonden engelhaften Schönheit oft Vorurteile und Angst entgegengebracht werden, in die sich auch tabuisierte, sexuelle Komponenten mischen."²⁴ The stereotype of the Oriental, and

²⁰Miller, *Subject* 208.

²¹Miller, *Subject* 208.

²²Jenny's first appearance in the novel parallels that of Gutzkow's Wally in that Jenny is presented through a constituting, albeit speculative male gaze.

²³During the discussion in the pub, of the Italianate, if not oriental beauty of the actress, William Hughes, an English visitor, asks after Jenny, describing her as the young woman with "ein sehr interessantes Gesicht" who is obviously Jewish (*J* 27).

²⁴Gabriela Schneider 82. As well as drawing attention to the - stereotypically negative - sexual elements in Jenny's portrayal, Schneider comments on Lewald's opposition of Jewish

Jenny's sexualisation, are intensified by the association with Giovanolla.²⁵ The men's pub discussion highlights similarities between Italian and Jewish physiognomies when William Hughes, an English visitor, asks about Jenny, describing her as the young woman with "ein sehr interessantes Gesicht" (J 27), and Ferdinand Horn gives his anti-Semitism free rein.²⁶ Horn's comments exemplify the association of the Jew as "Oriental" with "a lesser breed of human being," that Said asserts in his influential study *On Orientalism*.²⁷ The equation of Jenny with the stereotypical figure of the actress, and thus the "public woman" with questionable morals,²⁸ foregrounds Jenny's outsider status and concomitant vulnerability to being falsely and negatively judged in her society. Jenny is clearly not in the same social class as Giovanolla, who as a "public woman" is more obviously sexualised public property. However, the comparison with Giovanolla demonstrates that Jenny's ethnicity and thus already marginal social status renders her more vulnerable to being outcast if she should overstep conventional boundaries or fail to conform to gendered role expectations. The parallel shows the limits of possibility for Jenny if she wishes to remain within the boundaries of social acceptability. This theme is reiterated several times in the course of the narrative.²⁹

The significance of public perceptions about female virtue is underlined on Eduard's entry into the pub and then further underscored by the post-theatre discussion of *Figaro* at the Meiers. The juxtaposition of the two discussions reveals the significance of female virtue for

and Christian stereotypes in *Jenny* with regard to Eduard, Jenny, and Clara. Both Jenny and Eduard are presented as obviously Jewish in appearance.

²⁵Gabriele Schneider notes the parallel with the actress Giovanolla, but does not take the analysis further. (93, fn. 10)

²⁶Horn makes his racist antipathies clear, stating: "[M]ir wurde erst wieder in England wohl, nachdem ich mich in Havre ein Jahr lang unter jenen kleinen brunetten Französinen in der Frankfurter Judengasse geglaubt hatte." (J 27)

²⁷Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, 1978 (London: Penguin, 1995) 341.

²⁸C.f. Joeres *Deviance* 267, fn.19.

²⁹Jenny's rescue, towards the end of the narrative, of the woman suffering heatstroke, is the most dramatic of such incidents, and it makes the existence of such boundaries and their connection with gender expectations explicit. See discussion below: II.3.2.vi. Love and honour.

men in a society which constitutes masculinity and male honour through the duelling code.³⁰ In this context, a woman's moral standing can mean life or death for her male protector.

Eduard intervenes in the pub conversation during a sequence of toasts to women. Erlau, who has been commissioned to paint a portrait of Giovanolla, toasts her "Feueraugen." (J 27)³¹ He then proposes a toast to Jenny, seconded by the Englishman Hughes, who cries: "Ja! Das schöne Mädchen mit dem dunklen *Flammenblick* soll leben und immer leben!" [emphasis added, MV] (J 31), echoing Erlau's description of Giovanolla. Reinhard, who has already proposed a toast to German women, but who as Jenny's fiancé later displays jealousy, possessiveness, and a desire to sequester Jenny within the home, is on the verge of seconding the toast. At this point, Eduard challenges the toast, calling their behaviour into question:

Seit wann ist es Sitte, daß man bei Zechgelagen auf das Wohl unbescholtener Mädchen trinkt? Ich werde es wenigstens nicht leiden, daß der Name meiner Schwester in

³⁰Ute Frevert's research attests to the increasing mutual interdependence of ideas of masculinity, male honour and the duelling code through the nineteenth century: "For Carl Welcker, a liberal from Baden, there was no doubt that honour, duelling and masculinity were closely interlinked. In his view, male honour was demonstrated by a 'courageous cast of mind and the ability to defend it [i.e. honour]', and as this cast of mind found its most 'solemn and sublime expression in a duel', he considered that duelling was 'beneficial to the development of honour and masculinity.' *Men of Honour: A Social and Cultural History of the Duel*, trans., Anthony Williams (Cambridge: Polity, 1995) trans. and rev. ed. of *Ehrenmänner: Das Duell in der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (München: Beck, 1991)) 175. Frevert reads the increasing importance of duelling as a regulatory mechanism in the educated middle class as a fusion of this class and the aristocracy, and links it with the growing social influence and dominance of this class (34). She argues that Goethe's novel *Wilhelm Meister* was instrumental in transmitting into bourgeois culture the ideal of the "all-round development of the personality" emphasised by the aristocracy. She also links the adoption of this concept of the "personality" by educated middle-class men with the embourgeoisement of duelling in this period, and argues that the adoption of the duelling code by educated bourgeois men was not an attempt on their part to ascend into a higher class by mimicking aristocratic forms of behaviour. According to Frevert, "education and higher education rather than hereditary privileges became the common distinctive feature of men who were entitled to fight duels and appear before disciplinary courts." The duelling code enabled these men "to orchestrate convincing and credible demonstrations of their own claim to personal integrity." All quotations, 136f. Thus the marker of personal distinction was no longer membership of the aristocracy, but a concept of personal integrity that could be defended by the individual.

Fontane's *Effi Briest* presents the paradigmatic literary exploration of a man's defence of the combined honour of himself and his wife upon his wife's adultery.

³¹Erlau's interest in Giovanolla extends beyond the professional, and in addition to the description of her "Feueraugen" and "Götternacken" to the pub crowd, he uses sexualised imagery in emphasising her beautiful colouring, the perfection of her features, and noting "wie üppig ihre Formen sind." (J 27) When the party breaks up, chastened by Eduard's refusal of the toast to his sister, Erlau complains wittily and with self-irony about their "abgeschmackte[n] Sentimentalität," and states he intends to go and stand beneath Giovanolla's window. (J 32)

meiner Gegenwart im Weinhaus entweiht werde. Setzen Sie sich, meine Herren! Den Toast nehme ich nicht an. (J 31)

Eduard's concerns are those discussed in Rousseau's "Letter to D'Alembert," regarding the maintenance of public morals. Indeed, his words recall the view of the Spartan in an anecdote told in Rousseau's text.³² According to this view a woman is defiled by the mere mention of her name in public, even if this occurs with reference to her purity. Rousseau recounts the angry interjection of a Spartan man, who interrupts his friend's praise of a Spartan woman by saying: "Wirst du wohl aufhören, über eine anständige Frau schlecht zu reden?"³³ The only way to guarantee the maintenance of morals is to enforce not only women's physical, but also their discursive absence from the public sphere. Eduard's defence of Jenny's honour, and his linking of her honour with his own, occurs according to the terms of the duelling code, as Eduard, like Reinhard, and presumably the other young men, is a member of a "Burschenschaft." Gabriele Schneider links Eduard's membership of a "Burschenschaft" with his liberal political ideals. She views this detail as a utopian element of the novel, as membership of a "Burschenschaft" at the time was restricted to Germans and Christians.³⁴

According to this code, a man's honour is also linked with the honour of the women under his protection. A woman's honour is, in turn, determined by her sexual probity as attested to in public.³⁵ The duelling code thus asserts the validity of the concept of female honour developed in Fichte's "Family Law," thereby demonstrating its validity through the nineteenth century for members of the bourgeoisie. Eduard's invocation of honour to assert that Jenny is not public property, and the terms of his challenge to the men, both prove the existence of the

³²Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Brief an d'Alembert über das Schauspiel," *Schriften*, ed., Henning Ritter (München: Hanser, 1978) I: 333-474, 381-82.

³³Rousseau, "Brief" 382.

³⁴Gabriele Schneider 81, also fn 3, 92. Lewald may not have been aware that non-converted Jews might have been excluded from "Burschenschaften," and simply assumed on the basis of her brothers' and Heinrich Simon's duelling history, that membership was open to all men of her class. Her brothers, who had converted in their early teens (*ML* I, 195-197), were provided with a fencing room in the paternal house, Lewald stating in her autobiography that they were accorded "sogar ein großes drittes Zimmer, das wir nicht benutzten und das leer stand, als Fechtboden für sie und ihr Kränzchen ...; und diese Vergünstigung, die sehr viel Unruhe und Laufen ins Haus brachte, wurde ihnen erst entzogen, als sie es sich einmal beikommen ließen, ein Duell in unserem Hause anzufechten." (*ML* I, 259)

³⁵Ute Frevert. "Mann und Weib, und Weib und Mann:" *Geschlechter-Differenzen in der Moderne* (München: Beck, 1995) 202-212.

subtle sexualisation to which Jenny has been subject in the conversation, and which may negatively affect her reputation. In addition, when Eduard links his own honour with that of his sister, he signals that he is her protector and that he is thus prepared to risk his life for her. Eduard's defence of Jenny's honour challenges the men present to in turn challenge him if they disagree with his stance. This scene adumbrates Walter's death defending Jenny's honour, and of course, his own. Through Eduard's and Walter's actions Lewald highlights the way in which the duelling code meant that a man's honour was inextricably entwined with a woman's in that period, and the fact that a woman's sexual transgression, however it was defined, could cost the life of the man who viewed himself as her protector.³⁶ It also shows that the ideals of femininity and masculinity were inextricably intertwined, and that each supported the concept of (sexual) morality espoused in the society of the period.

An additional reason for Eduard's forceful intervention may be a raised sensitivity to any kind of slur, and an increased need to preserve his honour because of his and his family's marginalised social status. The existence of racially motivated discrimination and exclusion of Jews within Prussian society, and the social outsider status of the Meiers,³⁷ is emphasised by Ferdinand Horn's anti-Semitic contributions to the conversation prior to Eduard's arrival (*J* 27-8). The latter's continuing criticism of the Meiers brings a challenge from Reinhard, who says he finds Horn's statements not only "in unserer Zeit höchst befremdlich." He also considers them "geradezu unschicklich" in the light of having said that he was a friend of the family and had the greatest respect for them (*J* 29). Reinhard's challenge to Horn and Eduard's later incisive intervention to preserve his sister's and family's honour, demonstrate

³⁶Frevert *Honour* 180-191.

³⁷Beginning in 1815 the liberal Prussian laws regulating the status of Jews were subject to a series of modifications which eroded the emancipation of 1812. In 1822 Jews were forbidden entry to academic and school teaching posts. Educated Jews could become doctors, and various restrictions were placed on entry to the legal profession, culminating in its proscription in a cabinet order of 1842. Wanda Kampmann, *Deutsche und Juden: Die Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland vom Mittelalter bis zum Beginn des Ersten Weltkrieges*, 1963, (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer, 1979) 163-171, here 166. These regulations affect Eduard's career, as he is denied the position of head of the teaching hospital in which he works when he refuses to convert to Christianity.

the particular sensitivity of these two young men on the periphery of the educated bourgeoisie to questions of honour.³⁸

Eduard's and Reinhard's challenges to the other men provide a backdrop to the post-performance discussion of *Figaro* at the Meiers, which rapidly becomes a discussion of social morality and the question of whether young women should attend the opera, as well as explicating the significance of female virtue for men and masculinity. The extremely conservative and repressive viewpoints held by the young men are contrasted with Frau Meier's counter-discourse which is informed by Rahel Varnhagen's critical insights.

Prompted by Giovanolla's performance as Susanne in Mozart's *Figaro*, the post-theatre conversation begins as a discussion of the figure's flirtatiousness. This leads to discussion of the influence of theatre on morals and a comparison of German and French morals. Hughes, the English visitor, remarks that the apparently stricter upbringing of young French women does not result in a more highly moral society. Eduard in turn identifies the dissolution and corruption of French society as resulting from the lack of importance ascribed to the family and the home.

Both Reinhard and Eduard find that women should abstain from attendance at the opera theatre. This would preserve not only their own fragile morality, and the morals and unity of the family, but also the "Ehre," the honour and moral standing of men associated with them. Both men's views are equally conservative, and are expressed with the same degree of vehemence, an important detail which has been overlooked by previous scholarship. This conservatism is juxtaposed to their liberal political views, a motif already evident in the depiction of Robert in *Clementine*. Their membership of a "Burschenschaft," while underlining their political commitment,³⁹ also signals that they are bound by a strict code of

³⁸While Horn is a wealthy Christian, Reinhard's mother, a noblewoman, married a poor Protestant pastor. Frevert emphasises the personal and arbitrary nature of what might have been perceived as insults to a man's honour. She states that, apart from "certain expressions and forms of behaviour" which were commonly deemed insulting, "what they [ie the men] considered to constitute an attack was left to their own discretion," adding: "Nevertheless, there were no customary limits to personal sensitivity, with the result that the reasons behind the issue of challenges to duels were manifold in the extreme." *Honour* 150-171, quotation 145.

³⁹C.f. Gabriele Schneider 81.

honour governing moral conduct. This code links the public and private spheres through its regulation of morality and sexual conduct. Lewald's text presents the code as retrogressive with respect to women, as Frau Meier's response to the young men's views indicates.

Eduard justifies his views by emphasising the sanctity of a man's house as a "Tempel des Glücks," describing the wife's role as a "Hohepriesterin." He asserts the inalienable right of the husband to determine what activities are appropriate for his wife, whose purity must be the price for all his sacrifice:

[W]eil er Ruhm, Ehre und alles, was er ist und erwirbt, diesem Tempel und dieser Priesterin darbringt, weil sein Hoffen und Fürchten in diesen Kreis gebannt ist und er immer wieder dahin zurückkehrt, sobald das Leben mit seinen gebieterischen Forderungen ihn freiläßt; darum haben wir deutschen Männer ein Recht, zu verlangen, daß auch kein unreiner Hauch die Seele des Mädchens berühre, dem so viel geopfert wird. (J 60)

Eduard's views echo in all seriousness Hegel's definition of male activity as the everyday "Kampf" in the public sphere, and Schiller's polarisation of gender roles in "Das Lied von der Glocke." However, his view of male sacrifice extends these attitudes. His adherence to a code that links love and honour with death means he may be called upon to enact a potentially literal self-sacrifice.

Reinhard, describing *Figaro* as "ein so schlüpfriges, sittenloses Stück," and the arias as "so leichtfertige Gesänge" (J 60), echoes the theme of sacrifice. He is even more effusive in his description of the necessary purity of the "Mädchen" he loves and to whom he would commit his honour ("wie hoch, wie heilig ist uns das Mädchen, das wir lieben" (J 60)). His argument evokes the great cost to a man of sacrificing his freedom on marriage,⁴⁰ and asserts that such sacrifice and self-submission is only warranted for the holiest and purest of women.⁴¹ He concludes that such purity can only be defiled by the opera. He cannot bear the thought that "die Gottheit unsres Herzens unwürdigen Festen bewohnt," that "ihr Auge von unreinem Anblick berührt würde." (J 60) He declares he would give his life to spare his beloved such "Entweihung," but finds that:

⁴⁰Wenn ein Mädchen wüßte, wie schwer und heftig der Kampf ist, den ein Mann zu kämpfen hat, ehe er willig und für immer auf seine Ungebundenheit verzichtet, ehe er seine Freiheit opfert! (J 60)

⁴¹Nur einem Wesen, das man mehr liebt als sich selbst, das man gleich einer Gottheit heilig hält, kann man so untertan werden, als die Liebe es uns dem Weibe macht. (J 60)

ein Mädchen, das wahrhaft liebt, das die Liebe, die hingebende, die anbetende Liebe eines Mannes zu begreifen vermag, das in sich auch den Geliebten achtet, muß notwendig und freiwillig allem entsagen, was diesen und sie zugleich verletzt. (J 60)

Only such morally worthy womanhood conceptualised in these clichéed terms is deserving of such love and sacrifice. Jenny correctly interprets this as a request for her to "voluntarily" cease visiting the theatre.

Reinhard later draws a parallel with Jenny's attendance at the theatre on that evening, and her exposure to the gaze of others when she participates in the "tableaux vivants" on the evening of their engagement, viewing her as the object of a sexualising public gaze:

Dort im Saale, als sie in deiner Bewunderung kein Ende finden konnten, verdroß es mich, daß du auch für andere schön bist, daß ich den Genuß, dich anzustauen, mit gleichgültigen Menschen teilen soll. Ich wünschte dich fort von hier, wo kein Auge dich sähe als meines, wie ich es damals wünschte, als du mich im Figaro erraten lassen, was ich kaum zu hoffen gewagt hatte [emphasis added MV]. (J 115)

Reinhard's sexual gaze expresses his desire, and he is anxious to protect his property from the sexual gaze of other men. The moment she acknowledges she is his, he seeks to withdraw her from public circulation.

Both men's mothers are astonished by their sons' thoughts, correctly sensing a personal motivation behind them (J 61).⁴² Eduard and Reinhard are both dominant men and eventually assume leadership positions in their communities. Eduard becomes a powerful figure in the Vormärz struggle for Jewish emancipation,⁴³ and Reinhard establishes a successful parsonage. Their ideals of female behaviour uphold the self-abnegating female ideal of the sexual contract, which their personal code of honour further supports. Their passionate

⁴²Eduard has just realised he finds Clara attractive, and Jenny has just given Reinhard to understand that she loves him. See Sigrd Nieberle for discussion of their "Liebesgeständnis ... ohne Worte." *FrauenMusikLiteratur: Deutschsprachige Schriftstellerinnen im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1999) 108.

⁴³Gabriele Schneider draws parallels between Eduard Meier and Gabriel Riesser, one of the leading theorists for Jewish equal rights movement in the Vormärz. Riesser, like Eduard, was not prepared to convert in order to advance his career, and his view of Jews as "Deutsche jüdischer Konfession" was consistent with his refusal to allow "Judentum" to become a term merely signifying religious denomination. Following Riesser's lead "wurde die jüdische Gleichberechtigung deutsch-nationaler Prägung zu einem Programmpunkt des liberalen Vormärz", and Eduard Meier is figured as one of its main proponents (83). Schneider also draws a parallel between Eduard and Johann Jacoby, a significant figure in the struggle for political and social democracy in 19th century Germany, who saw himself as a German and a Jew (85).

defence of the purity of the private sphere as an extension of themselves shows the degree to which the code determining masculinity in this period both required and manufactured the identification of women, marriage and the private sphere with personal and social morality. Within this code, male identity is defined by honour, and the establishment of a family by male (self-)sacrifice. The link between sex and death in the duelling code further emphasises the mutual interdependence of conventional femininity and conventional masculinity. Further, the gender-specific definitions of honour mean that women are made to be complicit in upholding conventional masculinity through the necessity of acting according to the rules of conventional femininity.

Eduard's and Reinhard's extreme views also show that the logical consequence of the male code of honour upheld by the duelling code is the physical sequestration of women within the family. Even in the context of a family outing, a woman's appearance in the ambiguously-coded public space of the theatre may compromise her reputation. Lewald's text here thus presents these intelligent and politically progressive young men as the most extreme proponents of these conventions.

Mrs. Meier contradicts the young men, asserting that Eduard exaggerates the negative effects of the theatre in Germany, and that the state of women and society there is quite different from that in France. She also defends the Meiers' liberal cultural practices against Reinhard when he states that although that evening was one of the best in his life, "doch peinigte es mich, die Logen voll von jungen Damen zu sehen" (*J* 59). Frau Meier rejects the implied slur on her upbringing of her daughter, and emphasises that a carefully educated girl can make her own decisions about art:

Ich glaube aber, daß es dem reinen Sinn eines unverdorbenen Mädchens eigen ist, an einem schönen Bilde nur die Schönheit und nicht gleich die Flecken und Fehler zu sehen, die es entstellen. Darum haben mein Mann und ich nie Bedenken getragen, unserer Tochter manches Buch in die Hände zu geben, sie an manchen Dingen teilnehmen zu lassen, die man ihrem Alter sonst vorenthält. (*J* 59)

This equally moral counter-discourse has determined the principles governing Jenny's education and upbringing, and is embodied in her person. The principle espoused by the Meier parents echoes the following statement by Rahel, cited by Lewald in her autobiography:

"Damit ein schlechtes Mädchen nicht dumm handeln kann, soll ein gutes eingeschränkt sein! Bewundern Sie die Institution, wenn Sie können." (ML II, 157)

Eduard's and Reinhard's articulation of the dominant discourse with regard to female identity and development, and their conservatism and repressive views, are in stark contrast to the enlightened liberal views and practice of the Meier parents with regard to Jenny's development and education. Nurtured in such a liberal environment, Jenny is a radical figure whose contestation of the conventions governing women's identity and their possibilities in life demonstrates that as a whole, society is not yet ready for her challenge. However, she achieves a fulfilment and equilibrium which would have been denied her had she followed the requirements of convention. The positive representation of this contestatory counter-discourse and the clear depiction of the resistances it faces, is a major achievement of the novel.

II.3.1.III. Girlhood: confronting "double jeopardy."

Jenny's character and development through the novel is repeatedly assessed by others in terms of the stereotypically defined ideal femininity to which her character, behaviour, and desire fail to conform. Thus the narrative is punctuated by evaluations by her family members, Reinhard and his mother, and Walter. In the first phase of her development under familial/paternal aegis,⁴⁴ both her parents and Eduard have a contradictory attitude to her lack of conformity. On the one hand they recognise the difficulties this poses for her future role in life and wish to guide Jenny onto the path of the feminine. On the other, they value her unfeminine, or masculine traits, which are also presented positively by the narrator. When Jenny rejects the arranged marriage with her cousin Joseph, her mother thus laments Jenny's strongheadedness and lack of pliancy: "[d]ies ewige ich will und ich will nicht, *dies Unfügsame* [emphasis added] in dem Wesen" (36). However, she valorises her masculine qualities by associating them with Herr Meier:

⁴⁴Familial authority is paternal authority in this novel, in which Herr Meier is the supreme authority in the Meier family, determining its policy at all times, as is shown in the present reading of *Jenny*.

In dir ist der Charakter deines Vaters, der feste, starke Sinn Vom Glück verzogen, von uns allen mit der nachgiebigsten Liebe behandelt, hast du es nie gelernt, dich in den Willen eines andern zu fügen; was man an dir als Eigensinn hätte tadeln sollen, das haben Vater und Bruder als Charakterfestigkeit gelobt (J 36)

Eduard likewise observes Jenny's "faults," but also recognises and values her intellectual capacity. He regrets "daß sich in Jenny zu viel *Selbstgefühl* und eine fast *unweibliche Energie* zeigten" [emphasis added, MV] (J 45). He also criticises the dominance of her intellect at the expense of the emotions, saying "daß sich bei ihr die Eigenschaften des Geistes nur zu früh, die des Herzens aber scheinbar gar nicht entwickelten" (J 45). However, he only gives up tutoring her with reluctance, when his schedule leaves him no option, although he then again suggests that she attend a private school to rid her character of its "Härten und Ecken" (J 46). Even while promoting the femininisation of his sister, Eduard contributes to its lack.

Jenny's interest in politics has been at issue since Möhrmann claimed for her the status of the first Young German female character, and emphasised Jenny's Young German qualities. According to Möhrmann, Jenny reads modern literature rather than making tapestries, participates in men's conversations and has "ein offenes Ohr für die Fragen Ihrer Zeit."⁴⁵ Schneider contests these assertions, claiming that Jenny does not participate in political discussions and is, in fact, apolitical.⁴⁶ In Schneider's assessment, Jenny is self-centred and superficial in the first half of the novel, interested only in herself and her own problems, and only starts showing an interest in others eight years later.⁴⁷ Although Schneider cites two instances of Jenny disavowing an interest in politics,⁴⁸ one of these, when examined in context, actually provides evidence of the opposite.⁴⁹

⁴⁵Möhrmann 135-36.

⁴⁶Gabriele Schneider 86.

⁴⁷Gabriele Schneider 86.

⁴⁸Gabriele Schneider 95, fn. 25.

⁴⁹Steinhelm mentions a planned New Year's Eve celebration, reporting also that Herr Salomon, a Jewish merchant, has been elected to a city office. Jenny responds: "Das letztere ist mir ungemein gleichgültig, ... aber für die erste Nachricht bin ich Ihnen sehr dankbar, und sie macht mir großes Vergnügen. Weiß es Eduard schon?" (J 39) The latter question refers to the second piece of news, as Steinhelm confirms when he states: "Also sehen Sie, sehen Sie, es ist Ihnen doch nicht so gleichgültig als Sie behaupten" (J 39) Gabriele Schneider cites only Jenny's disavowal of interest, and omits the broader context of Jenny's question asking whether Eduard has been informed, as well as Steinhelm's response. On this basis, Schneider's assertion that Jenny is not interested in or aware of political issues in this early stage of her development cannot be sustained.

While Jenny in fact cannot be described as apolitical, her activism takes place in the familial private sphere and in the public spaces of her social milieu. Like Eduard, she is shown to have been politicised and made acutely aware of her outsider status through her direct experience of anti-semitism at school. Once she realises that she is discriminated against (*J* 47), she asks to leave the school (*J* 47). From that point she remains in the private and predominantly familial environment. Jenny's 'confinement' to the private sphere is made particularly clear in the way Lewald divides up her own early experiences between Jenny and Eduard. Although Jenny is presented as excelling at school, and as being the teachers' favourite,⁵⁰ Lewald very deliberately assigns her own experience of being told her head would have sat better on a boy, to Eduard (*ML* I, 87).⁵¹ In doing so, she also changes the gender bias of the original to a racial one, as Eduard is told: "Armer Meier, dir hilft ja all dein Lernen nichts, du kannst ja doch nichts werden, weil du nur ein Jude bist." (*J* 41) Similarly, Lewald also makes Eduard rather than Jenny a victim of the overt racism stemming from the "Hep! Hep!" riots of 1819 that she herself suffered (*J* 41).⁵²

II.3.1.IV. Truth or love?

Jenny's removal from a social context which would discriminate against her on the basis of race has the effect of drawing her into a space defined traditionally as that of the feminine. Apart from the visits to the theatre discussed above, Jenny's social life centres on her family. This "privatisation" of Jenny, and the novel's spatial placement of her in an unequivocally feminine realm, serve to focus attention on the issue of her contestation of her gender role.

The narrative then explores the intersections of gender with class, ethnicity and religion through Jenny's love relationships. Both times the process of inscribing herself into society as the wife of a German Christian forces Jenny to confront questions of who she is, and who

⁵⁰"[S]ie fing ... an, sich ihrer Fähigkeiten bewußt zu werden, welche sie in eine Klasse gebracht, in der alle Mädchen ihr im Alter um mehrere Jahre voraus waren. ... Die halberwachsenen Mädchen dieser ersten Klasse mochten sich größtenteils mit dem bedeutend jüngern Kind weder unterhalten noch befreunden, das ihnen obendrein von den Lehrern mitunter vorgezogen wurde." (*J* 46)

⁵¹Lewald's rival was Eduard Simson, who later became the President of the "Frankfurter Nationalversammlung." *ML* I, 69; 292, fn. 39.

⁵²*ML* I, 95-98; see also Kampmann 159ff.

she will be allowed to be, in terms of the role she is to play in the prospective marital partnership. The relationships herald significant shifts on the path of her development. In both relationships, Jenny's failure to adhere to the rules of conventional femininity is initially more disturbing to the male beloved than her class, ethnicity or confessional identification. These become relevant once Jenny's and the respective partner's feelings develop to the point at which they consider inserting themselves into society as a married couple. While religion becomes the primary focus in the relationship with Reinhard, Jenny's ethnicity is the focal point in the relationship with Walter.

Jenny's relationship with Reinhard presents a critique of the story of the constitution of female identity sealed within the terms of the sexual contract, both in terms of women's self-subjugation to men, and in terms of the constitution of a woman's psyche. Reinhard seeks to contain Jenny on all levels; physically, intellectually, and emotionally. He thus not only wants to remove her from the desecrating gaze of other men, as discussed above. On a purely physical level, he entraps her in his arms when helping her out of the carriage after the momentous "Figaro" visit, causing her to exclaim: "So hält man ein Vögelchen fest, das man eben gefangen hat, weil man sich des Besitzes bewußt werden will, weil man fürchtet, es könne uns entfliehen" (J 58). Through his tuition he seeks to cast her in his desired image.⁵³ Jenny does attempt initially to conform to his ideas, but as the relationship develops, she increasingly interrogates the notion that in a love relationship a woman's identity is constituted according to the model of self-subjugating love and consequent loss of identity. Her realisation that she neither has faith, nor can she believe intellectually in the fundamental tenets of the Protestant faith, leads to great inner conflict. This is figured as the choice between "Wahrheit" and "Liebe."

The conflict is played out in two stages whose climactic points occur firstly with her decision to convert, and then secondly, with her recognition that she cannot take communion with Reinhard. Her first choice of love and thus conversion leads to a division in herself once she realises she has in fact committed herself to dissimulation in order to be with Reinhard.

⁵³C.f. Gabriele Schneider 86-87.

This is the point at which she first realises that her intellectual convictions are just as much a part of her identity as her love for Reinhard. The falsity of this partnership, which would involve Jenny's self-negation, is captured in the clichéd image of Jenny and Reinhard sitting beneath a chestnut tree after her christening ceremony. They sit down "unter den Schatten einer mächtigen, von Efeu grün umrankten Kastanie" (J 185) While Reinhard gazes at her "mit der innigsten Liebe," (J 185) Jenny is aware that the love and support he offers in this scene are transitory, and that he is likely to hold her conversion without belief against her as much as the fact that she does not share his religious beliefs. Like the clichéd image, his support is bound to a conventional and stifling set of beliefs about marriage.⁵⁴

The second choice, truth, allows Jenny to resolve her self-division, but results in the loss of Reinhard. However, the narrative does not actually have Reinhard reject Jenny on the grounds of religious incompatibility, but rather unconvincingly presents him as the victim of his mother's and Therese's machinations, which persuade him of Jenny's sexual betrayal. He thus discards her as a woman who has lost her honour. I will return to this point below. The two stages of Jenny's conflict thus explore conventional notions of love and the gender ideal that supports them. Jenny demonstrates that intellectual conviction is as constitutive of a woman's identity as it is of a man's. She cannot give up her intellectual conviction and thus her belief system without doing herself irreparable damage.

In the relationship with Reinhard Jenny is tried and found wanting both by Reinhard, and by his mother. Reinhard's efforts to mould and contain Jenny involve appropriation of her intellectual, emotional and sexual self, requiring her to conform to the female gender ideal. His mother's critique of Jenny as a suitable wife for her son views Jenny's failings of character and lack of femininity, and thus her failure to conform to a Christian gender ideal as a product of her ethnicity and class, mistrusting "das jüdische Element in ihr" (J 88). The "Pfarrerin" also focusses on the "unruhige Lebhaftigkeit" which is characteristic of both genders in the Jewish community, but which threatens women's femininity: "Sie [ie the

⁵⁴The reference to a chestnut tree rather than the traditional oak with the climbing ivy may be an allusion to the fact that Reinhard cannot in fact provide the support Jenny needs even in traditional terms.

"unruhige Lebhaftigkeit"] mag vortreffliche Geschäftsmänner hervorbringen, der Weiblichkeit aber tritt sie zu nahe" (J 89). The "Pfarrerin" views this characteristic as typical of Jenny and other intelligent Jewish girls from wealthy families. This critique presents Jenny on the negative side of the conventional binary oppositions of feminine/masculine and emotion/intellect, or "Herz/Geist," and also creates an opposition between the ideal Christian woman and the wealthy Jewish masculine woman.

The "Pfarrerin" also identifies the dominance of Jenny's enlightened intellect, her "Geist," over her "Herz" as potentially threatening to her union with Reinhard, as it renders her incapable of sustaining the kind of household required of a pastor: "Jennys Geist ist unerbittlich klar; er läßt sich nie von ihrem Herzen täuschen." (J 90) In this, Jenny is also the overeducated product of a wealthy Jewish families. such young women harbour ideas above their station and prefer the company of men, who in turn are grateful to receive "solch einen kleinen Überläufer" (J 90). Here the "Pfarrerin" subtly sexualises such women, who no longer find pleasure in the company of women or in caring for the house:

Im Kreise der Männer machen ihr Geist und ihre Aufklärung rasche Fortschritte; die neuen Begriffe, der große Maßstab der Männer werden an alles gelegt; das Mädchen schämt sich der engen Verhältnisse, die ihm bis dahin genügten; eilig werden die alten Vorurteile niedergerissen, die beschränkten Ansichten verworfen; das Haus, in dessen friedlichen Mauern das junge Mädchen heimisch ist und am liebenswertigsten erscheint, wird zerstört, und ein neuer spiegelblanker Palast errichtet. (J 90)

The rather obvious use of negative expressions, such as "enge[n] Verhältnisse," "alte[n] Vorurteile," and "beschränkte[n] Ansichten," to describe the female estate, echoes Campe's affirmation of the confinement of woman's estate. However, where Campe recognises the factual limitations imposed on women, the "Pfarrerin" seeks to present these positively.

The terms in which the Pfarrerin criticises the light-filled spaces of Jenny's projected house, and characterises her own ideal as one of half-light and darkness, again lack subtlety:

Durch die großen Scheiben dringt strahlend hell das Sonnenlicht und glänzt von den glatten Marmorwänden wieder. Alles ist Licht! Kein Halbdunkel, kein düsterer Schatten; aber auch kein stiller Raum, um dem Schöpfer einen Altar zu bauen, kein trauliches Plätzchen für schüchterne Liebe. ... Jenny, von den ihrigen in Zweifel erzogen, ist ein weiblicher Freigeist geworden. Wird sie, die Glaubenslose, dich dauernd glücklich machen können? (J 90)

Through the subtle sexualisation and the "Pfarrerin's" emphasis on her intellectual interests, Jenny is here in rather obvious terms presented as destroying woman's place as it is conventionally defined, undermining the house and its sanctity.⁵⁵ The Pfarrerin is at pains to disassociate Jenny from her mother, describing the latter as "ein echt frommes, echt weibliches Gemüt," and stressing that "Madame Meier selbst bedauert die Richtung, welche ihre Tochter genommen hat." (J 91)

In fact, although the Pfarrerin casts the ideal feminine woman as the ideal Christian woman, Jewish women were allocated the same subordinate position in the family and within the Jewish community as Christian women. Both were defined according to their roles as daughter, wife and mother. Kaplan's description confirms this elision of ethnicity when she points out that "[a]t the turn of the century, German and Jewish middle-class women shared with their Victorian counterparts in the United States and Britain a status and image riddled with contradictions."⁵⁶ Pedestalised,

protected, respected, and powerless ... exalted as morally superior to men, but ... subject entirely to male authority, they were charged with the preservation of religion and culture, but were denied equal religious or educational status.⁵⁷

Kaplan elaborates German-Jewish women's position of "double jeopardy" as follows:

Jewish women experienced both the inequalities from which German women suffered and the effects of Judaism's cultural and religious prejudices against women. The position of women in the Jewish faith rested upon an ancient role differentiation in which the characteristics of strength, initiative and intelligence were ascribed to men, while women were regarded as inherently close to the physical, material world, and were held responsible for the moral development of the family. The highly esteemed activities of prayer, study, and the regulation of the Jewish community were male monopolies. While women did work outside the home in the late Middle Ages and the early modern period, they were expected, above all, to fulfill their natural, maternal roles. Many of these same attitudes were still commonplace among nineteenth and twentieth-century German Jews. Most Jewish women accepted the dictates of their patriarchal culture, performing their duties in the confines of the home.⁵⁸

⁵⁵Stocksiekler di Maio reads this passage less critically, stating: "The images of space and light are too powerful not to belie the mother's negative opinion in the case of Jenny, a Jew whose liberation began with the Enlightenment." (283) In Helmer's view this passage merely confirms the gender prescriptions of the time, which enforced women's inequality, and Jenny's contestation of these. Helmer finds that these words signify that women were not included in the Enlightenment project, and adds: "Jenny aber will, daß das Licht der Aufklärung auch vor dem "keuschen Dämmer des Hauses" nicht haltmacht." (15)

⁵⁶Kaplan 11.

⁵⁷Kaplan 11.

⁵⁸Kaplan 67.

Within this context, Jenny's education and upbringing, a result of her father's liberalism, enable her to diverge from both the Christian and the Jewish ideal of womanhood.

Jenny thus shares some characteristics of a phenomenon identified as exceptional by Kaplan, namely, that of early nineteenth-century Jewish women who had access to education, some wealth, and were able to lead lives which diverged from the conventional model.⁵⁹ While she comes close to representing the "apostate salon Jewess"⁶⁰ in the Pfarrerin's eyes, Jenny's life is circumscribed by her family, and is not cast in the image of Rahel, or Henriette Herz in this sense.⁶¹ However, Lewald was greatly influenced by Rahel's life and letters, which she read in 1834, describing them as "eine Offenbarung und eine Erlösung" (*ML* II, 156). She learned from the latter's example, applying Rahel's insights to her own life and circumstances.⁶² The figure of Jenny may in this sense be viewed as a subtle application of these insights, as she too struggles to find and maintain her own identity in the face of pressures imposed by the code of womanhood and the institutions of marriage and the family.

⁵⁹The daughters of wealthy Jews in the ghetto had been the first to learn the language, literature, and social graces of their neighbours. In the early nineteenth century, some of those with access to enlightened culture converted. Nevertheless, the image of the apostate salon Jewess, and the newly rich, bourgeois woman who neglected her religion in the pursuit of material pleasures were dramatic, but exceptional. Most remained tradition-bound by family, class, and community ties as well as by the hostility of the non-Jewish world." Kaplan 19f.

⁶⁰Kaplan 19.

⁶¹Gabriele Schneider draws attention to similarities between Lewald and Dorothea Schlegel und Rahel Varnhagen, two intellectual Jewish women, who exercised great influence on women's emancipation and literature from the end of the eighteenth century (72).

⁶²Rahel is a source of strength and inspiration to Lewald, particularly in her insistence on maintaining the struggle against the limitations imposed by institutions like the family, morality, and ideal womanhood. Lewald's autobiography gives a clear indication of the degree to which she receives explicit instruction in womanly behaviour from her parents and other relatives, excepting Heinrich Simon, and is expected to confine her expectations of life to those acceptable to her future role. An incident Lewald reports is the glimpse she has, through lit windows, of the repetition of family life, with families sitting in their living rooms of an evening, doing the same thing night after night: "Der Vater rauchte, die Mutter strickte, die Kinder arbeiteten. Das war einmal wie allemale ...; und geradeüber in dem Hause saßen sie ebenso und daneben auch ebenso - es überfiel mir eine wahre Angst." (*ML* II, 150) Lewald cannot help crying out: "Herr Gott! wenn ich solch ein Dasein haben sollte, ich müßte verzweifeln!" Her father responds sharply, accusing her of having "unberechtigte Ansprüche an das Leben." (*ML* II, 150f)

The Pfarrerin's views underscore Jenny's and Reinhard's gradual realisation that they come from "different worlds."⁶³ Reinhard views Jenny as two people, one of whom is the woman whose intellect he has shaped and with whom he wants to live. The other is "ein zweites, fremdes Wesen," who repels him when she engages in 'unfeminine' behaviour such as laughing at Steinheim's jokes, accepting the admiration of others as her due, and enjoying the luxury which surrounds her (*J* 87). He views many aspects of her as problematic: the wealth; the beauty which attracts male attention and inspires his jealousy; and her 'unfeminine' behaviour, that is, her lack of modesty and her assertion of her personality in her dealings with others. Reinhard can only accept aspects of Jenny which are cast in his view of femininity, and his pride and jealousy make him easy prey for his mother's strategies for destroying his relationship with Jenny.

Jenny's attempts to mould herself for her role as Reinhard's wife lead her to ponder fundamental questions which reveal that the issue of religion ties in with the determination of women's identity by the gender ideal. Jenny's desire to convert signals an initial desire to constitute herself through her love, and thus through Reinhard. However, his fixed ideas about the identity of his future wife clash with Jenny's sense of self. Jenny's conflict between truth and love shows that conforming to his desire would involve negating an identity that is already present. While she is probably aware of the probable consequences for her prospective life with Reinhard, her inability to negate herself entirely signals the end of the struggle. Her struggle thus also demonstrates that the normative expectation that a woman surrender her self entirely to her husband upon marriage is based on the assumption that women are unformed and have no sense of self. This belief is expressed by Eduard in the oft-cited statement: "Wen das Weib liebt, dem glaubt sie." (*J* 109) Möhrmann notes that the religious double standard exposed by differences in social attitudes toward Jenny's and Eduard's conversion parallels the moral double standard.⁶⁴ She also states: "Dabei ist es aufschlußreich, daß es gerade der fortschrittlich denkende und handelnde Eduard ist, der diesen Unterschied formuliert und den Religionswechsel seiner Schwester als Tribut ihrer

⁶³Gabriele Schneider 87.

⁶⁴Möhrmann 135

Weiblichkeit versteht."⁶⁵ However, as the above discussion has shown, Eduard's assertion is consistent with his conservative views.

Jenny's preparation for baptism involves her in serious examination of tenets of faith such as the dogma of the Holy Trinity, and the belief in the immortal soul. The Pastor responsible for guiding Jenny's preparations for conversion realises that her desire to convert stems from love for Reinhard rather than an "inneres Bedürfnis" (*J* 131). Nevertheless, his tuition forces Jenny to pit her desire to share Reinhard's beliefs against her own pantheistic beliefs (*J* 132),⁶⁶ requiring her to examine her belief system in the light of Christian Protestant teaching. The climax of Jenny's struggle comes, when, in a session with the pastor, she finally realises she cannot adapt the dogma of the Holy Trinity to suit her pre-existing beliefs (*J* 133-135).

Jenny's realisation of the disjunction between her intellectual conviction and the tenets of the Protestant faith signals the beginning of the real struggle within her between the truth she has recognised, and her love for, and desire to keep Reinhard. The text underlines the reason for her desired conversion by juxtaposing the scene in which she realises she cannot accept Protestant dogma with a scene in which she walks to the Pfarrerin's house. Her walk from the Pastor's to the Pfarrerin's dimly lit house in increasing darkness foreshadows the challenges her life as a poor pastor's wife would bring. In an attempt to please Reinhard Jenny, "der man früher niemals erlaubt hatte, ohne Begleitung eines Dieners die Straße zu betreten," (*J* 135) goes against middle class conventions that prevent women and girls from going out on the street unaccompanied.⁶⁷ The evening at the Pfarrerin's is uncomfortable, as

⁶⁵Möhrmann 135. Gabriele Schneider makes the same point in discussing the function of the contrast between the two siblings (90). She does not, however, consider the ramifications of gender in her further discussion of Jenny's conversion struggle.

⁶⁶Lewald herself was a pantheist. C.f. Blackwell 265; Gabriele Schneider's discussion, 68f.

⁶⁷See discussion in Introductory section: 1.2.iii. Sex and space: the negative sexualisation of women's activity in the public sphere...." Lewald recounts that once she had decided to support herself entirely from her earnings as a writer, she decided to disengage the servant who accompanied her when she went out. While she did not experience fear walking alone, she did feel "gedemütigt" and "erniedrigt." Her realisation that working class women walked alone as a matter of course caused "eine vollkommene Revolution in meinem Innern" and she gains insight into the fact that her "Salonanstand" and her "damenhafte[n] Vornehmheit" are not a true reflection of worth. (*ML* III, 116-17, quotations 116) Lewald's account of her own experiences and that of Jenny focusses on the different codifications of bourgeois female propriety according to class.

Jenny's awareness that she must dissemble if she wishes to keep Reinhard is accompanied by the fear generated by the frightening experience of walking alone in growing darkness. The evening confronts her with the manifold sacrifices she would have to make. Not only would her lifestyle become far less comfortable and secure, but marriage would involve self-negation or, at best, dissimulation.⁶⁸ As Blackwell points out, Jenny's "religious search has taken her away both from her family and friends and from Reinhard."⁶⁹ She states that it is this isolation which forces Jenny to look closely at her own situation.⁷⁰

Jenny's initial choice of dissimulation arises not only from the multiple pressures she faces, but is also a result of insufficient self-knowledge. While deliberating whether to go through with her religious conversion, Jenny realises that Reinhard's acceptance of her is conditional on her converting: "Sie schauderte vor der Wahl zwischen der Wahrheit und der Liebe." (J 176) Schneider correctly notes that once the engagement has been made public, the pressure to fulfil conventional expectations increases: "Sie muß, wie es gesellschaftlich akzeptiert ist, die Ansichten und Überzeugungen ihres zukünftigen Ehemannes zu ihren eigenen machen."⁷¹ Similarly, when Reinhard insists on accepting a poorly paid parsonage in a bad area and expects that Jenny will accompany him and live within his means, Jenny feels she has no choice, saying: "Nun ich muß ja meinem Manne folgen, wie es in der Bibel steht." (J 142) Her initial surrender to "Liebe" occurs as much out of fear of losing Reinhard, as of losing him to Therese, whom the narrator assesses as "eigensüchtig genug ..., auf den Trümmern von Jennys Liebesglück sich eifrig ihr bürgerliches Wohnhaus zu begründen." (J 176) However, after her conversion, she is torn by the feeling of being "unwahr gegen sich

⁶⁸Jenny's walk is described as a nightmare in terms of her inability to walk the distance, her fear of the deepening dusk, and her fear of passers-by. Her attempt to prove that she would be able to make the sacrifices required of a poor vicar's wife and adapt easily to her new station demonstrates to everybody that her bourgeois upbringing has 'softened' her, and her father stipulates that upon their marriage they will be presented with a carriage and horses. Reinhard is horrified, as this would clearly mark her, the pastor's wife, as different and in fact 'above' his parishioners. Jenny's father also specifies as a non-negotiable condition of marriage that he subsidises Reinhard's salary to bring it up to that of the wealthiest parsonage in the country. Reinhard, after agreeing to this, "war mit sich selbst verfallen" (J, 145).

⁶⁹Blackwell 266.

⁷⁰Blackwell 266.

⁷¹Gabriele Schneider 88.

selbst" (J 210). She feels that she has committed perjury (J 208), and also feels isolated from her family (J 208). These feelings come to a head when Reinhard writes asking her to take communion with him.

Jenny's refusal to take communion with Reinhard signals her refusal to surrender "Wahrheit," and thus her ultimate refusal of the marriage. This is framed as not only the victory of intellect, but also as the assertion of autonomous female identity. In her letter to Reinhard, written in response to his request, Jenny describes her inability to do so in the following terms: "Ich kann nicht anders! Diese Überzeugung ist stärker als meine Liebe, als ich!" (J 212) At this point, at which she is to deny herself absolutely a second time to keep Reinhard,⁷² this decision signals more than the victory of intellect over emotion.⁷³ Since the act of conversion and the further act of taking communion are focal points of an absolute self-denial, concerning the belief system at the core of her being, Jenny's decision signals her refusal to subsume her self, her identity under Reinhard's stereotypical image of his ideal wife.⁷⁴ The issue of religion is thus tied in with the issue of her own identity as opposed to the requirements of the gender ideal and the sexual contract. Jenny contests the ideal by asserting the dominance of her belief system, and thus her identity, against the self-negation required by her love for Reinhard. Although Jenny's desire to convert signals her desire to constitute herself through her love, and thus through Reinhard, she finally realises this is not possible. Although she is aware that she will lose Reinhard, her inability to negate herself entirely, signals the end of the struggle. Blackwell's analysis of Jenny's contestation of her own and

⁷²Gabriele Schneider notes the process of self-alienation which accompanies Jenny's relationship with Reinhard, as she attempts to remodel herself in the image of his ideal of the Protestant pastor's wife (86).

⁷³Stocksleker di Maio views it simply in these terms: "The ambivalence Lewald felt toward women throughout her entire life is manifest in both the issue of conversion and of education. Jenny's struggle to define her religious faith is viewed in terms of the dichotomy between emotion (female) and reason (male). Reason prevails at the expense of womanhood." (282)

⁷⁴C.f. Möhrmann's statement: "Reinhard ... ersehnt sich eine Frau biedermeierlicher Prägung." (136) She also finds that Jenny's realisation, during the baptism ceremony, that she could never believe something she did not find convincing intellectually, is the instant in which "der Prozeß ihrer Emanzipation vom traditionellen Frauenbild" begins (136). Gabriele Schneider refers to Jenny's declaration of her credo as her "Absage an jede positive Religion" (89). She notes that the elimination of positive religion, together with the demand to separate church and state, and bring about a reconciliation between Jews and Christians, are a version of the "Absorptionstheorie," according to Katz. (96, fn. 31)

women's pre-scripting by convention in the area of religion emphasises the emancipatory nature of Jenny's realisation that she indeed can think for herself and free herself from such scripts. Blackwell finds that Jenny gains three "religious insights" during her development. These are firstly, that women should fight against their definition as being acquiescent in the matter of religion; secondly, that Jenny herself can only believe what she understands intellectually; and thirdly, that if loyalty to herself or to her love is at issue, she must be true to herself.⁷⁵ With reference to Gutzkow's Wally as well as Jenny, Blackwell states that: "Women are trained to feel guilty about examining their own belief deeply, and therefore can't maintain a positive self-view while searching after their own faith."⁷⁶

Jenny's crisis and her insight are fundamentally different from Wally's. As discussed above, Wally, who does not have faith, but who cannot come to terms with this lack of faith, seeks a template for faith from Cäsar. Jenny, in contrast, is secure in her own belief system, which refutes positive religion.⁷⁷ Jenny's crisis comes with her realisation that her own beliefs are just as strong and formative of her identity as is Reinhard's faith for the constitution of his identity. To thus reduce Jenny's struggle to a crisis that is "eher psychosozialer Art,"⁷⁸ as Schneider does, is to negate the authenticity of Jenny's inquiry.⁷⁹ Schneider adds that Jenny's crisis "demonstriert die psychologischen Begleiterscheinungen selbst der assimilierten Juden, die über den Weg der Taufe Anschluß an die deutsche Gesellschaft suchten."⁸⁰ Schneider thus labels Jenny's conversion as a means of assimilating into German society, which was typical of a type of conversion prevalent in the period of Jewish emancipation that began around 1770/80, namely a "secular conversion" that was not motivated by spiritual factors, but rather the desire to acquire a national identity.⁸¹

⁷⁵Blackwell 269.

⁷⁶Blackwell 270.

⁷⁷Möhrmann finds that Jenny's religious scepticism and interrogation of received religion enables her to be an exemplary representative of Young Germany (137).

⁷⁸Gabriele Schneider 86.

⁷⁹Underlying Schneider's assertion is the idea that a belief system that rejects faith in received religion cannot fulfil the same function for the psyche as faith does. I would argue that spiritual inquiry remains spiritual inquiry, regardless of the nature of the belief asserted.

⁸⁰Gabriele Schneider 86.

⁸¹Gabriele Schneider 95, fn. 29.

Schneider's labelling is certainly correct in the case of Eduard, who rejects the conversion that would facilitate union with Clara. His principled rejection of conversion arises from his view of non-conversion as an attestation of solidarity with his people. While in his case conversion is not linked with faith, but is a political tool, in Jenny's case her process of conversion leads her to deliberate on fundamental questions of faith and how belief shapes the psyche. Schneider's labelling also disregards the specific workings of gender, which meant that women's private path was also their professional path. Jenny's primary interest in converting is not to marry and thereby gain entry into German society. Rather, she wishes to convert because she thinks this will actively demonstrate the degree of her commitment to Reinhard, who has been slow to declare himself.⁸² In this sense Jenny's decision to convert and her subsequent struggle does indeed have a psychosocial basis. The novel thus reveals that the nexus between intellectual conviction and identity exists in women as well as men. In the sense that Jenny is able to assert her independence, this literary figure presents a much more radical contestation of convention than Wally.

Jenny radically disproves Eduard's belief, cited above, that a woman is defined by the man she loves. Significantly, Eduard's full statement in fact equates love and faith for a woman, and likens the beloved male to Christ:

Jeder Mann ist seiner Geliebten der Verkünder eines neuen Glaubens; Liebe ist die Offenbarung, in der das Weib den Geliebten als den gottgesandten Messias erblickt. Wenn Jenny wahrhaft liebt, wie ich gewiß bin, wird sie glauben, woran sie will! Sie wird glücklich machen und das ist genug, um auch glücklich zu sein. (J 109)

Eduard's suggestion that Jenny will mould her belief to that of her beloved is proven wrong. Jenny's ultimate confession to Reinhard about her inability to assert the Protestant faith proves that, for a woman, love and religious belief are in fact separate, and that a woman's intellect is not to be equated with her heart. However, the issue of Jenny's marriage to Reinhard concerns not only the intersection of gender and religion, but the intersection of

⁸²Gabriele Schneider refers to Reinhard's mistrust of himself and his beloved as standing in the way of smooth relations during the engagement. The quotation used to substantiate this comes from a point earlier in the narrative, and is there given as the reason preventing Reinhard from declaring himself (J 81). At the same point, Schneider also refers to Reinhard's jealousy, and his labelling of "jeden Kontakt Jennys mit einem anderen Mann als 'Fahnenflucht.'" The term is actually used by Jenny of Eduard's behaviour (J 87).

race, gender and religion. While her dilemma points up the pressure which familial and social forces may exert on a Jewish woman to convert to the religion of her husband, the case of Clara Horn and Eduard shows that equivalent pressure is exerted on a Christian German woman to ensure that she does *not* marry a Jewish man.⁸³

Jenny's cousin Joseph reveals much greater insight than Eduard. The former emphasises her Enlightenment heritage, and defines Jenny's spiritual allegiance as a contemporary form of Jewish belief which emphasises the intellect: "großgezogen in den Vorstellungen des jetzigen Judentums wirst du nie aufhören, an alles den Maßstab der Vernunft anzulegen" (J 84). He draws out the family's adherence to the moral code explicated in the Old and New Testaments while rejecting "die Gesetze, die das Judentum charakterisieren, als bloßes Zeremoniengesetz" (J 84), and asserts: "du wirst niemals Christin sein noch Jüdin." With respect to her struggle between desire for Reinhard and the recognition of her own identity, Joseph tells her: "Du mußt mit dir selbst einig werden." (J 84) He advises her to examine whether Reinhard can provide her with the same support as her family, and concludes that she will ultimately follow her heart: "Das allein entscheidet zuletzt das Schicksal der Frauen. Gott gebe, daß dein Herz dich niemals irreleitet" (J 85). Unlike Eduard, Joseph asserts a positive link between the heart and the intellect, thus also contesting the binary oppositions that view women as defined by the emotions and men by the intellect.

Stocksiekler di Maio's discussion of gender and Jewish ethnic and religious identity asserts that religious identity is of secondary importance for women. She finds that "Whereas religious identity in *Jenny* is tenuous, ethnic identity is pronounced, if problematic."⁸⁴ She emphasises that, while Herr Meier and Eduard regard remaining within the Jewish faith as a

⁸³Clara chooses to conform to convention rather than to follow her love for Eduard, demonstrating that social pressure and a woman's allegiance to her family may prove stronger than love when a Christian woman's desire does not conform with convention. Gabriele Schneider recounts the case of an attempted marriage between a Christian woman and a Jewish man, Ferdinand Falkson, in 1844 which has a significant number of parallels to the case of Eduard and Clara Horn, and which demonstrates the subtle workings of discrimination. According to the case history a Protestant pastor refused to marry the couple, and they were subsequently also refused permission by the Ministry of Justice. Moreover, they had no grounds for appeal to the King, since such intermarriage was not expressly forbidden by law (85).

⁸⁴Stocksiekler di Maio 279.

statement of ethnic solidarity, the rules of exchange which apply to Jenny dictate that the bride moves into her husband's social sphere, and in doing so, is required to give up aspects of her previous identity. Stocksieker states: "For Jenny, however, gender identity is more important than Jewish identity with respect to conversion."⁸⁵ She clarifies this by stating that on the basis of her reading of *Meine Lebensgeschichte* and *Jenny*,

women were conditioned for change with respect to two issues crucial to Jewish identity - name change and conversion. A Jewish woman was expected to marry and follow her husband, assuming his name and, should he be a Christian, converting to his religion.⁸⁶

According to Stocksieker di Maio, Jenny's conversion is thus acceptable to her family because she is a woman: Jenny is expected to act according to precepts of gender rather than religion. However, while this was certainly true in Lewald's case, the reverse is true for Jenny. The novel distinguishes clearly between the cultural practice that Stocksieker correctly identifies, and the practice endorsed by Herr Meier. Herr Meier is in fact Lewald's projected paternal ideal. While initially intending that Jenny marry her cousin Joseph, he respects her resistance to the arranged marriage. In addition, he is not in favour of Reinhard as a potential husband for his daughter, claiming the latter lives in an "Ideenwelt" (*J* 108) and does not understand the realities of love and life. He does not promote the marriage in any way, but equally, he does not impede it. However, he asserts himself strongly when Reinhard breaks the engagement, and forbids Jenny to resume contact (*J* 219). In contrast to Lewald's own father, Herr Meier consistently acts in Jenny's best interests rather than according to convention, allowing her the freedom to make her own mistakes. The significance of Herr Meier as a refutation of Lewald's own father and the pressure he placed on her to enter into an arranged marriage has not been noted in Lewald scholarship. Through the figure of Herr Meier, who grants Jenny much latitude despite his greater insight, Lewald contested her own father while nevertheless asserting the principle of patriarchal authority.⁸⁷

⁸⁵Stocksieker di Maio 278.

⁸⁶Stocksieker di Maio also uses Eduard's statement ("Wen das Weib liebt, dem glaubt sie!") to support her claim (283).

⁸⁷Since Venske's excellent discussions of Lewald's Inscription by paternal authority, other studies have also discussed her attempts to free herself from her father and assert her own identity while at the same time being unable to do so entirely. See Regula Venske, "Alltag und Emanzipation: Eine Untersuchung über die Romanautorin Fanny Lewald,"

Lewald scholarship has focussed exclusively on the issue of Jenny's inability to share Reinhard's religious belief as the reason for the breakdown of their engagement. As indicated above, however, the text shies away from this. Instead, the problem of religious faith is sidellned by motifs of competitiveness between women, sexual jealousy, and male vulnerability. Jenny and Reinhard emerge as the pawns of Therese and his mother. Reinhard's mother confides Therese's insinuations that Jenny is having an affair with Erlau just before Reinhard receives Jenny's letter telling him she cannot take communion with him. Reinhard distances himself from her as a result,⁸⁸ stating firstly that he cannot marry a woman who does not share his faith. However, he stresses the impact of her betrayal: "Und doch könnte ich Dich lieben, könnte Dich segnen, wenn Du mir die Möglichkeit gelassen hättest, Dich zu achten." (J 217) Reinhard's readiness to believe Jenny's infidelity, and the manner in which he discards her, result in the matter becoming one of honour, Jenny's sexual honour, and the honour of the Meier house (J 218). Herr Meier emphasises this when he forbids Jenny to reply: "Du warst Reinhard's Braut, aber du bist auch meine Tochter; auch die Ehre deines Vaters muß dir heilig sein, auch ihr mußst du ein Opfer bringen können, ja, ich fordere, daß du es mir bringst." (J 219)

II.3.1.v. Immaculate widowhood.

Staatsexamensarbeit, (Hamburg 1981); "Disziplinierung des unregelmäßig spekulierenden Verstandes: Zur Fanny Lewald Rezeption," *alternative* 25 (1982): 66-70; "Discipline and Daydreaming in the Works of a Nineteenth Century Woman Author: Fanny Lewald," Joeres and Maynes 175-192; "Ich hätte ein Mann sein müssen oder eines großen Mannes Weib! - Widersprüche im Emanzipationsverständnis der Fanny Lewald," Brehmer et al 368-396. Gabriele Schneider's study introduces a different perspective, looking at the interplay of Lewald's conservative tendencies with her desire to achieve social reform. Schneider defines Lewald as a reformer rather than a radical from her earliest phase of writing, and shows how the writer's socially and politically conservative tendencies enabled her to act as a powerful advocate in her areas of literary, political and social interest (Schneider).

⁸⁸The narrator intervenes after the Pfarrerin repeats Therese's speculations to Reinhard, emphasising his essential innocence, his need for guidance, and his mother's inadequacy: "Würde nur jemand ihm warnend, beruhigend zur Seite gestanden haben, er hätte sich aus der Verwirrung der Leidenschaften leicht und schnell zurechtgefunden; denn nur zu deutlich hatte ihm, solange er selbständig geurteilt, Jennys Brief den Zustand ihres Herzens verraten, und kein Zweifel an der Wahrheit ihrer Worte war in ihm aufgekommen, bis die Mutter seinen Argwohn rege gemacht." (J 216) The Pfarrerin is portrayed as fuelling her son's inclination towards jealousy (J 216).

Jenny's third phase of development, in the eight year period following Reinhard's rejection, presents a positive alternative model of constitution of identity.⁸⁹ This model presents the possibility of female development outside the limits set by the sexual contract, and Jenny emulates aspects of the traditional path of male "Bildung," developing the imagination through travel, painting and education rather than being committed to a dependent relationship on a male through whom she is required to constitute her identity.⁹⁰

In this period Jenny gains freedom and independence in two vital areas. Her repeated rejection of marriage proposals leads her parents to finally cease pressuring her to marry.⁹¹ Although she does not leave her father's house and thus his sphere of influence entirely, she takes control of the household once her mother dies, and her father becomes dependent on her. The withdrawal of the pressure to marry and thus conform to the requirements of the sexual contract, and the acquisition of a position of power in the household (*J* 224), enable Jenny to develop outside the limits set by the contract.⁹²

Blackwell's study views Jenny's development positively as culminating in her clarification of her religious belief, a pantheistic deism.⁹³ Stocksieker di Maio acknowledges Jenny's achievement in this sphere,⁹⁴ but views the latter's development as "minimal ... when compared to Eduard's occupation and activities."⁹⁵ Stocksieker di Maio states further:

⁸⁹In Kontje's view, "[i]n many ways Reinhard's rejection is the best thing that could have happened to her, as she gets to keep her family, her money, and her independence. The price, however, is that she remain celibate." (158)

⁹⁰C.f. Kontje, who states: "Jenny's return to her father enables the continuation rather than the end of her intellectual development." (158) In contrast, Helmer reads Jenny's renunciation as illustrative of the path of typically female self-sacrifice she embarks on once she has "keinen Anspruch mehr auf Liebesglück." Helmer 18.

⁹¹[E]s (war) endlich der Vater selbst, der seiner Frau anriet, nicht in Jenny zu dringen, sondern ruhig eine Zukunft zu erwarten, in der die Erinnerung an Reinhard ihren Einfluß auf Jenny verloren haben und die Vorschläge ihrer Freunde leichter Gehör bei ihr finden würden (*J* 224).

⁹²Helmer views this period as one in which Jenny gains independence, but in keeping with her description of the novel as a "Liebesroman" (11), she also views it as a time of waiting for the right man, thus overlooking ways in which the text describes the period as one of empowerment (18).

⁹³Blackwell, 255-274, 271.

⁹⁴Stocksieker di Maio 282.

⁹⁵Stocksieker di Maio 282.

The only occupation the narrator calls Jenny's work is drawing, an accomplishment expected of any well-to-do middle class woman, and a few private acts of charity is the closest Jenny comes to working in the public sphere.⁹⁶

Jenny does indeed do charity work,⁹⁷ but on one occasion she oversteps the limits when she rescues a woman from the lower classes, who has fainted on the road as a result of heatstroke.⁹⁸ This event, which I discuss below, demonstrates the nature of Jenny's accomplishments and her political activism. Thus although although it is true that her development is attenuated when compared to the possibilities available to a man, the achievement of the novel is of a different order. Lewald does confine Jenny to the private sphere, as I noted above, but her spatial confinement results in exploration and contestation of the limitations imposed upon women. Jenny's achievement is to expose and question the proscriptions of the sexual contract through her contestation of the behavioural codes that limit women's development in this sphere. Her activism thus involves the politicisation of the private, familial sphere. Jenny challenges the regulation of women and the private sphere by the normative bourgeois female ideal, as well as by public opinion and established codes of conduct. This activity both complements and is contrasted with Eduard's contestation, in his professional and private life, of discriminatory practices against Jews.

Jenny's story demonstrates how tightly regulated this sphere, and thus women's conduct, was in this period. The sword of social prescription, while encouraging drawing and charity work, also censures active intellectual pursuits on the part of a woman, or public activity of any kind, where even a too-public act of charity might entail transgressing the boundaries of womanhood. According to Kaplan:

One of the only forms of outside activity traditionally permitted women was religious charity work. In the nineteenth century Jewish women took part in the primitive social services of the Jewish community. Their activities, inspired and limited by religious customs, focussed on poor relief and participation in burial societies.⁹⁹

⁹⁶Stocksieker di Maio 282.

⁹⁷Reinhard is impressed by Jenny's charitable instincts when she hears of a poor family's misfortune and immediately helps. In view of her future role as a pastor's wife, he is less happy about her statement that: "Die Dürftigkeit ist nicht poetisch, ich habe nie an die glückliche Armut geglaubt, sie ist nur niederziehend, ist nur kläglich." (J 88)

⁹⁸See discussion below..

⁹⁹Kaplan 67-8.

Jenny remains within the sphere of the feminine, but she asserts her identity as a woman in contestation of the normative ideal. She consolidates her independence in the period she spends in her father's house and outside the sphere of action circumscribed by the sexual contract. Her resultant self-confidence and self-knowledge give her the strength to challenge the force of public opinion in her relationship with Count Walter.

II.3.2.vi. Love and honour.

Where Jenny's relationship with Reinhard focussed primarily on intersections of gender and religion, her involvement with and proposed marriage to Count Walter highlights issues of gender and ethnicity. The projected "Mischehe" serves as a departure point to examine the regulation of heterosexual relationships by the broader community through the "Urteil der Menge" and the duelling code. Each acts as a regulator of social relations to ensure the stability of the status quo. The relationship also raises the issue of women falling in love a second time, demonstrating the double standards of a society that enforces the concept of "erste Liebe" as discussed by Gutzkow.¹⁰⁰ Jenny's second love relationship thus presents further challenges to the codification of womanhood and woman's place according to the sexual contract, as well as to the behavioural codes and regulatory mechanisms that enforce its workings.

Jenny's and Walter's courtship is marked by two incidents which demonstrate to Walter the degree of Jenny's deviation from the behavioural guidelines of ideal womanhood and the degree to which she is stigmatised in the German Christian community on ethnic grounds. These are the incident in which Jenny rescues the woman suffering from heatstroke, and Jenny's performance of Byron's song "Das Mädchen von Juda." Walter's resultant reflections on the regulatory effect of social convention enable him to respect her more and gain a better understanding of her social inscription as a Jew. His reflections on Jenny's character in a letter to his uncle establish that Jenny has "unfeminine" traits, yet is at the same time feminine. He describes her lack of "eine gewisse Jugendlichkeit, das weiblich Weiche ..., daß

¹⁰⁰See discussion above.

man an Mädchen ungern vermißt." (J 234) He also discusses her lack of desire to please men: "Gefällt sie, ist's ihr recht, wenn nichts [sic], so gilt's ihr gleich." (J 234) However, he concludes that an intermingling of feminine and masculine traits in her assert her essential femininity:¹⁰¹

In ihr vereinen sich der Geist und der Mut eines Mannes mit einem Frauenherzen, und es überrascht mich oft, daß doch zuletzt, trotz aller männlichen Klarheit, irgendeine lebenswürdige weibliche Schwäche oder ein lebhaftes Gefühl den Sieg über all ihren Verstand erringen. (J 235)

The criticisms of Jenny's lack of femininity made by her family and Walter valorise Jenny's intellect and independent nature. These qualities are presented as a positive augmentation of the feminine rather than an overstepping of the boundary into masculinity and the domain of the "Mannweib."

The rescue incident is preceded by a passage which spells out its significance as a demonstration of Jenny's deviance from the feminine ideal. The passage contrasts Jenny with Clara, who having been passed from Eduard to William Hughes, is now the textbook loving wife and lives "doch eigentlich nur in ihrem Mann und in ihren Kindern" (J 230). She is a foil to Jenny,¹⁰² who "wollte, durch Eduard daran gewöhnt, teilnehmen an allem Großen und Wichtigen." (J 230) Like Clementine, Jenny claims the right to intellectual pursuits and an active interest in political affairs. Clara's reaction demonstrates that even this passive political participation contradicts the female ideal. She assesses Jenny's intellectual pursuits and her interest in the "Erscheinungen der Außenwelt" in conventional terms as a "Zeichen innerer Unbefriedigung" and the last resort for women who seek an "Ersatz, mit dem sie sich für ein Glück entschädigen, das ihnen nicht geworden ist." (J 230) In Jenny's view, in turn, her friend embodies "eine Entsagung, die sie bewunderte, ohne zu glauben, daß sie selbst imstande wäre, sich zu solcher freiwilligen Selbstbeschränkung zu entschließen." (J 230)

Jenny's contentious rescue of the young woman "der niederen Stände" involves her finding the woman unconscious on the road with her young child beside her, reviving her, and helping her to the house. Clara and Walter witness the final stage of the action. The incident sparks a

¹⁰¹The letter is an attempt to persuade himself that Jenny is not the kind of woman one would marry, and to assert that his heart is free (J (234-35).

¹⁰²C.f. Möhrmann 137.

discussion about the boundaries of acceptable female behaviour, and thematises the policing and self-policing of women in the interests of maintaining female propriety. Jenny's specific misdemeanour, that of having been seen taking action outside the house, outside her prescribed territory, evokes the concerns raised in the discussion above of Jenny's opera visit: simply being in a public space makes women vulnerable to sexualisation and the accusation of impropriety. The discussion of this incident also makes clear that Jenny is more vulnerable to censure and to having her actions misread because of her Jewish ethnicity.

Clara's concern about what "die Menge" will think explains the nature of the transgression as making Jenny vulnerable to the perception that she had put herself on public display. Clara voices the reality in which women live and are forced to account for their actions. She regrets her words the moment she speaks them, but emphasises that she had only intended to make Jenny aware of the danger to which she exposed herself:

Nur vor der Verderbtheit derjenigen war mir bange, welche ihr irgendeine unlautere Absicht, ein Schaustellen dabei zur Last legen konnten. Wir Frauen sind so sehr gewohnt, uns nur innerhalb unseres schützenden Hauses zu denken, daß wir erschrecken, wenn wir uns außerhalb desselben handelnd erblicken. (J 233)

Clara comments that the absence of help for Jenny thankfully also meant an absence of witnesses, meaning that Jenny has escaped "allen Bemerkungen ..., die man darüber leicht gemacht hätte." (J 231) Jenny in return emphasises that she acted according to her own (and her father's) ethical code, stating that concern for propriety could not have led her to ignore the woman's plight. She states, "daß mir die Urteile der Menge sehr gleichgültig sind, wenn ich das, was ich tue, vor mir und meinem Vater verantworten kann" (J 232)

Jenny's words make Walter aware of his own ambivalence, in that, while applauding her actions, "auch ihm der Gedanke unangenehm gewesen, man hätte Jenny bei jenem Samariterdienst beobachten und sie falsch beurteilen können." (J 232) He articulates this in a self-critical manner, commenting to Herr Meier on the contradictions "in den Sitten unserer sogenannten zivilisierten Welt" (J 232). These mores would approve of a servant performing the rescue, while expecting Jenny to hold back because of considerations of propriety, thus committing her to behaving less humanely. Herr Meier then pushes the point, asking whether Walter approves of Jenny's actions. The latter's equivocal answer ignores the

differences in gender coding and thus does not address the source of unease: "Wenigstens hätte ich selbst nicht anders zu handeln vermocht." (J 232) Herr Meier responds with some irony, that Walter would wish that Jenny not be exposed to a second test of this nature, "denn wir wollen einmal kein Mädchen von den gewohnten Sitten ihres Standes abweichen sehen." (J 232) His statement emphasises that in a woman any perceived lapse against propriety may be deemed to imply wholesale impropriety. However, he emphatically defends Jenny's actions as arising from an ethical code distinct from that of public opinion. He emphasises:

In meinen Verhältnissen war es mir Pflicht, meine Kinder bis zu einem gewissen Grade gleichgültig gegen die öffentliche Meinung zu machen, die wir ein für allemal gegen uns hätten und deren Einfluß auf uns und auf jeden doch viel größer ist, als wir es glauben wollen." (J 232)¹⁰³

Walter's discomfort attests to the hypocrisy and senselessness of convention and the truth of Mr. Meier's statement, while confirming the power of public opinion.

Walter's awakened awareness of the implications of Jenny's contravention of the rules of womanly behaviour includes the realisation that attacks on her may originate in racial prejudice as well as on gender grounds:

Er hatte von jeher gewußt, daß Jenny Jüdin sei, aber so fern hat er von diesen Verhältnissen gestanden, daß er fast nie daran gedacht, es könne ein edles Unglück darin liegen, Jude zu sein. Jetzt aus des Vaters schlichter Äußerung tönte ihm, dem Glücklichen, der Schmerzenschrei eines Volkes entgegen und sein Mitleid mit demselben knüpfte, ihm unbewußt, ein neues Band, das ihn an Jenny fesselte. (J 233)

Here the idea of "Trauernde Juden," raised in the "lebende Bilder" performance on the night of the announcement of Jenny's and Reinhard's engagement, becomes reality in Walter's consciousness. It is reified in Jenny's salon recital of Byron's song, "Das Mädchen von Juda."

The performance of Bendemann's painting "Trauernde Juden," takes place in a familial environment. The performance allegorically anticipates Jenny's later situation,¹⁰⁴ as stated by Schneider. Schneider also discusses the framing of the performance by the doors of the Meier's hothouse (J 113) as a metaphor for the precarious situation of the Meiers, as Jews,

¹⁰³Stocksiekler di Maio views Herr Meier's disregard of public opinion and convention as the result of his having been "excluded from Gemeinschaften," stating: "Jenny's father finds solace in his family and inculcates in his children a self-protective indifference toward prejudiced public opinion." (278)

¹⁰⁴Gabriele Schneider 185.

in German society.¹⁰⁵ However, the allusion to Lessing's *Nathan der Weise* is also, as Schneider notes, a promotion of religious tolerance. The presentation of the "lebende Bilder" in such a setting thus underscores the message of the painting chosen. It emphasises Jenny's status as other through the visual representation of her physical difference in a context which also highlights her race,¹⁰⁶ as noted by the painter Erlau. He comments on the inauthenticity of the original painting since Bendemann used German models rather than Jews (J 116). The allegorical reading of the performance of this painting may be extended to Jenny's sudden desire to play a Madonna rather than the figure of Rebecca in a representation of the templar and the Jewess (J 102-103). According to Schneider, this, together with Jenny's preference for Biblical motifs, symbolises her turning towards Reinhard.¹⁰⁷ However, her sudden decision to perform as Rebecca after all is equally significant, together with the fact that she is still wearing the Rebecca costume at the moment when her father announces her engagement to Reinhard (J 118f). Both times the costume visually underscores her Jewish identity.¹⁰⁸ While her performance as Rebecca adumbrates her future unhappiness with Reinhard,¹⁰⁹ her sudden reversion to perform as the Rebecca figure rather than the Holy Virgin also pre-figures her equally unpredictable future choice of "Wahrheit" over "Liebe" (J 103) after her conversion.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵While Clara admires the beauty and scent of the exotic flowers, Eduard, "der sich wohl mit den künstlich in einer Enklave am Leben gehaltenen Pflanzen identifiziert," finds on the contrary, that they cannot develop their true beauty in such an artificial environment. Gabriele Schneider 188.

¹⁰⁶C.f. Gabriele Schneider's discussion, which also notes the dramatic and heightened effect of a representation in which life and art combine to convey meaning (185).

¹⁰⁷Gabriele Schneider 185.

¹⁰⁸Physical appearance as a marker of difference separating Jews from Germans, and as a potential inhibitor of assimilation, is a recurrent motif in *Jenny*: the description of Jenny as an oriental beauty in the opening sequence, which is coded both positively and negatively, depending on the speaker; Ferdinand Horn's racist comments cited above; Eduard's statement to Clara that if Jews weren't so obviously different in appearance from Germans, they would have been assimilated like the Jews in France, on the strength of their education. Gabriele Schneider discusses Jenny's and Eduard's attraction to Reinhard and Clara as identifiably German on the basis of external appearance (83). Stocksieker di Maio refers to Clara's reflection, "did Christ look like Eduard." (279)

¹⁰⁹Gabriele Schneider 186.

¹¹⁰Erlau also paints Jenny's portrait in the Rebecca costume, initially for Reinhard, but he decides to keep it when he confesses his love to Jenny, as he regards Reinhard as unworthy of her, and as he has put much of himself into it. The missing portrait then becomes a key element in the story of Jenny's betrayal which Therese relates to the Pfarrerin. The figure of

Jenny's performance of "Das Mädchen von Juda" similarly emphasises her outsider status. The song's thematisation of the Jews' lack of homeland also anticipates her later situation when Walter fights a duel to defend his right to remain within his social sphere and to admit her into it as his wife. His killing by a Baron symbolises the fact that he is cast out by a member of his own class. As his betrothed and the reason for the duel, Jenny is thus also symbolically cast out.

Her recital takes place in Clementine's salon during the Baden spa season. The shift from the familial environment shows that the stakes have risen. The salon of Clementine, the Geheimrätin von Meining, is part of the public sphere of Baden spa society in which public opinion is produced and circulated. Whereas Jenny's relationship with Reinhard played itself out within the borders of the protective familial environment, the proposed marriage with Walter, a son of one of Germany's oldest families, is not a private matter.

The salon environment is coded as threatening and racially discriminatory through a conversation Jenny overhears about her relationship with Walter. Like the rescue scene, the salon scene is preceded by a significant exchange that casts light on the events that follow. In this case, Jenny, her father, and Walter have had a chance meeting during the day with the newly-wed Steinheim. The latter emphasised the need to remain within class and race boundaries when contemplating marriage,¹¹¹ foreshadowing the anti-Semitism that would be directed against Jenny if she were to enter into a closer relationship with Walter. The conversation Jenny overhears takes place between an elderly woman wearing a "Stiftskreuz," which emphasises her conservative affiliations, and a young Austrian attaché to the

Rebecca stands as a signifier of Jenny's true identity in the face of Reinhard's attempts to mould her. Erlau also takes Jenny's painting seriously, and in so doing, grants her an identity which goes beyond that of Reinhard's betrothed, and the future pastor's wife.

¹¹¹Steinheim's reappearance in Baden has not been treated in the scholarship. It aggravates Jenny, and heightens Jenny's and Walter's awareness of the barriers society has imposed upon a union such as the one they are contemplating. Steinheim reveals his lack of education in a discussion of a production of *Nathan, der Weise* with Walter. However, his comments on the appropriateness of class differences and the need to maintain boundaries deeply affect Jenny and Walter. He remarks "wie tief das Gefühl für Standesunterschiede im Menschen begründet ist, das man einen leeren Wahn schilt. 'Doch dieser Wahn ist uns ins Herz gelegt, wer mag sich gern davon befreien', besonders wenn es darauf ankommt, eine Ehe zu schließen, in der vollkommene Gleichheit der Verhältnisse die erste Bedingung zum Glücke ist?" (J 252)

ambassadorial entourage at the Federal Diet. When asked if the rumours of a possible "Mißheirat" between the daughter of the Jewish banker and Walter are true, the attaché replies:

Graf Walter gefällt sich allerdings darin, der Rotüre¹¹² gegenüber den Liberalen zu spielen, indes, von der Torheit, die Sie ihm zutrauen, ist er sicher fern. Die Meier ist hübsch und pikant. Die Galanterie eines Grafen wird ihrer Eitelkeit schmeicheln und Sie wissen, die Freiheit des sogenannten BADELEBENS entschuldigt manches! (J 256)

The overheard conversation forces her to acknowledge the strength of her feelings for Walter, and also to recognise the pressure which would be brought to bear to prevent their union.

In this environment, Jenny's choice of a song expressing a young Jewish woman's lack of homeland is a provocative political statement. She uses the weapons at her disposal to strike back at those who would discriminate against her on the grounds of race. In doing so, she demonstrates how far she has come since she left school because she could not deal with the ways in which her otherness defined her social status and relationships with Christian Germans. Moreover, the act of singing this song dovetails with her brother's activism. Schneider notes parallels between Eduard and key figures of the Vormärz movement for Jewish emancipation such as Johann Jacoby and Gabriel Riesser.¹¹³ Significantly, the latter's well-known slogan was: "Wir sind entweder Deutsche oder wir sind heimatlos."¹¹⁴ In the context of the parliamentary attempts to once again ghettoise the Jews in Prussia,¹¹⁵ by

¹¹²I.e. "Nichtadelige." Helmer 279, fn. 256.

¹¹³Gabriele Schneider 83, 85.

¹¹⁴Kampmann 174. According to Kampmann, Riesser was, like Eduard, an assimilationist, a "deutsch[er] Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens." Kampmann raises the potential problems of this position in the light of what is then considered to constitute Jewishness, but emphasises the liberal humanist position of Riesser, saying: "also nicht für die Rechte des jüdischen Volkes und für die Glaubensinhalte seiner Religion, sondern für das allgemeine Menschenrecht auf freie Betätigung im Staate und auf freie Glaubensentscheidung führt Gabriel Riesser seinen Kampf, das gibt ihm die unerschütterliche Sicherheit und das hohe Pathos (174).

¹¹⁵Lewald's identification of *Jenny* with the question of Jewish emancipation in Biedermeier Prussia occurs in the third volume of her autobiography, *Befreiung und Wanderleben*. She presents the second novel as an explicitly political intervention, a reaction, using the only means available to her, to the political activity ensuing upon successive acts of legislative oppression, which inspired a renewed struggle for Jewish emancipation: "Der Stoff, den ich mir für die "Jenny" ... gewählt hatte, war damals ein viel besprochenes, denn es war unverkennbar, daß die Regierung, unter dem Vorgeben, die Verhältnisse der Juden selbständig festzustellen, nur eine scharfe Absonderung derselben von den Christen beabsichtigte. Die Juden sahen das mit Besorgnis. Sie traten allerorten mit Wort und Schrift für ihre Sache auf, und die Aufgeklärten aller Bekenntnisse stellten sich auf ihre Seite. Die Emanzipation der Juden war von der einen Seite, die Unterdrückung derselben war von der andern ein

instituting King Friedrich Wilhelm IV's promotion of the concept of the "christlicher Staat,"¹¹⁶ Jenny's song had to be particularly provocative for the conservative members of the salon gathering. In her autobiography Lewald specifies that *Jenny* was an intervention, using the only means available to her, into the political debate about the emancipation of Jews in Biedermeier Prussia (*ML III*, 36).

In acting politically and in displaying obvious emotion, Jenny literally makes a public spectacle of herself. There is "[k]ein lautes Zeichen des Beifalls" (*J* 257), and while some are moved, others "sahen sich befremdet an" (*J* 257). Some consider her "abstoßend und stolz, zu ernsthaft und selbstbewußt für ein Frauenzimmer" (*J* 258). The "Stiftsdame's" comments focus unfavourably on Jenny's ethnicity, but she attacks Jenny primarily for her lack of femininity, finding:

es zeugt immer von wenig Erziehung, sich und seine Gefühle so preiszugeben. Ich will gestehen, es mag unangenehm genug sein, dem jüdischen Volke anzugehören, indes ist es doch nicht unsere Schuld, daß Fräulein Meier eine Jüdin ist und sich dessen schämt, und ich begreife nicht, mit welchem Rechte sie sich in der Gesellschaft in einer Weise gehen läßt, die für meine Nerven zum Beispiel viel zu stark ist. (*J* 258)

This negative critique implies that Jenny shows an appalling lack of control and femininity in drawing attention to her ethnicity. The negative response from political conservatives, and the general ambivalence towards Jenny's recital demonstrates that there is a large degree of social resistance to the idea that Jews may find their "Heimat" in German society, but that opinion is nevertheless split.

After this experience, Jenny resolves she must renounce Walter, not wishing to involve him in "den Kampf ..., den sie als Jüdin gegen die Meinung der Menge zu bestehen hatte." (*J* 260) Jenny thus voices similar concerns to those articulated by her father when Walter approached him to ask for Jenny's hand.¹¹⁷ Walter's uncle also finds that Walter would be

Gegenstand lebhafter Erörterungen" (*ML III*, 36) The separation of Jews from Christians was proposed by King Friedrich Wilhelm, who in 1842 clarified his policy on Jews by stating that future legislation must seek to maintain "das Besondere im Dienste des Judentums ... und es seiner inneren Durchbildung überlassen, ohne es in das Leben des christlichen Staates hineinzuziehen." Kampmann 169.

¹¹⁶Kampmann 193-205.

¹¹⁷Although Herr Meier stresses his respect for Walter, he emphasises that the latter's family would view the union as a *mésalliance*: "Aber die gräfliche Waltersche Familie könnte vielleicht die Tochter eines Juden nicht der Ehre würdig erachten, welche Sie ihr mit Ihrer Wahl erzeugen." (*J* 243)

making an enormous sacrifice in marrying her, and indeed states that the Walter family would find "die Tochter eines Juden nicht der Ehre würdig" (J 243): "Fräulein Meier wagt viel, indem sie sich auf diese Höhe stellt, und Du wirst Mut und Energie brauchen, um sie dort zu halten." (J 259)

Jenny herself is preoccupied with the idea of renunciation from a much earlier point, when she first realises Walter loves her.¹¹⁸ Her concerns are about her suitability for this marriage on the one hand, and about the loss of freedom on the other:

Mir fehlt die Fähigkeit, mich in dem Leben eines andern aufgehen zu lassen. Meine Existenz ist eine fest bestimmte, in sich abgeschlossene. (J 247)

She thus worries about her divergence from the feminine ideal, and whether she would be judged as having "ehrgelzige Motive." She finds that her freedom and independent lifestyle since the failure of her engagement do not predispose her for marriage, and worries because she does not have the passion for Walter that she had felt for Reinhard. She confides in Clementine that she cannot be the conventional wife, nor can she love in the same way as the first time (J 247). The narrator glosses her fears about the legitimacy of this second love as "Scham vor sich selbst, daß sie einer zweiten Neigung fähig sei" (J 248). This "Scham" is explicable in the context of the requirement of ideal womanhood that a woman only love once, as drawn out in the discussion in the first section of this thesis. Clementine legitimises Jenny's feelings, both by giving her permission to have them, and also by saying that love is different at different stages of life. She cries: "So liebe Walter anders!" (J 247) Moreover, Clementine also emphasises Jenny's mistaken internalisation of a double standard which sets different expectations for women and men in this arena: "Auch du bist sicher nicht das erste Mädchen, das ihn die Liebe lehrt." (J 247)

Clementine's history also highlights the fact that Lewald's novels present different kinds of renunciation engaged in for different reasons. At one point, when Jenny refers to Clementine's own struggle between "Pflicht und Liebe" (J 246), Clementine seems inclined to view Jenny's situation as a replication of her own: "Du sollst es auch kennenlernen, das Glück,

¹¹⁸"Sie wußte nun, daß er sie liebte, und obgleich er ihr sehr wert war, war ihr seine Liebe nicht willkommen." (J 242)

seine Neigung dem Glücke eines andern zu opfern, und darin ein neues, besseres Glück zu finden." (J 246) However, she quickly retracts this, stating "von dem Opfer einer Neigung ist ja hier die Rede nicht!" (J 246) Jenny intends to renounce Walter in order to withdraw from the developing relationship which she perceives as being on the boundary of social acceptability.

Jenny's final capitulation to her emotions and to Walter occurs, significantly, at the precise moment in which her intellect is no longer dominant, and in which she becomes "schwach genug, meine [ie her MV] Vernunft zu verleugnen" (J 247). Awakening into consciousness after a carriage accident in which she is hit on the head,¹¹⁹ she rests on his chest, crying. This movement is read as "das Geständnis, welches sie demselben [ie Walter MV] In ihrer Schwäche gemacht, als sie Ruhe suchend, sich an ihn wie an ihren anerkannten Beschützer lehnte." (J 264) Jenny thus only succumbs to her feelings for Walter when her intellect is momentarily 'switched off' by the force of the accident.¹²⁰

Walter's increasing love and respect for her, and his desire to marry her validates Jenny's independence of mind and other characteristics which cause her to deviate from the ideal of womanhood. Jenny's sketch of two intertwined trees of equal height and strength to illustrate her and Walter's shared views on what constitutes an ideal marriage partnership¹²¹ stands in stark contrast to the allusion to the standard image of the oak and the ivy evoked to symbolise the nature of her relationship with Reinhard. The new metaphor emphasises the extent of her development following the broken engagement, and the radical nature of her partnership with Walter.

¹¹⁹Gabriele Schneider similarly acknowledges Jenny acting counter to the decision of her intellect, referring to the role chance, "symbolisiert durch Fahrzeuge, Räder, die an das Rad der Fortuna erinnern" and dramatic theatrical effects play in Lewald's early novels (177).

¹²⁰Blackwell, in contrast, considers *Jenny* "stylistically sound up to her engagement to the Graf, which is overwrought, unmotivated, and sentimentalised." Blackwell 272.

¹²¹Walter, in a conversation with Jenny in which he expresses optimism for the future, hopes that society will soon be rid of "eine Menge veralterter, stereotyp gewordener Bilder ... von denen viele mir geradezu verkehrt erscheinen und schädlich wirken." (J 227) One of these is "Das Bild des Baumes und des Schlingkrautes für die Ehe." (J 227) In response, Jenny sketches "[z]wei kräftige, üppige Bäume ... dicht nebeneinander, frisch und fröhlich emporstrebend, mit eng verschlungenen Ästen" (J 227).

However, although their relationship presents the possibility of radical change on the level of interpersonal heterosexual relations, the reactions of others of Walter's class demonstrate that society in general does not accept their prospective union. The Baron whom Walter challenges to a duel refers to Jenny in derogatory terms when he learns the identity of Walter's bride-to-be. He states: "Ach, scherzen Sie nicht, ein Judenmädchen?" (J 270) and persists in the same tone when Walter asks why the union should be considered unusual. Walter is characterised as a man with deeply-felt liberal views,¹²² and Walter's challenger clearly has an interest in preserving the status quo. Walter's intention to marry Jenny challenges a feudal order based on the purity of blood-lines, an order which is already under threat and on the defensive in the political climate of the 1830s.¹²³ In this context, the ostensible erasure of class and race which permits Eduard, by virtue of his education, to be a member of a "Burschenschaft" is not symptomatic of a broader liberalisation. Schneider has also drawn attention to the fact that Jews were in fact not permitted to be members of a "Burschenschaft,"¹²⁴ describing Eduard's fictional membership as a utopian element in the narrative. Walter's and the Baron's duel thus reflects the true nature of the status quo.

As stated above, Walter's death in the duel symbolically reflects his social outcast status according to the more powerful members of his peer group. Walter and his family, who support the duel (J 273) are in the minority. Jenny's death from a broken heart moments after Walter's final breath shows that the two were as one in love and therefore in death: "Und

¹²²According to Gabriele Schneider, Walter's pride in his oaks ("Ich bin so glücklich, in meinem Park die herrlichsten Eichen zu besitzen") confirms his liberal tendencies. It identifies him as a "Despotenhasser" wie die Anhänger des Göttinger Hain, die sich im Eichenhain versammelten, denen der Wald aus Eichbäumen, die schon im bardischen Gesang als "gutes Holz gegen Tyrannen" ihren festen Platz hatten, "das Bild für den contract social autonomer Personen" war. Der Wald wird mit der Republik verglichen: "Eine Republik [...] gleicht einem sorgfältig gewarteten Forste. Jeder Stamm desselben strebt mit seiner ganzen Kraft empor und streckt seine mächtigen Äste so lang, so dichtbelaubt empor oder hinab, als sein innerer Trieb vermag." [omission in original MV] (189)

¹²³Koselleck provides extensive discussion of ways in which the feudal order regarded itself as threatened by social change, and how the nobility tried to shore up its position. See Reinhard Koselleck, *Preußen zwischen Reform und Revolution: Allgemeines Landrecht, Verwaltung und soziale Bewegung von 1751-1848*, Industrielle Welt 7, 2nd. rev. ed. (Stuttgart: Klett, 1975); see following article for a summary of the previous reference: - - - , "Staat und Gesellschaft in Preußen 1815-1848." ed., Herbert Wehler, *Moderne deutsche Sozialgeschichte*, 5th ed. (Kiepenhauer: Köln, 1968) 55-84.

¹²⁴Gabriele Schneider 81, also 92, fn. 3.

mit einem Schrei des furchtbaren Schmerzes fuhr Jenny nach ihrem Herzen und fiel auf die Leiche des Bräutigams nieder." (J 272) In casting out Walter, German Christian society has also cast out Jenny. Their union is not possible in the present social context. That Jenny's death, on the cusp of such a marriage, is the indirect result of anti-Semitism, rather than of Jenny having been perceived to have overstepped gender boundaries, is a signal that one aspect of the utopian conditions the principal Jewish characters strive for in this novel is more achievable than the other. While German society may not be ready to accept Jenny as a member of one of the oldest noble families, some individuals, including a member of such a family, accept both her lack of conventional femininity and her race. Thus Walter represents an enlightened individual who recognises the need for change, and promotes Jewish assimilation.

Kontje, in contrast, reads Jenny's death as a twofold indictment of the possibility of "both a political utopia, where German Christians and Jews could participate equally in an enlightened, constitutional state, and a private utopia, which would enable men and women of different religious and social backgrounds to enter marriage as equal partners."¹²⁵ Kontje's definition of the private utopia focusses solely on the institutional status of marriage, omitting consideration of its private nature as a relationship between two individuals. In presenting Jenny's and Walter's successful egalitarian union on the personal level, Lewald reinscribes one aspect of the "doppelte Natur der Ehe" as conceptualised by Fichte.¹²⁶

The reading of the text in a contemporary review (February 1844) in the influential *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*¹²⁷ confirms the novel's essential pessimism with regard to Jewish integration. The critic praises the anonymous woman writer's skills, as well as the message he finds in the text. He views the theme of Jewish emancipation as

¹²⁵Kontje 159. Gabriele Schneider, like Kontje, also overlooks the significance of Jenny's achievements within the private sphere. She focusses solely on the novel's exposition of race relations in the public sphere, viewing Jenny's story as depicting "säkularisierte Konversion als Deklaration sozialer und ideeller/weltanschaulicher Zugehörigkeit (Jenny)." She concludes: "Die völlige Assimilation in der deutschen Gesellschaft des Vormärz bleibt dabei eine Utopie." (81)

¹²⁶See discussion above.

¹²⁷*Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*. Review, *Clementine, Jenny*. Nr.49, 18. Feb 1844, 193-195.

fundamental, and expresses the view that "we" are obliged, "aus Gesetzen der Humanität ... ihr Theilnahme zu widmen."¹²⁸ According to the critic, the text admonishes Jews, expressing the following "Lehre:"

sich selbst zu beschränken, auf das Ihnen nicht zustehende freiwillig Verzicht zu leisten, in ihrer abgegrenzten Sphäre zu bleiben und Verbindungen, Ehren, Ansprüche, Rechte nicht zu erstreben, die Ihnen den einmal feststehenden Verhältnissen nach doch nicht zugebilligt werden können.¹²⁹

Further, the critic finds that "der Roman sinkt in einem etwas verbrauchten, *obwohl hier ganz gerechtfertigten* Schluß zusammen. [emphasis added MV]"¹³⁰ The critic finds that the final words of the novel, Eduard's cry of battle at his sister's grave,¹³¹ "ist aber auch das einzige, das die Verf. direkt und offenbar für eine Sache ausspricht, die zu den Fragen des Tages gehört." Nevertheless, he asserts that the author, while thus acknowledging her own position, "überläßt ... dem Leser, ihre Lehre aus dem Roman selbst herauszulesen, und ihre Lehre gestaltet sich, wie gesagt, etwas anders."¹³²

My discussion has shown that the novel's pessimism regarding the socio-political emancipation of Jews and their integration into Christian German society is leavened by its depiction of Jenny's wide-ranging and successful challenge to the the sexual contract. The novel shows that the determination of woman's nature and social role in mid-nineteenth century Germany is the same in the Jewish as in the Christian community. Jenny's activism in the private sphere undermines the stereotypical association of women with the emotions by asserting her right to her intellectual convictions and belief system as well as an interest in politics. In her love relationships she challenges the subordinate role of women and the

¹²⁸"[D]ie gesellschaftliche Stellung der höhern Judenclasse und ihre Emancipation aus den Fesseln des Vorurtheils (sind) Grundstoff und Angel der Erzählung." Review, *Clementine, Jenny* 194.

¹²⁹Review, *Clementine, Jenny* 194.

¹³⁰Review, *Clementine, Jenny* 194. Gabriele Schneider cites from the same passage, but omits the following words: "*obwohl hier ganz gerechtfertigten*." Her quotation of the critic's words implies that the latter was making an aesthetic rather than a political judgement (91). Blackwell reads the "drastic endings and parallel plots" of *Jenny* and *Wally* as "manifestations of [the MV] struggle for forms to depict a new social reality beyond romance and belief." (272)

¹³¹Eduard cries: "Wir leben ..., um eine Zeit zu erblicken, in der keine solche Opfer auf dem Altare der Vorurteile bluten! Wir wollen leben, um eine freiere Zukunft, um die Emanzipation unsers Volkes zu sehen!" (J 273)

¹³²Both quotations, Review, *Clementine, Jenny* 195.

assumption that their identity is constituted through that of the male beloved. She successfully supersedes the relationship determined by the metaphor of the ivy and the oak with one determined by two trees of equal stature. In addition, Jenny's implementation of her own code of ethics enables her to challenge the regulatory authority of public opinion. In asserting her own code of conduct she exposes the hypocrisies of the behavioural code that sexualises women's activity outside the house. The figure of Jenny Meier thus represents a comprehensive challenge to the sexual contract, while her death following that of her lover in a duel shows the imbrication of the public and private spheres.

II.3.3. *Eine Lebensfrage.*

In contrast to *Jenny*, Lewald's third novel, *Eine Lebensfrage*, tells the story of a male protagonist. However, it is not a fiction of male development. Rather, both the primary and secondary narrative strands foreground the functioning of heterosexual relationships during a period of crisis, and examine the psyches of the individuals involved. The relationships of the love triangle, namely between Alfred and his estranged wife Caroline, and between Alfred and his beloved Therese, explore the intersections of adulterous love, marriage, the law and public opinion. The relationship between Sophie and Julian in the contrasting secondary narrative strand looks at the extra-judicial regulation of the extra-marital "Theaterintrigue." My discussion of these relationships from within the framework of the sexual contract contrasts the novel's exploration of the laws, social conventions and codes of conduct that regulate extra-marital sexual practice as well as marriage and divorce. The Fichte analysis above also informs my discussion of the novel's exposition of the regulatory impact of extra-judicial disciplinary mechanisms such as public opinion on individuals, and its differentiated presentation of the workings of a gendered and therefore double moral code that enforces sexual double standards. Lewald's text demonstrates that the regulation of these relationships, whether by means of externally imposed laws and conventions, or by internalised disciplinary mechanisms, supports the sexual contract. However, the novel's presentation of the individual characters shows that each conforms to, challenges, or exploits moral convention and the sexual double standard in different ways.

My discussion looks at ways in which the text breaks new ground in its depiction of the individual characters' interactions with social convention and the moral code, and in its depiction of the regulatory effect of public opinion and the role of morality in producing and reproducing the gender inequities of the time. The text provides a more sophisticated perspective on love, sex, and morality than suggested in critical readings to date. These have overlooked the importance of the secondary narrative strand and have failed to acknowledge the significance of public opinion as a social regulative. In addition, they have not recognised

the text's assertion both of the supreme importance of love as the basis for marital union, and its potentially transitory nature.

Lewald presents the novel as an intervention into the Prussian divorce law reform debate of 1842, stating that her promotion of divorce as an ethical act ("Es gibt Fälle, in welchen die Trennung einer Ehe eine hohe sittliche Tat sein kann!" (ML III, 111)) was inspired by an article in *Die Halle'schen Jahrbücher*.¹ In Lewald's view, her novel argues for the moral right to divorce when a union is no longer a marriage "im höhern Sinne des Wortes, das heißt: die durch gegenseitige Liebe und Wertschätzung nach allen Seiten förderliche Verbindung der Eheleute ..." (ML III, 214). While a conservative critic in 1845 states that "solchem Spiele mit dem Heiligen läßt sich nie eine sittliche Seite abgewinnen,"² more contemporary scholars tend to assess the political nature of Lewald's intervention positively.³ Many view the novel as providing a reasoned argument for divorce and as promoting the education of women, Möhrmann for instance arguing that the marriage of Caroline and Alfred demonstrates "daß die Befreiung der Frau nicht bloß ein feministisches Problem ist."⁴ A number also discuss the broader political implications of the proposed reforms. Kontje identifies Lewald's strategy as "link[ing] the personal freedom to divorce to the public welfare of the state, enlisting the conservative belief in the sanctity of marriage and the family in the defense of liberal divorce laws."⁵ Rheinberg and Schneider in turn discuss the institutionalisation of marriage and resultant loss of personal freedom that would result from the projected reforms.⁶ Rheinberg makes the additional point that the novel implicitly refutes the institutionalisation of marriage by the state in the projected law reform. She states that the

¹Steinhauer states that she searched the journal without finding the article referred to, and suggests that it must have been in another journal (69). Alfred defends the morality of divorce to Julian in similar terms to those used by Lewald in her autobiography: (L I, 138f) In Lewald's case, life imitated art, and shortly after writing her third novel she became embroiled in a similar situation through her developing relationship with Adolf Stahr. (ML III, 216-17)

²Review of *Eine Lebensfrage* in *Literaturblatt*, 21 November, 1845, No.119, 476.

³Burchardt-Dose is the exception, asserting that *Eine Lebensfrage* has no broader social or political relevance: "Das Thema gehört ... der Privatsphäre an und wird ohne Einbeziehung der gesellschaftlichen Implikationen anhand eines Dreiecksverhältnisses dargestellt" (302). See discussion in introduction, above.

⁴Möhrmann 140; Storz and Margaret Ward 267; Gabriele Schneider 155.

⁵Kontje 160.

⁶Rheinberg 112; Gabriele Schneider 157.

novel's arguments in favour of a flexible divorce law implicitly promote the idea of marriage as a contract which may be entered into and dissolved voluntarily.⁷ This is, of course, a direct contradiction of Savigny's doctrine of the "Natur' und Würde der Ehe als Institution."⁸

Lewald's text presents an alternative view of morality which depends on acknowledging the primacy of love as the basis for marriage. Both narrative strands emphasise that this is only possible if women are granted sexual and social autonomy. This involves the freedom to view their destiny as independent of men, and requires that women have access to education that would enable them to enact this freedom in a social context. The text's promotion of women's social and sexual equality in these areas presents a far-reaching challenge to the sexual contract, which undermines the definition of women as sexually available and subordinate to men at all times.

II.3.2.i. Trio.

As noted above, the principal narrative strand presents the problems of marriage as an institution that is a captive of the political interests of the church and the state, contrasting these with an ideal of marriage as a framework that enables individual happiness. My discussion of the inter-relationships between Alfred, Caroline and Therese focusses on these aspects where relevant, but looks more closely at the ways in which these relationships are presented as having been determined by extra-judicial codes of conduct that support the sexual contract. I also examine the extent to which these can be viewed as disciplinary mechanisms internalised by the respective individual.

Alfred's and Caroline's marriage raises issues relevant to the way behavioural codes which support the sexual contract determine the fate of individuals. While Alfred's and Caroline's marriage has been viewed by Lewald scholars as a union Alfred enters into for reasons of moral obligation,⁹ or is mistakenly assessed as a marriage of convenience,¹⁰ or even regarded

⁷Rheinberg 112.

⁸See discussion above: I.2. Fichte's "Family Law" as an expression of the sexual contract.

⁹Gabriele Schneider 156.

¹⁰Storz and Margaret Ward 267.

as a marriage into which Alfred was coerced,¹¹ Alfred's renunciation of Therese in order to fulfil his duty and marry Caroline has been overlooked. Alfred marries Caroline after their nine-year engagement, acknowledging responsibility for having ruined her chances on the marriage market, but at the same time renouncing his desire for Therese. I will return to this point. The lengthy engagement, the marriage, and to some degree his reluctance to divorce Caroline, are all conditioned by the terms of his uncle's will, and are a product of his compliance to these terms.¹² While the intricacies of the uncle's will are a fictional device manufactured to demonstrate how force of circumstance may mean that a male individual who consistently acts in a morally sound manner may find himself in need of a divorce, this strand of Lewald's fable also demonstrates the accompanying pitfalls for a woman whose destiny is bound to a man in marriage.

Although Alfred no longer loves her, he acknowledges responsibility for the long engagement, marrying Caroline from a sense of duty ("Ich habe das Unrecht begangen, ein Mädchen zu meiner Frau zu machen, die ich nicht mehr liebte" (L II, 179)). He thus acts in accordance with his own code of ethics, and against Julian's pragmatic advice to provide her with a large settlement instead. While Julian's reduction of the relationship to a commercial transaction dehumanises Caroline, Alfred's actions, which seek to preserve his own and Caroline's self-respect, result in a desecration of marriage. In a social environment in which women are reduced to chattels of marriage, neither Julian's proposed course of action, nor Alfred's, can adequately recompense Caroline for her loss. Alfred and Caroline fall in love at nineteen, but during the waiting period Alfred develops intellectually and as a writer, and also forms a close friendship with Therese. Caroline, in contrast, stays at home attending to the needs of her father, and loses youth and nubility. By the time they marry, "der mädchenhafte, jugendliche Reiz, der auch die weniger begabte Frauenseele liebenswürdig macht, (war) gänzlich entschwunden". (L I, 17) Caroline is condemned by the behavioural code that requires that a woman be seen to remain faithful to her first love, the "erste Liebe"

¹¹Möhrmann 140.

¹²The terms of the will and its three codicils are broad, and the church is given guardianship powers over Alfred and his heirs. Julian remarks to Alfred that the clergy is given "eine Art geistlicher Aufsicht über die Besitzer des Nachlasses" (L I, 163).

which Gutzkow polemicises against in his "Vorrede" to Schleiermacher's *Vertraute Briefe an die Lucinde*.¹³ The discussion of *Jenny* above has shown that social moral conventions make it difficult for women to have a love relationship with more than one man and retain their honour and desirability. Caroline's lack of marketability after the nine year engagement is, however, emphasised.

Caroline is also the victim of her lack of education, as noted by a number of scholars.¹⁴ Her primitive intellect and sensibility strongly contrast with Therese's intelligence, sensitivity and true womanhood. Lewald scholarship has reiterated the view of "sensitive" Alfred,¹⁵ "der tolerante, großzügige, sozial engagierte Schriftsteller,"¹⁶ who is "destroyed" by the "prosaische[n] Hausfrauenmentalität einer zur Ehe abgerichteten Bürgertochter."¹⁷ In contrast, Burchardt-Dose criticises Lewald's "Schwarzmalerei" in the presentation of Caroline,¹⁸ and Kontje proposes that the novel humanises Caroline by describing the pain she suffers on separation from her son.¹⁹ However, the novel does not in fact fully humanise Caroline,²⁰ even though there are isolated attempts to present her failings as the result of

¹³Gutzkow's criticisms focus on the lack of sexual freedom that results from the requirement that one's first sexual partner remains one's partner for life, and that legitimates sex only within marriage. However, his polemic also identifies the problems for women who are interested, "so wenig wie möglich Biographie zu haben und ihre Vergangenheit ohne Nachrede zu erhalten." Gutzkow, *Vorrede* xxxiii-xxxiv. In a society that defines women on the basis of their sexual functioning, and does not allow women to initiate sexual activity, the identification of a woman as belonging to one particular man is always already a sexual identification.

¹⁴C.f. Möhrmann 140; Storz and Margaret Ward 267; Gabriele Schneider 155.

¹⁵Möhrmann 140.

¹⁶Gabriele Schneider 156.

¹⁷Möhrmann 140; Gabriele Schneider's description is similar (156).

¹⁸Burchardt-Dose 302.

¹⁹Making the point that sons go to the father in the case of divorce according to the ALR, Kontje writes that "divorce may indeed be a highly moral deed in certain circumstances, but in this particular case, at least, the justifiable divorce leaves lasting scars on the divorcée...." (163).

²⁰As Alfred is due to leave her, taking Felix with him, Caroline produces "eine[r] jener Naturlaute, die der Wilde mit dem civilisirtesten Menschen gemein hat." (L I, 283-84) This is an extremely equivocal description, since her emotion is not attributed to her sensibility, but is described as a trait shared by all humans regardless of their degree of civilisation. It ends the first volume, and could arguably have been put there for (melo-)dramatic effect. Gabriele Schneider notes that although Lewald rejects sensationalism, she often uses "grelle Motive" to create liveliness, immediacy and tension at climactic points of the plot (177). Caroline is presented in unredeemably negative terms except during her face to face discussion with Therese, and even when Caroline expresses herself moderately or with a degree of insight, the narrator is quick to condemn her.

nurture rather than nature. At times, even the tempering of the character only serves to further indict Caroline. The narrator concedes that she is "nicht böse, aber roh und verdorben durch die unvermeidlichen Reibungen zwischen zwei Menschen, die sich so wenig verstanden, als diese Beiden." (L II, 284f) However, Caroline is clearly the one at fault: she is described not only as uneducated (L II, 186), but as belonging to a secondary class of human being, that of "Menschen von niedriger Stufe der Entwicklung" (L II, 186f). When Alfred makes a final attempt at reconciliation, appealing to Caroline's better instincts, her supreme fault is defined as a fundamental lack of feminine qualities. Specifically, she lacks the "Seelengröße" to do what is necessary to recapture her husband, and the capacity for self-abnegation which is necessary for final reconciliation, as the narrator writes: "Das einzige untrügliche Mittel ist gänzliche Selbstverleugnung, rückhaltloses Hingeben an das Leben des Mannes." (L II, 285-86) Arguably, the character of Caroline is crudely drawn so that her predicament does not detract from the reader's sympathy with Alfred and Therese.

The structural centre of the novel is its presentation of the lengthy *saga* of Alfred's separation and divorce.²¹ Alfred's initial separation from his wife turns into the desire for divorce once he reestablishes the friendship with Therese. However, he attempts a reconciliation in order to retain his estate and his son, as the terms of his uncle's will would cause him to lose both in the case of divorce.²² Alfred's personal wealth means his attempts at reconciliation are driven by his desire to administer the estate conscientiously, thus fulfilling his public duty, and by the desire to maintain the family inheritance for his son.²³ The second reconciliation attempt that follows the failure of the first is at Therese's behest. Alfred finally decides to divorce Caroline and relinquish the estate in order to keep his son and assert his independence. At the end of the novel, he and Felix are to convert to the Protestant

²¹Gabriele Schneider describes the process as incorporating "mehrere langwierige Stadien" (156).

²²A divorce would result in the uncle's estate reverting to the church. More significantly, the third codicil would in this case determine Alfred to be an unsuitable guardian, and Felix would become a ward of the church until his majority (L I, 239-244).

²³Alfred's wealth derives from factories he established, and from significant literary earnings (L I, 130). Commentators have emphasised various aspects of Alfred's dilemma, Kontje (163) and Sengle (II: 896) focussing on his public duty and persona as a landowner, and Burchardt-Dose on the love relationship with Therese (438, fn. 111). Kontje rechristens Alfred to "Albert" midway through his discussion of the novel (163).

faith. While the process focusses the narrative on the state's linking of morality with the proposed tightening of the liberal divorce laws of the ALR,²⁴ it can also be viewed as the depiction of Alfred's final emancipation from the ethos of renunciation. Gabriele Schneider provides a comprehensive contrastive analysis of Alfred's situation as it would be viewed in accordance with the existing legal code and the reform proposals, making clear the punitive cast of the latter.²⁵ I will summarise her pithy account, and then look more closely at Alfred's process of renunciation.

According to Gabriele Schneider, the new laws would not acknowledge Alfred's grounds for divorce, "Zanksucht und unüberwindliche Abneigung."²⁶ The reforms also propose that an attempt at reconciliation be made by a priest before the submission of a petition for divorce, which would confer greater power on the clergy than it already possesses. This scenario is rehearsed through the machinations of chaplain Ruhberg, who manipulates Caroline in order to gain Alfred's estate for the church.²⁷ Caroline's threat to divorce Alfred on the grounds of "boswilligen Verlassens" is prompted by the chaplain, and legitimate according to the ALR. According to the reform proposals, however, if Caroline wished to remain married, it could also result in Alfred's being forced to reinstate the marriage upon serving a prison sentence.²⁸ Ruhberg's slanderous suggestion of an adulterous affair between Alfred and Therese would increase the difficulties of divorce under the existing code, which would entitle Caroline to forbid Alfred to see Therese, and increase Caroline's settlement.²⁹ The reforms would in addition require both the adulterous spouse and the co-respondent to serve a "Gefängnis oder Zuchthaus" sentence of six weeks to one year, thus punishing both parties

²⁴In this context, Gabriele Schneider refers to "das Zusammenwirken von katholischer Kirche und restaurativer Gesetzgebung, die beide im Bestreben um den Erhalt des Status quo die Freiheit des Individuums einschränken" (169). While it is true that some of Alfred's difficulties are caused by the Catholic church, his uncle's will is the cause of others.

²⁵Gabriele Schneider 155-157.

²⁶Gabriele Schneider 156.

²⁷Gabriele Schneider 156.

²⁸Gabriele Schneider 157.

²⁹Gabriele Schneider 157.

equally without regard to gender.³⁰ The adulterers would also be forbidden to subsequently marry.³¹ While Ruhberg's slander would have potentially unpleasant consequences under the existing codification, the reforms would classify Therese as a common criminal.

Alfred's compliance with the terms of the will, and his first two attempts to renounce Therese, occur despite his much-quoted statement that: "Ich hasse alle Entsagungstheorien. Ich will besitzen, was ich liebe, es soll mein sein und müßte ich es der Welt abtrotzen" (L I, 161). Despite this assertion, Alfred's attempts to renounce Therese twice in the course of the narrative, together with his initial renunciation of her in order to marry Caroline, demonstrate that he, too, remains captive to codes of conduct which respectively enforce and advise renunciation. These are the moral code of the Catholic church, and the social moral code enforced by public opinion.

Alfred's case for divorce is paralleled by that of Madame Berendt, a victim of an arranged marriage, whose husband no longer lives with her and their children, but expects her to support his gambling and dissolute lifestyle.³² Her divorce application would also be invalid before a court acting according to the reforms (L II, 134). Where Alfred's case shows a financially secure man wishing to end an emotionally insupportable marriage entered into for the wrong reasons, Madame Berendt's story illustrates the possible destiny of a woman of little means and power who has had no control of her life. Her partnership in the marriage, however, requires her by law to obey the whims of her husband, and submit to his coarseness and bouts of drunkenness (L II, 125f). She is driven to the step of petitioning for divorce by the escalating violence of her husband's behaviour, which is directed against her daughters as well. The reforms would eliminate any chance of escape for women in such cases, and would rigidly enforce the destiny of women inscribed within the sexual contract. A romantic "sting

³⁰The reforms thus make provision for women to serve the more severe "Zuchthaus" sentence, demonstrating that their moral transgression casts them out of the protected feminine sphere.

³¹Gabriele Schneider 157.

³²Gabriele Schneider notes: "Der Roman [ie *Eine Lebensfrage*] weist eine deutliche Exempelstruktur auf: ... als weiteres Exempel dafür, wie unhaltbar die Reformvorschläge zur Verschärfung der Scheidungspraxis sind, wird der Parallele einer Frau geschildert, die sich, bevor es ihr die Gesetze unmöglich machen, aus der für sie unerträglichen Konvenienzehe mit einem "Spieler von Profession" (L II, 124) lösen will (169).

in the tail^a demonstrates that her story is a cautionary fable asserting the unpredictability of arranged marriage as a sound investment in a daughter's future. Her former beloved, judged by her parents as a poor marriage prospect, is in fact Justizcommissarius Weiß, working in the same court as Julian and Theophil. He happens to be in the courthouse and is told of the case by Theophil. Although his offer of pecuniary help is rejected by Julian, it is clear that he is interested in resuming contact with his former beloved.

II.3.2.1.b. Therese and Alfred; Therese and Caroline.

Therese's story of renunciation and self-abnegation is the reverse side of adultery. She exemplifies the behaviour of a woman who has fully internalised the moral code and exercises a strict disciplinary surveillance on herself. Her story reveals the mixture of self-discipline and fear that motivates such a woman to resist her sexual desire because of the resultant loss of propriety. Moreover, Therese's manipulation of the behavioural codes so that she may continue seeing Alfred, and her analysis of this behaviour, demonstrate both the perversion of desire and the perversion of female agency that result from adherence to these codes.

Therese thus cannot simply be dismissed as a colourless adjunct to Alfred.³³ Through her story, adultery is a present absence in the principal relationship in *Eine Lebensfrage*. However, in her struggle between love and propriety, the need to maintain propriety proves stronger than love for Alfred. Therese, the lover of a married man, may be viewed as the pendant to Otilie in Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*.³⁴ Otilie's immunity to attempts at socialisation in her early education and her continuing innocence³⁵ thus contrast with a

³³According to Burchardt-Dose, Therese "wirkt hausbacken und unemanzipiert und trägt damit die Züge, die Möhrmann nur bei der Ehefrau erkennt" (439, fn. 112).

³⁴The clearest parallel to Otilie is Agnes, who similarly requires tutoring in sexual mores, and is not aware of the intent behind Julian's suggestion that they read a passage from *Romeo and Juliet* together. Beyond the fact that both Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften* and *Eine Lebensfrage* are concerned with "Scheidungsproblematik," there are few direct parallels between them. As Gabriele Schneider argues, "die Personenkonstellation läßt sich nur bedingt übertragen" (158-161, quotation 158-159).

³⁵Friedrich Kittler's discussion of the pedagogical performances of Otilie and Luciane at the school for "höhere Töchter," where the pedagogical apparatus implements the Old Regime system of socialisation, contrasts Otilie as the representative of "bürgerliche Innerlichkeit," with Luciane, who embodies "feudale Repräsentation." He argues that the rules of this school do not know how to "organically" educate "den Organismus aller Organismen, die Frau" (263), and states that: "In öffentlichen Prüfungen kann eine Mutter

figure who is the utterly socialised model of propriety, aware of the complexities of "Schamhaftigkeit" and thus the interplay of sexual knowledge, innocence, propriety, and 'ideal' female behaviour.³⁶

Goethe's influence is also apparent in Therese's and Alfred's discussion of the concept of "Entsagung," as Möhrmann and Margaret Ward have shown. Ward rejects Möhrmann's assertion that Lewald's third novel presents "eine endgültige Absage an den Ethos der Entsagung,"³⁷ but acknowledges that Therese does free herself from this concept. However, she confers a more active role on Therese than is actually the case. Ward writes that Therese "rejects the concept of renunciation in favor of union with the man she loves, although that means he must divorce his wife."³⁸ This is echoed by Gabriele Schneider, whose reading emphasises Therese's decision against renunciation in favour of marriage to Alfred.³⁹ In fact, as discussed above, Alfred makes an independent decision to divorce Caroline in order to retain custody of his son as well as to gain the freedom to marry. It is interesting that Möhrmann and Ward focus exclusively on Therese's initial captivity to the ethos of renunciation, while constructing Alfred's relationship to it as one of challenge. Möhrmann writes that "Alfred will sich nicht mehr damit begnügen, auf die liebende Verelnigung im Jenseits zu warten, auf die Belohnung im Himmel zu spekulieren und die reine Idee über den realen Besitz zu stellen."⁴⁰ Ward, too, states that "Alfred, like the male characters in the

selbstredend nur durchfallen. Wie die Öffentlichkeit den Staatsdienern und die Staatsdienerschaft Männern vorbehalten bleibt, so die Intimität von Gefühl und Familie in genauer Komplementarität den Müttern" (264). According to Kittler, the statutes of the "Luisenstiftung" in Berlin, formulated two years after Goethe's novel was written, "erlauben im Namen pädagogischer Mütterproduktion "schlechterdings niemals öffentliche Prüfungen." Durch ihr Versagen beweist Ottilie also nur, wie notwendig solche neuen Statuten sind. Daß eine höhere Töcherschule ihre Preise an Mädchen vergibt, die eine Ottilie "überparlieren," ... war in der Epoche gelehrter Frauenzimmer denkbar; in der Epoche der Bildung ist es Profanierung. Um Diskurse hervorzurufen, darf die Frau nicht selber parlieren." Kittler, F.A., Bolz, *Modelle* 264.

³⁶See discussion above: I.2. Fichte's "Family Law" as an expression of the sexual contract.

Julian indeed contrasts Therese and Agnes in similar terms. He states: "man wird manchmal aller Civilisation müde und verlangt Natur," and he himself prefers the "Naturkind" Agnes (*L* II, 92), the naïf who most closely resembles Ottilie.

³⁷Margaret Ward 73; Möhrmann 139.

³⁸Margaret Ward 73.

³⁹Gabriele Schneider 160. Kontje focusses on the fact that "Therese ... has finally found happiness, having ... accepted [Alfred's] MV proposal" (162).

⁴⁰Möhrmann 139.

first two novels, is primarily intent on possessing the object of his love.⁴¹ However, as stated above, Alfred in fact renounces Therese three times, and both Caroline and Therese suffer as a result of his drawn-out emancipation from convention.

Discussion of a theatre performance by Sophie leads Therese and Alfred to discuss love and renunciation, as well as the role of public opinion and social convention in regulating love relationships. Sophie's role requires her to declare her undying passion for her unfaithful husband. She speaks "von ihrer glühenden Liebe, von der Unmöglichkeit, für einen Andern zu leben" (L I, 154).⁴² In the course of the conversation, Therese demonstrates that she has internalised the ideal of self-abnegation and the disciplinary code of public opinion. While Alfred finds that Sophie's role should have allowed her "etwas mehr Stolz ... den ungerechten Anschuldigungen gegenüber, die der Gemahl auf sie häuft" (L I, 157), Therese, in contrast, finds that Sophie exemplifies true womanly behaviour: "Stolz setzt Eigenliebe voraus und wahre weibliche Liebe ist ganz Hingebung, ganz Demuth." (L I, 158) She adds "Wie kann man Stolz empfinden, wo man in anbetender Liebe vor seinem Schicksal kniet." (L I, 158) This view of a woman's love as constituted by self-abnegation and of the beloved as determining a woman's destiny reveals Therese's motivational structure. It also demonstrates how her love for Alfred has determined her path. As she states when Theophil proposes to her, she views herself as fated to renunciation because the beloved is unattainable (L II, 314-15). It is clear that Therese can afford the luxury of such views since she is economically independent and, unlike Clementine, under no pressure to marry.⁴³ Therese's claim that true love is

⁴¹Margaret Ward 74.

⁴²Sophie's role mirrors her relationship with Julian and her belief that Julian is rejecting her because he is in love with Eva, whom he accompanies to the theatre. As in *Jenny Lewald* here uses performance to make allegorical reference to events occurring in the novel.

⁴³Therese contrasts her view of the pure expression of love with the view of most women, who simply desire "die einträgliche Stelle einer Hausfrau, das gesicherte Dasein einer solchen" (L I, 160). She does, however, note that this mentality is "die Schuld der weiblichen Erziehung und unserer mißgestalteten Verhältnisse" (L I, 160). Eva views the relationship between Therese and Julian as unnatural, preventing either of them from realising their social duty of marriage (L I, 66).

Julian's normally respectful treatment of Therese changes when she takes him to task about his transgression in taking Agnes to the ball. His response is: "Quäle mich nicht mit *Gouvernantenmoral*", and "[V]erschone mich mit Vorwürfen, die mir lästig sind, sie klingen zu *altjungferlich*. Gewöhne dir das nicht an [emphasis added, MV]." (L II, 115) When she thwarts his epicurean pursuit, even the beloved sister is shown her actual place in the female sexual pantheon, that of the sexless spinster.

defined by self-abnegation and self-sacrifice echoes Charlotte Stieglitz's ideal: "Jene Liebe, welche die Harkourt⁴⁴ uns zeigte, die einzig wahre, die will nichts für sich, als lieben dürfen, als leben oder sterben für den Geliebten!" (L I, 160) As I have shown, Charlotte's suicide reified this stereotype in her own life and death. Therese's adherence to this stereotype is coupled with the idealisation of the female capacity, granted to only a few women, "die göttliche Liebe zu fassen, mit der die Frauen des alten Testaments sprachen: "Herr! ich bin deine Magd." (L I, 159) Therese's view echoes that of her author.⁴⁵ Alfred, in response, expresses his hatred and rejection of "alle Entsagungstheorien," and asserts that true love cannot be simply an expression of the desire for self-abnegation, but is demanding as well. He counters as follows: "Glauben Sie, daß es eine wahre Liebe gibt, die nicht nach gänzlicher Vereinigung strebt?" (L I, 160)

In discussing the role of public opinion and social convention in regulating love relationships, Therese argues that women must practise renunciation if their love represents an infraction of the social moral code. She judges Sophie's declamation of her self-abnegatory love in the play as ideal. However, she adds that she herself could not articulate her desire in this way, since this would expose her to the public eye. She states: "[I]ch habe Furcht vor dem Urtheile der Menge; ich wäre untröstlich, müßte ich je einen Schritt thun, der die Augen fremder Leute auf mich zöge." (L I, 161) Therese assumes that the articulation of desire is a public act, foreshadowing her later refusal to admit her love to Alfred. This can be understood in terms of my discussion, in the first section of this thesis, of the sexualisation and thus stigmatisation of women who deviate from the norm imposed by the ideal. Therese has internalised this ideal to the degree that merely breaking her silence in speaking her desire to Alfred would involve her in an infraction of the moral code. Thus, although Therese loves passionately, she accepts silence. She finds women who challenge the norm threatening, and expresses her "dislike" of them in paradoxical terms, viewing their courage in transgressing

⁴⁴This spelling is used consistently in *Eine Lebensfrage* rather than the French "Harcourt" one might expect.

⁴⁵An entry in her journal *Gefühltes und Gedachtes* expresses Lewald's enthusiasm for this sentiment: "Wie schön sind manche Worte der Bibel! Wie schön ist's, wenn die Frauen des alten Testaments sagen: 'Herr! ich bin Deine Magd!' - Wie viel einfacher als das moderne: 'das Leben macht den Mann zum Unterschicksal des Weibes'" (24. Mai 1843, *Gefühltes* 3).

against the norm as born of the cowardly inability to adhere to it: "[I]ch mag die Frauen nicht, die den Muth haben, sich über Vorurtheile wegzusetzen; dieser Muth ist Feigheit in meinen Augen." (L I, 162) Significantly, Therese also views renunciation as an expression of the true self, stating: "Begreifen kann ich es, daß eine Frau aus Liebe so feig wird, nicht entsagen zu können, sich selbst untreu zu werden - vergeben kann ich es nie." (L I, 162) Therese's statements attest to her absolute submission to the order enforced by convention, to the point where these internalised behavioural codes in fact are constitutive of her identity. Her decision to marry Alfred and acknowledge her deepest desire thus requires a massive internal shift.

For much of the narrative, Therese embodies this ideal of self-abnegation and renunciation of desire according to the terms demanded by the conventional codification of the ideal woman. Her views are never challenged by the narrative. She is planning to avoid contact with Alfred by going on an extended trip when chance intervenes in the form of Alfred's triple decision to renounce the Catholic church, to divorce Caroline, and to marry Therese. However, the narrative subtly interrogates Therese's initial position through the presentation of the changing relationship between Sophie and herself. Therese's ability to accept Alfred's proposal represents a massive internal shift, as she does so despite the knowledge that her happiness is contingent on Caroline's unhappiness and the destruction of the latter's marriage and family, and therefore her life: "All Ihre [ie Therese's] Zweifel schwanden, sie fühlte sich erlöst und hätte mit dem Jubel der Hoffnung Alfred danken mögen, hätte nicht die Erinnerung an Caroline ihre Freude getrübt, auf deren zerstörte Ehe sich der Tempel ihres Glückes gründen sollte." (L II, 370)

Therese's views and the vehemence of their expression are more readily understood when considered in the context of the symbolic status of female sexuality at the time as the embodiment of public morality. The female co-respondent in an adulterous relationship defies public opinion, and faces social ostracism in a society in which the linking of marriage and female morality is such that in the oft-cited doctrine of marriage which served as the basis for the reforms of the ALR, "die von Savigny betonte Stittlichkeit der bürgerlichen Ehe ... 'nur

die Frauen meint, ja sich ganz ausdrücklich gegen sie richtet."⁴⁶ Savigny's discussion of adultery in his "Revision des Entwurfs des Strafgesetzbuches von 1843" shows that female adultery is the point at which the link between marriage and female morality becomes most visible in the eyes of the law. In addition, he invokes laws of nature to support placing sole responsibility for social morality on women, and exonerating male adultery.⁴⁷ His view of the greater gravity of a woman's adultery and the linking of a woman's honour with her sexual probity replicates Fichte's views, discussed in Part One of this thesis. Like Fichte, Savigny too invokes public opinion and the natural order as the legitimating authorities of this view:

Sowohl bei den Berathungen der Kommission des Staatsraths, als im Staatsrath, ist diese mit der allgemeinen Meinung im Volk übereinstimmende Auffassung der Sache gebilligt worden, und es erscheint nothwendig, im Gesetz den Unterschied, welcher die Geschlechter trennt, auch fernerhin anzuerkennen.⁴⁸

Therese's awareness of public opinion on the matter of female propriety is contrasted with Alfred's complete lack of awareness of the implications for her if she were to succumb to his attempts to persuade her to articulate her love for him.

On his return to Berlin after the first failed reconciliation attempt with Caroline, Alfred, who has also decided he will not divorce his wife, attempts nevertheless to persuade Therese to at least tell him she loves him. She refuses in terms that constitute an admission of her love, stating that if she did as he asked, then "Wir müßten uns trennen ohne Hoffnung, uns wiedersehen zu dürfen." (L II, 51)⁴⁹ Practised in renunciation, she successfully hides her love for him: "Theresens Selbstbeherrschung täuschte ihn und that ihm wehe, denn er ward irre an ihr, an sich selbst." (L II, 51) Just before Alfred's return to Berlin, Therese confides her love for him to Julian, who responds: "Ihr Frauen, gewohnt, euch zu beherrschen, bezwingt euch leichter als der Mann, der sich die Verhältnisse zu schaffen verlangt." (L II, 40) However, Therese's reflections after this scene, which lead her to

⁴⁶Gerhard, *Verhältnisse* 174. See also discussion above: I.2. Fichte's "Family Law" as an expression of the sexual contract.

⁴⁷Savigny, "Revision des Entwurfs des Strafgesetzbuches von 1843, Berlin, 1845, cited in Gerhard, *Verhältnisse* 451.

⁴⁸Savigny, "Revision des Entwurfs des Strafgesetzbuches von 1843, Berlin, 1845, cited in Gerhard, *Verhältnisse* 452.

⁴⁹The verbalisation of her love would also be akin to adultery. The fact that Therese in effect reveals her feelings by saying this is a stylistic weakness of the text, as her motivational structure would not allow her to reveal her feelings at this point.

conclude that she has transgressed against her own personal ethical code, in fact constitute a critique of the "Sittenkodex."⁵⁰ She finds that "Sie, die so ernst nach Wahrheit strebte, hatte sich zu einer Unwahrheit entschlossen" (L II, 55). Paradoxically, her refusal to admit her love to Alfred, which would entail the admission of adulterous feelings, allows her to continue a relationship with him:

Habe ich ihm nicht wehe gethan, mich selbst zur Lüge erniedrigt, um das Glück seiner Gegenwart zu genießen? - Eine glühende Schamröthe überdeckte ihr Gesicht, das sie weinend in ihre Hände stützte. (L II, 56)

The blush signals the duplicity of Therese's actions, which enable her to maintain her propriety in terms of the moral code while continuing to see Alfred.

Therese's actions and reflections assume broader relevance when chaplain Ruhberg's slanderous newspaper accusation appears. The claim that Therese has seduced Alfred and the two are conducting an affair affects not only Therese's and Alfred's honour, but also potentially implicates Julian, as Therese's male guardian.⁵¹ Julian contends they cannot be affected by Ruhberg's slander, saying:

Mein Leben und das deine wage ich zu vertreten vor uns selbst. Wir haben nach unsrer besten Ueberzeugung, nach den Gesetzen gelebt, die wir als recht erkannten, mehr kann Niemand thun. (L II, 150)

Julian makes this statement without irony at a point at which he is trying to extricate himself from his relationship with Sophie, as is discussed below. The situation highlights the gendered nature of the double moral code, as he stresses the need for aggressive preventative action to preserve Therese's reputation, stating: "[D]ie Ehre einer Frau muß durch keinen Verdacht angetastet werden; eine Frau muß auch den Schein eines Tadels zu vermeiden suchen." (L II, 151f) While there is no suggestion that Julian's reputation would be threatened by his relationship with Sophie, even the barest insinuation of impropriety could damage Therese.

⁵⁰According to Keim, the consistent theme of Lewald's first three novels is the suppression of one's desire in order to fulfil one's duty according to the bourgeois "Sittenkodex." She states this motivates Clementine, Clara Horn und Eduard Meler in *Jenny*. Similarly, in *Eine Lebensfrage* "[d]ie Darstellung der Liebe und der Frau ist aber auch noch hier die bekannte des alten weiblichen Geschlechtsideals" (246).

⁵¹.Therese states: "daß du beschimpft wirst durch mich, o das ertrage ich nicht" (L II, 149).

Alfred's and Julian's diametrically opposed strategies for defusing the situation reveal the latter's acute awareness of the power and relevance of public opinion. Julian insists on Alfred returning to live with Caroline in order to put a stop to gossip and save Therese's honour. Alfred, who is oblivious to "das Urtheil der Menge," had thought he could protect Therese by marrying her, an action that would have confirmed belief in the slander, as Julian points out.⁵² Alfred's initial rejection of Julian's plan highlights the hypocrisy entailed in preserving his and Therese's reputations ("Ich soll dem falschem Urtheil der Menge genugthun und mich selbst verachten müssen, wenn ich in den unwürdigsten Ketten liege" (L II, 158).

While Julian is with Alfred, Caroline forces her way into Therese's rooms, and forcefully puts her case to 'the other woman.' This scene further increases Therese's discomfort at her manipulation of social convention, and Caroline's directness forces her to consider the ethics of her actions as they concern Alfred's family. In this scene, as in the entire narrative, the narrator continues to present Caroline negatively, while presenting Therese in a positive light. Therese, embodying "die Würde einer edlen Seele, die Ruhe wahrer Weiblichkeit" (L II, 161), is contrasted with the vulgar Caroline, who "vor Zorn erglühend, in leidenschaftlicher Unruhe, fast erlag unter der Last ihrer überreichen Toilette" (L II, 161). Despite the narrator's negative commentary, Caroline puts her case with increasing dignity, and displays an empathy uncharacteristic of the character's presentation up to that point in the narrative. Although she initially blames Therese for having taken Alfred's love from her even before their marriage, Caroline is moved by Therese's emotion to concede that she is also responsible for the state of the marriage. However, she asks Therese to give up Alfred. Therese, who adheres to the same moral code as that upon which Caroline bases her appeal, and who has come to regard her own actions as hypocritical, is particularly vulnerable to the moral underpinnings of Caroline's argument.

Caroline's figuration of herself as the wronged wife, and of Therese as the aggressor who stole her husband shocks Therese by presenting her in an unaccustomed light: "Der Gedanke,

⁵²Julian's plan prevents Alfred from playing into Ruhberg's hand, thwarting the latter's plans to acquire Alfred's estate for the church by forcing a divorce (L II, 155-57).

daß man ihrem Verhältniß zu Alfred eine falsche Deutung geben könne, war ihr bis zu diesem Tage nie gekommen." (L II, 164f) Paradoxically, this shock enables her to acknowledge her feelings and her true desire for the first time, making her realise that she wants more than friendship with Alfred. She is thus finally able to emotionally accept his assertion that true love desires complete union. However, she is susceptible to Caroline's insistence on the primacy of marriage, family, and motherly love over an illicit and immoral love which transgresses religious laws. Caroline argues:

Ich glaube, daß Sie ihn lieben, aber was ist Ihre Liebe gegen die Rechte einer Frau? Was ist ein unerlaubtes Verhältniß gegen eine Ehe? Was sind Ihre Ansprüche gegen die meinen? Sie opfern einen Liebhaber, der Sie nicht lieben darf, der eine schwere Sünde damit begeht an Frau und Kind; ich soll meinen Mann und mein Kind verlieren. O, Sie wissen nicht, was Mutterliebe ist! Sie wissen nicht, wie schwer Sie sich an mir vergehen!" (L II, 166f)

Caroline is the only one to argue her case, as the narrator immediately comments: "Vor der unedeln Ausdrucksweise Carolinens zog sich das Herz der armen Therese krampfhaft zusammen Daß eine Frau wie diese ihr solche Vorstellungen machen durfte, das machte sie sehr elend." (L II, 167) The narrator clearly insists on the primacy of true love above the institution of marriage, but Therese's internalised moral code requires that she relinquish Alfred. It is interesting that Lewald's text allows Therese to acknowledge the moral ambivalence of her actions to herself, but that she still feels superior to Caroline, and can view Caroline's behaviour as incorrect. Therese's reaction underlines the strategic significance of silence and the unspoken. In speaking the unspeakable, and thus insisting on a moral breach where none is apparent in terms of moral convention, Caroline herself asserts her lack of social and feminine grace.

When Therese next sees Alfred, and attempts to persuade her to admit her feelings for him, she maintains her silence in order to maintain her sense of propriety:

[S]ie wollte ihm sagen, daß sie ihre gegenseitige Neigung, ihr Verhältnis für ein strafbares halte; aber das hieße ihm gestehen, daß sie ihn liebe, daß sie auf die Zukunft unbewußt Hoffnungen gebaut, vor denen sie jetzt erröthete. (L II, 171)

As he embraces her, Therese's "Stimme ihres Gewissens" intervenes, "mächtig wie dröhnender Posaunenschall am Tage des Gerichts" (L II, 173f). She breaks free without making the potentially adulterous admission that would commit her to eternal damnation.

Instead, she claims she cannot be at peace with the consciousness "daß mein Glück auf den Trümmern Ihrer Ehe gegründet wird und daß Ihre Frau der Stunde flucht, die uns verbindet" (L II, 176). Therese's request that Alfred renounce her ("lassen Sie uns entsagen" (L II, 176)), return to his wife, and return their son to his mother, is made as a request to take "den Fluch der Schuld von uns" (L II, 176).

By the end of the novel, Therese's increasing respect for Sophie gives her insight into her own motivational structure, and allows her to acknowledge that her initial reluctance to act on her feelings for Alfred was based on self-interest and fear of public opinion. Therese expresses her insight to Sophie as follows:

O! wie viel wahrer, edler und besser bist du,⁵³ als ich, die ich aus selbstsüchtiger Scheu vor dem Urtheil einer kalten Menge nicht thue, was meine Pflicht ist! - Was du gefehlt gegen die Sitte, wie gering erscheint mir das gegen das Unrecht, das ich begehe!
(L II, 360)

Therese's insight validates Sophie's behaviour as moral, and demonstrates the shift she has undergone in the course of the narrative. Therese is able to acknowledge the importance of her love and later enter into a relationship with Alfred even while acknowledging the hurt felt by Caroline.

II.3.2.II. Duo: Sophie and Julian.

The presentation of Sophie's and Julian's erotic liaison, which is neither a fiscal exchange such as concubinage or prostitution, nor a form of courtship leading to marriage, demonstrates that such an affair is in fact just as integral a part of the social fabric, and is equally subject to the regulative effect of public opinion and the moral code. Moreover, the text shows just how tightly regulated such affairs are, and also, that two separate, gendered moral codes obtain. Disadvantaging women while advantaging men, regulation according to these codes reproduces the conventions which deem a woman's honour to be contingent on her sexual probity, and a man's largely on his conduct of professional relationships in civil

⁵³Lewald made small but significant changes in the second edition of the novel. Therese addresses Sophie with the formal "Sie." Lewald also changes "was meine Pflicht ist" to "was mein Herz mich heißt," thus softening Therese's infraction of the moral code. See Fanny Lewald, *Eine Lebensfrage*, vol. x of *Gesammelte Werke* (Berlin: Janke, 1872) 243, cited by Margaret Ward 74.

society. The present reading of the relationship examines the novel's depiction of the means by which such regulation is enacted and enforced, and secondly, suggests ways in which the novel effects a challenge to aspects of this ideology.

This secondary narrative strand has received relatively little scholarly attention so far.⁵⁴ My reading shows that it supports the promotion of the primacy of love in the first strand. Thus Sophie is presented positively as a woman who dares live her love and acknowledge her passion in contestation of the bourgeois moral code. Sophie is presented as having adopted the ideal of free love as a form of ethical protest against the multiple hypocrisies of bourgeois marriage practice. However, from the conventional perspective represented by Julian and Alfred, the relationship is no more than a "Theaterintrigue" of Julian's, one of many. His status as an inveterate sexual epicure is asserted early in the narrative, and he cynically exploits existent conventions governing such extra-marital sexual liaisons. The clash between Sophie's ideal of free love, and Julian's practice of sexual epicureanism demonstrates that the freedom she seeks for herself as a woman is already granted to men within the existing moral code. Moreover, it emphasises that the social place of women engaging in such relationships is also pre-determined. In attempting to claim equal sexual freedom with men on moral grounds, Sophie contests "the writ of the law of male sex-right" as identified by Pateman, the fundamental rule of the sexual contract that determines male ownership of women's bodies in both the public and the private spheres.⁵⁵ She thus contests an already colonised space.

II.3.2.II.a. Julian.

Sophie's and Julian's liaison is introduced in a conversation between Alfred, the voice of male propriety and integrity, and Eva, Julian's cousin. Eva's comments emphasise the 'visible

⁵⁴Scholars have tended to focus on the significance of the individual characters for Alfred and Therese rather than on their relationship. They thus refer to Sophie's importance for Therese (Kelm 250-51; Storz and Margaret Ward 268, 269), as well as the contrast in the moral character of Julian and Alfred (Storz and Margaret Ward 267), or Alfred and Therese (Kontje 161). Gabriele Schneider does look at the critique of Enfantinian notions of the "emancipation of the flesh" implicit in the novel's representation of the liaison between Sophie and Julian (168), but does not provide a contrastive reading of the two relationships.

⁵⁵Pateman, *Contract* 12.

invisibility' of the relationship, as she conveys the (non-)existence of this liaison and of Sophie Harkourt to Alfred, saying "nun! davon spricht man nicht, so sehr sie auch zu ~~des~~ Präsidenten Leben gehört" (L I, 63). She then notes the emphatic silence within the family regarding this relationship, adding disapprovingly that Julian's stable domestic life with his sister, Therese, permits him to enter into "solche[n] Verbindungen wie die mit der Harkourt, durch die er sich zum Stadtgespräch macht" (L I, 66).

Eva's revelations cause Alfred to reflect that Julian, whom he has not seen for eleven years, must be "noch ganz der alte Epikuräer." (L I, 68) This is confirmed at their first meeting, which is interrupted by the arrival of a letter from Sophie. Julian describes the liaison as one that has lasted longer than usual (L I, 75), and Alfred comments on Julian's continuing engagement in "Theaterintriguen," (L I, 77) remarking that the latter has not changed in the eleven years since they were last together. Alfred also questions whether "der genußreiche Wechsel" will satisfy his friend in the long term, and wonders whether Julian might not at some point "nach einem treuen, jungfräulichen Wesen verlangen, deren ganzes Sein in dir [Julian, MV] begründet ist?" (L I, 82) Alfred and thus convention clearly tolerate such liaisons, and although Alfred's comments may be viewed as a subtle suggestion that it is time his friend moved on, Julian's attitude to marriage remains consistently ambivalent. He does, however, take steps towards ending the liaison that he has conducted according to strict rules that enforce not only Sophie's passivity, which is in any case the standard for women at the time, but that also define her and the relationship as publicly invisible, even though its existence is "the talk of the town."

When he next sees Sophie, Julian attacks her for her contravention of the rules of the liaison, saying that he finds her "Spioniren und Nachfragen unerträglich." (L I, 105) In openly asserting her presence in his life by sending her servant to his house, she impedes his freedom of movement, and insists on the existence of a relationship (I, 105-06). Although his attack is the more vehement since he is attempting to discontinue the relationship, the complaint is clearly an oft-reiterated one. Sophie's actions thus render the apparently

invisible visible, and thwart Julian's desire to adhere to the code that asserts the invisibility of the relationship.

Julian tells Alfred that he values Sophie, but that he does not love her, and will not marry her. His sexual interest in her is emphasised by his description, to Alfred, in libertine terms, of the challenge she initially presented: "sie galt für spröde" (L I, 75), and by a scene that begins with his intention to reject her, but ends with his willing complicity in his own seduction by her (L I, 102-116). When she asserts her absolute love for him in this scene, he does not hesitate to invoke the sexual double standard which defines her as debased and worthless because her sexual honour is stained. He responds: "Eine schöne Liebe, die Vergleiche mit früheren anzustellen hat." (L I, 106) Such relationships, which are given a positive sanction by the prevailing sexual moral code, afford him sexual pleasure outside the bonds of responsibility required by matrimony, or in other words, sex without commitment.

Julian does begin to think about settling down, and finally discontinues the relationship because of the pressure of public opinion, but not because the latter censures him or his conduct, rather because the affair has gone on for too long. For that reason, continuing the affair would compromise his freedom to engage in any other more serious relationship:

Ohne daß er [Julian, MV] es sich selbst gestand, fing er an, sich nach Ruhe, nach festbegründeter Häuslichkeit zu sehnen. Er dachte bisweilen daran, sich zu verheirathen, aber sein Verhältniß zu Sophien war allgemein bekannt und man hielt es für bindend. (L I, 111)

Storz and Margaret Ward write that Julian "spurns marriage" to Sophie, "but for him the affair is more a matter of pleasure than love, and he breaks it off out of concern for his reputation."⁵⁶ This echoes Sophie's view that the influence of public opinion is the reason for Julian's withdrawal from her: "Er läßt sich von mir reißen durch den Tadel, den die thörichte Menge auf mich und auf unsere Verbindung wirft." (L I, 271) However, his reputation is not yet compromised, and the text shows that he does not want to continue the extra-marital liaison that is regarded as "bindend." He thus discards Sophie in order to ensure his freedom, whether his exercise of the latter will involve marriage or not. As mentioned above, Julian is consistently drawn as a sexual "epicure," a man more interested

⁵⁶Storz and Margaret Ward 268.

In the escape clause in the marriage contract than in marriage. Although he toys with the idea of marrying the young, virginal, and impressionable Agnes, he also tells Alfred he has never felt less inclination to marry than now, "wo man im Staatsrath ernstlich daran denkt, die goldnen Ketten der Ehe in ganz solide Fesseln zu verwandeln." (L II, 93)

Julian's sexual epicureanism is contrasted with his status as a compassionate professional and as a loving and protective brother. The brother presents himself as the champion of his sister Therese's honour when it is threatened by Alfred's wife Caroline. The professional in turn comes to the aid of Madame Berendt. The male who is sexually exploitative in his personal sexual relationships may thus at the same time fulfil the role of moral guardian and protector of women in the familial private sphere and in civil society. Through the figure of Julian the text draws attention to the multivalent functioning of the law and moral convention, casting light on the parallel existence of the two separate and gendered moral codes for the judgement of sexual behaviour. There is no hint of irony in the narrator's description of Julian's protective agency, and his promiscuity is not criticised by the narrator or other figures in the narrative except for Eva, whose self-interest signals her partiality. While the text thus appears to accept the code which ascertains that relationships with "loose" or "public" women do not have any impact upon a man's honour and are thus of no consequence to his professional stature or in his private life, it does present resistance to this code on the level of plot.

The "less-than-subtle poetic justice" Kontje identifies in the engineering of Julian's almost fatal illness at the narrative's end,⁵⁷ indicates the critical stance of the text towards his treatment of Sophie, and alerts the reader to examine his behaviour more closely. In keeping with the text's emphasis that marriage should be based on love, there is, however, no suggestion that Julian should marry Sophie. Julian does survive his illness, but recovers to find that the young virginal Agnes who had become the focus of his (sexual) desire once he had cast-off Sophie, is engaged to another.⁵⁸

⁵⁷Kontje 161.

⁵⁸Julian's interest in Agnes is lascivious. He excites her by having her read *Romeo and Juliet* aloud with him, during which she becomes "erhitzt, ebenso entzückt als verschämt" (L II, 68). The references to shame and heat are indicators that Agnes' confusion is sexual in origin.

Lewald's autobiographical account of the man who was a model for Julian, Ludwig Crelinger, a man she describes as a sophisticated man of the world, an intellectual and indeed a "Lebemann" (*ML* III, 112), also sheds some light on the broader social context in which Julian is located. Lewald states that she gave Julian "einzelne kleine Züge" which Crelinger "teils mit andern Geistreichen und durch die Erfahrung gebildeten Lebemännern gemeinsam hatte, und wieder andre, deren er sich gegen mich angeschuldigt oder gelegentlich gerühmt hatte." (*ML* III, 112) Her account of Crelinger's marriage shows that he is unlike Julian in significant respects, but does reveal the existence of the two separate and gendered moral codes which are implemented by moral convention governing sexual behaviour in Lewald's social milieu. Lewald first meets Crelinger while visiting an aunt in Breslau, and relates that his entry into Breslau society was impeded by the fact that he was married to a girl from the lower classes who was reputed to have been his lover before marriage. (*ML* II, 122) According to Lewald, "die weibliche Tugend der Breslauer Frauen blieb unerbittlich," and few women would reciprocate the couple's visits. However, the men held Crelinger in high regard, his friends noting "daß sicherlich mehr Liebe, Mut, und Ehrenhaftigkeit dazu gehörten, ein armes, verführtes Geschöpf zu seiner Frau zu machen, als es zu verstoßen." (*ML* II, 122)

In the case of Crelinger's wife, as in the fictional representation of Sophie, public opinion as it is produced and enforced by women views moral culpability as lying only with the woman, it remaining the man's privilege and the normal course of events for him to reject the woman, thus reinforcing the rule of seduction and abandonment. In a society in which women's honour is defined in sexual terms, women endanger themselves if they consort with immoral women. In the case of the Crelingers, the seducer, in defiance of convention, assumed the role of bridegroom, and equally defiantly, Lewald and her aunt visited his wife. Lewald's account of Crelinger's marriage demonstrates her capacity to draw her own conclusions and to

See Geitner's discussion of "Hitze" as a marker of "'Irratio feminalis,' welche sich einerseits in die Hysterie ..., andererseits in die Nymphomanie ... sowie in den sogenannten Vapeurs zeigt ..." (Geitner, "Passio" 132).

act in accordance with her own sense of ethical behaviour rather than blindly following conventions enforced by her immediate social milieu.⁵⁹

Julian has been described as "an aging rake,"⁶⁰ and I would argue that his sexual epicureanism, in its consistent targetting of actresses as sexual partners in the pursuit of pleasure, bears some resemblance to the aristocratic libertine code. Julian's sexual practice resembles that of the "petit-maîtres," for whom "lust is the sole natural motive of erotic attraction."⁶¹ Such a man would "renounce all women whose seduction seems hazardous,"⁶² instead "devot[ing] his attentions exclusively to the *petits-maîtresses* ..., to the women of his class who share his views regarding the conditions of a happy erotic life."⁶³ Julian's sexual partners are actresses, who occupy a precarious social place in the transitional society of mid-nineteenth century Germany, in which the caste system and the moral sexual codes of the feudal aristocracy co-exist with the developing bourgeois codes.⁶⁴ Although much has been written about the challenge issued to the morally corrupt aristocracy by the superior bourgeois moral code, Julian's sexual epicureanism in fact represents a continuation of precisely such corruption. His sexual practice is made possible by the definition of actresses as available because they are excluded from bourgeois society. As women of another caste, and women of already ambiguous virtue according to the bourgeois moral code, they have no

⁵⁹Crelinger is associated with moral ambiguity in Lewald's autobiography in an additional sense. Johannes Ebel, a charismatic protestant priest and teacher, and Heinrich Diestel, a theologian, chose him to defend them in the "Mucker" trial in Königsberg. (*ML* II, 119-121; 126-128) Lewalds compares the aims of the theosophic sect with those of the Young Germans (*ML* II, 120). Members of the sect were prosecuted for "grobe Unsittlichkeiten" committed in the name of religion (*ML* II, 119, 120). Lewald's brother was the articulated clerk charged with taking the transcript of the proceedings (*ML* II, 126), and Mathilde, Lewald's best friend, and her family were deeply involved with the sect (*ML* II, 121). Lewald, with her father's support, defied public opinion to continue the friendship (*ML* II, 120).

⁶⁰Kontje 161.

⁶¹Michel Feher, "Libertinisms," trans., Michel Feher and Sophie Hawkes, Feher 10-47, 11.

⁶²Feher, "Libertinisms" 22.

⁶³Feher, "Libertinisms" 22.

⁶⁴Ortrud Gutjahr's summary of the position of the actress in late eighteenth-century Germany highlights the complex interrelationship of the actress' gender with her social status and her professional role: "Solange die Bühnenkunst nicht als Beruf, sondern als Stand und damit Sein begriffen wurde, blieb die Schauspielerin in diesem unlösbaren Dilemma befangen, in ihrem Rollenspiel die Abweichung von der Natur der Frau und zugleich ihr Wesen darzustellen." *Gesellige Vernunft: Zur Kultur der literarischen Aufklärung*, Festschrift für Wolfram Mauser zum 65. Geburtstag, ed., Ortrud Gutjahr, Wilhelm Kühlmann, Wolf Wucherpennig (Würzburg: Königshausen, 1993) 83-107, 107.

recourse to institutional protection and in effect have the social status of prostitutes.⁶⁵ I would therefore view his conduct as a variant of the aristocratic libertine code, or in other words, an embourgeoised libertinism.

I propose this term to describe what appears to me to be a further example of the meshing of bourgeois and aristocratic behavioural codes in German bourgeois society through the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This meshing of sexual and moral codes occurred in the process of defining the ideals of masculinity and femininity which would obtain in the new bourgeois society, and I would argue as Ute Frevert does in her study of the duelling code in Germany, that even as the bourgeoisie sought to assert itself as morally superior to the aristocracy it superseded, it at the same time adopted aristocratic codes of conduct that it found attractive.⁶⁶ More specifically, while the "bürgerliche Meisterdenker" like Fichte were propagating the ideal of true love and monogamy for women, professional bourgeois men were adopting a considerably freer mode of sexual practice.

While the term "Libertinage" belongs specifically within the French literary tradition in which the figures of Casanova and de Sade define the two behavioural and conceptual poles,⁶⁷ the term was also used more loosely by Lewald's German contemporaries to refer to activity with a focus on sexual pleasure, or with specific reference to the aristocratic sexual and moral code. For example, Gutzkow polemicalises in his "Vorrede" that the emphasis on women being sexually inexperienced before marriage results in men having to choose between the options of utter boredom within marriage, or "Libertinage:" "Der einreißende Dilettantismus ist entweder in Libertinage oder in höchst ordinäre und langweilige Verhältnisse ausgeschlagen."⁶⁸ Both Gutzkow's words and Lewald's text refute the validity of Nipperdey's view that "der zornige Kampf gegen die adlige Libertinage" accompanied "[d]ie empfindsame

⁶⁵Möhrmann refers to the link established between female actors and prostitution as going back to Roman times. It was not until the turn of the century between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that the acting profession became more respectable for women in Germany. At this point the profession and marriages to "Bühnenkünstlerinnen verlieren das Stigma der Mesalliance." Renate Möhrmann, "Einleitung," Möhrmann, *Schauspielerin* 7-23, here 8.

⁶⁶See discussion in *Jenny* above.

⁶⁷See Catherine Cusset, "Editor's Preface: The Lesson of Libertinage," *Yale French Studies* 94 (1988): 1-14.

⁶⁸Gutzkow, *Vorrede* xviii.

Revolutionierung der Familie, die Entdeckung von Liebe und Partnerschaft" from the early nineteenth century.⁶⁹ While moral rhetoric insisted that the dominance of the aristocratic code in the late eighteenth century gave way to the moralisation of sexual relations, textual evidence from the period would indicate that in practice, "Libertinage" was not entirely displaced by the new ideal of love partnership. Analyses such as Elias' *Triebstruktur und bürgerliche Gesellschaft* which focus on the sublimation of the sexual drive in bourgeois society to ensure the latter's smooth functioning, or Theweleit's reading of the efforts of "reterritorialisation" carried out on women's bodies by the bourgeois enterprise, or Foucault's exposé of the fallacy of the "repressive hypothesis,"⁷⁰ all fail to include consideration of prostitution and extra-marital practices such as the "Theaterintrigue" which are given an implicit positive sanction by social convention even while they are officially proscribed by the moral code. Such sexual practices provide an acceptable and contained channel for male desublimation within the bourgeois sexual code, while maintaining the subordination of women and concomitant proscription of female sexual autonomy within the sexual contract.⁷¹

11.3.2.11.b. Sophie.

Lewald's representation of Sophie is similarly differentiated in its exploration of a woman's challenge to social moral convention. Sophie has been described as "the one figure who stands outside the boundaries of bourgeois morality,"⁷² and indeed her status as an actress means that she is a figure on the margins of social acceptability, and that she in fact

⁶⁹Nipperdey 128.

⁷⁰Elias, *Prozeß*; see also: Elias, "Zum Zusammenhang von Triebkontrolle und Familienform bzw. Gesellschaftsstruktur," Rosenbaum 152 - 160; Klaus Theweleit, *Frauen, Fluten, Körper, Geschichte*, Vol. 1 of *Männerphantasien*, 2 vols., Frankfurt a.M.: Roter Stern, 1977-78 (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1980) 344-377; Foucault, *History* 2.

⁷¹I am not aware of any extensive socio-historical studies of prostitution in Germany in the mid-nineteenth century such as that of Alain Corbin's study of prostitution in France. Fuchs's claims are unfortunately not substantiated by evidence. See especially *Das bürgerliche Zeitalter*, München: Langen, 1912, vol. 3 of *Illustrierte Sittengeschichte vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, 3 vols., 1909-1912.

⁷²Storz and Margaret Ward 267.

belongs to a separate "Stand."⁷³ Her history of amorous liaisons enforces convention's inevitable equation of the actress and thus 'public woman' with a woman of loose morals.⁷⁴ Sophie is particularly vulnerable, as the acting profession only gained general social respectability toward the end of the nineteenth century.⁷⁵ The above discussion of Julian's actions and his attitude towards their relationship has shown, however, that Sophie's challenge to social sexual norms and thus to ideals of bourgeois morality is tightly regulated by bourgeois morality, the conventions of which govern both ideal and other forms of sexual relationship. In this sense she is still located firmly within the regulatory boundaries of bourgeois society.

Sophie is a highly ambiguous figure, not only as a result of her dramatic change of perspective when she suddenly accepts and adopts the judgement of the bourgeois moral code, as has been highlighted by Lewald scholars,⁷⁶ but also from the very beginning of the narrative, as a result of her multiple outsider status. Sophie is figured as an outsider on three counts: she is French, an orphan, and an actress who espouses free love. She is thus firstly an outsider figure from a society with relaxed morals, a society which also spawned the Saint Simonian movement; she is secondly a figure who is not imbricated in a familial context, and is thus without a male protector; and she is thirdly a figure whose profession automatically assigns her morally ambiguous status. While her nationality and profession endow her with a questionable background and ambiguous social status, this is undercut to

⁷³Ursula Geitner, *Schauspielerinnen: Der theatralische Eintritt der Frau in die Moderne*, ed., and Afterword Ursula Geitner (Bielefeld: Haux, 1988) 9.

⁷⁴C.f. reference to Giovanolla and Jenny above.

⁷⁵It was not until the turn of the century between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that the acting profession became more respectable for women in Germany. At this point the profession and marriages to "Bühnenkünstlerinnen verlieren das Stigma der Mesalliance." Renate Möhrmann, "Einleitung," Möhrmann, *Schauspielerin* 7-23, here 21. Lewald's account of the famous opera singer and actress Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient indicates that the latter was considered respectable in bourgeois terms. However, female actors had to take great care to maintain a virtuous reputation if they wished to cross from the actor's "Stand" into bourgeois society. "Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient," *Zwölf Bilder nach dem Leben: Erinnerungen* (Berlin: Janke, 1888) 35-63. See Ortrud Gutjahr's presentation of four female actor's biographies from this perspective. See especially that of Karoline Schulze-Kummerfeld, of whom Gutjahr writes: "Dreh- und Angelpunkt im Kampf um soziale Anerkennung als Schauspielerin gegenüber dem Bürgertum ist ihr die Tugendhaftigkeit." "Gesellschaftsfähigkeit und gesellige Rolle der Schauspielerin im 18. Jahrhundert," See especially 91-97.

⁷⁶Keim 245; Storz and Margaret Ward 267; Gabriele Schneider 119.

some degree by her status as an orphan: a female child without means or familial protection cannot be guaranteed a suitably moral upbringing, and cannot assume to marry well, if at all.⁷⁷ Sophie presents her stage career as a matter of economic survival.

Sophie develops her behavioural code on observing the hypocrisies that define bourgeois marriage practice, and her views echo Gutzkow's criticisms of the institution of marriage in the above-mentioned "Vorrede." They are based on a contempt for the institution, formed from observing adulterous marriages of convenience, commercial transactions which were nevertheless "rechtmäßig" and sanctioned by a priest, and in which the spouses were considered pillars of rectitude. Her critique of the hypocritical "scheinheilige Tugend" (L I, 109) that is sanctioned by convention as long as appearances are maintained targets the determination of "Sitte," "Keuschheit" and "Civilisation" by church and state through the institution of marriage (L I, 269).⁷⁸

Attuned to discrepancies between appearance and reality through her profession, she resolves to devote her life to truth, and her relationship to Julian is initially based on this credo. As she writes in a confessional letter to Alfred, written after Julian has discarded her, she assured the latter that "er solle frei sein von jedem Bande, das ihn an mich [Sophie, MV] bindet, sobald er mich nicht mehr seiner Liebe würdig fände." (L I, 270) She states further: "Mein Glück sollte ein Beweis werden, daß nur in der Freiheit der Liebe die Reinheit der Ehe bewahrt bleibe." (L I, 272) Her position asserts the immutability and supreme authority of love, and in this letter she articulates her notion of sexual purity in explicit contrast to convention, emphasising the significance of their physical union:

Wie glücklich, wie rein fühlte ich mich in den Gedanken, Julian zu gehören, ohne Eid und Schwur; sein geworden zu sein in einer Stunde seligster Entzückung, in der wir die Welt der Liebe im Herzen trugen, die heiligste Welt der Liebe, die keinen geputzten Hochzeiten bedarf, weil sie das Recht zu gänzlicher Vereinigung in sich selbst besitzt! (L I, 269)

⁷⁷C.f. Gutzjahr's reference to the late nineteenth-century female actor Schulze-Kummerfeld's experience "daß es für ein junges Mädchen, das nicht im Schutze des bürgerlichen Hauses heranwachsen kann, ungleich schwerer ist, einen tugendhaften Lebenswandel zu führen." Gutzjahr 93.

⁷⁸C.f. Gutzkow, *Vorrede* xxvii, xxxiii-xxxv.

Sophie's adherence to the ideal of free love has been identified as deriving from Young German and Entantian/Saint Simonian contestations of marriage,⁷⁹ and also compared with Louise Aston's declaration: "Freiem Leben, freiem Lieben / Bin ich immer treu geblieben."⁸⁰ However, although such ideas resonate in Sophie's articulation of her credo, Lewald's text presents a problematisation of this concept of free love, and thus of Entantian/Saint Simonian and Young German advocacy of a greater sexual freedom for women which disregards women's social reality as defined by the moral code.⁸¹ In her autobiography, Lewald refers to the powerful impact of the new ideas from Paris and their reception by the Young German writers (*ML* II, 65). However, the novellistic working through of these ideas in *Eine Lebensfrage* is clearly an acknowledgement of the pitfalls women face when attempting to implement these ideas in mid-nineteenth century Germany.⁸²

Sophie's advocacy of free love, and her insistence that Julian is a free agent, is parallel to the concept of inconstancy in the Saint Simonian Entantin's classification of people into two classes: those characterised by inconstancy ("mobiles"), who require constant change and for whom divorce is thus a necessity, and those characterised by constancy ("immobles"), who espouse fidelity and commit themselves to one marriage partner for life.⁸³ However, Sophie has difficulty accepting that her love is unrequited, and that Julian wants to leave her. At this point, Lewald's text begins to explore the tensions which arise when a female proponent of free love is afflicted by unilateral 'true love.' Lewald's scenario is somewhat complicated by the fact that the codes and conventions which allow "Theaterintriguen" sanction behaviour that is indistinguishable from that advocated by the code of free love. The similarity enables

⁷⁹Gabriele Schneider 168f; Burchardt-Dose 302.

⁸⁰Gabriele Schneider 171, f. 33.

⁸¹C.f. Möhrmann's critique of such theories of "Emanzipation ohne gesellschaftliche Rückkoppelung" which do not consider women's lack of access to employment and education, and the realities of pregnancy, childbirth and child-rearing (48).

⁸²In this sense the novel may be a working through of her reading and discussion of Young German texts during her time in Breslau, and her close friendship with Heinrich Simon in this period, a fusing of philosophy, art and life. In the character of Sophie, and in the representation of the judicial and extra-judicial regulation of sexual practices through the juxtaposition of the primary and secondary narrative strands, Lewald's narrative is a comprehensive and subtle exploration of love, sex and ethics.

⁸³Moritz Veit, *Saint Simon und der Saintsimonismus: Allgemeiner Völkerbund und ewiger Friede* (Brockhaus: Leipzig, 1834) 199.

Lewald to criticise the double standard imposed by convention and the hypocrisy of the social moral code that tolerates Julian's behaviour while proscribing Sophie's.

The text thus presents a twofold challenge to both the established institution of marriage, and the just as established convention of "Theaterintriguen" to which Julian subscribes. Sophie pits her love against his practice of pleasure, which is contingent on her debasement. In this sense Julian's epicureanism is aligned to the practice of libertinage, as it is discussed by Nancy Miller. As Miller points out, there is always an unequal power relationship between the male libertine and his female partners. She thus argues that it is not possible to characterise libertine practice as the pure pursuit of pleasure, but that it is always imbricated in the inequality of the sexes.⁸⁴ To describe Julian as "ein Genußmensch, ein Epikuräer" and simply align him "mit der lebenslustigen Eva" overlooks the exploitative element in his practice of pleasure.⁸⁵ Sophie's membership of the acting caste, and her already deeply ambiguous social status means she is not the bourgeois fallen woman in the sense explored by Lehmann. Lewald exploits the potential allowed by the ambiguities of Sophie's status to explore the social consequences of free love for women in a way that does not obviously challenge the status quo.⁸⁶ In her presentation of Sophie's absolute love for Julian, even once he has discarded her, Lewald is also able to suggest that society's condemnation of such women and such behaviour may be based on false judgement. Other aspects of Sophie's outsider status discussed above also allow her actions to be viewed in a more benevolent light, as the discussion below of Alfred's defence of her demonstrates.

Alfred attributes Sophie's adherence to the Saint Simonian and Young German path that leads to her fall to her lack of integration within a familial context, asking rhetorically:

Warum stand ihr kein schützender Vater, keine treue Mutter zur Seite? ... Warum ward diese edelste Natur hingeschleudert in den Kreis einer Sittenverderbniß, von der sie sich verletzt abwendete, um sich den mißverstandenen Lehren einer Schule zuzuneigen, die zwar Wahrheit und Recht erstrebt, aber auf falschem Wege? (L I, 274-75)

⁸⁴Miller, "Libertinage and Feminism," *Cusset* 17-28, 17.

⁸⁵Gabriele Schneider 159.

⁸⁶This would contradict Möhrmann's assertion that: "Die Unabhängigkeit der Schauspielerin, der Freiraum, den ihr ihre Tätigkeit gewährt, bleibt fiktional ungenutzt." "Die Schauspielerin als literarische Fiktion," Möhrmann, *Schauspielerin* 154-174, 161.

Alfred's defence of her also highlights the dark side of convention, and emphasises the function of the family in supporting the status quo. His figuration of Sophie as the originally unprotected child, and hence as somebody in need of familial protection indicates the double-edged nature of the protective function of the family in ensuring women remain within the bounds of convention in their sexual behaviour. Her case demonstrates that the rhetoric of free love cannot be separated from the institutionalised social forms governing sexuality, and that a naive, idealistic woman who believes in the rhetoric of love, and attempts to divorce it from its legal corollary, is liable to exploitation, since a different set of rules is in effect for sexual liaisons taking place outside the rituals of courtship and marriage. Sophie's insistence on the independence and autonomy of love thus clashes not only with the conventions governing marriage, but also with those governing the conduct of all variants of the extra-marital liaison.

Thus, Sophie's attempt to live out her philosophy of free love challenges Julian's sexual epicureanism and the freedom that is granted to men by sexual moral convention. The same convention requires her silent acquiescence to its rules. Her belief in the supreme power of love and in her capacity to live beyond the law and without its protection falls because it hinges on the cooperation of a man who has no interest in contesting the prevailing order.

Sophie's ultimate acceptance that Julian has left her results in her absolute capitulation to this order, and thus to bourgeois moral convention. This involves her acceptance of moral responsibility for the liaison in the terms required by convention, as set out in the above discussion of Fichte's treatment of adultery. Sophie thus states:

[M]eine Schande, den Tadel der Welt auf ihn [i.e. Julian, MV] zu wälzen, das vermag ich nicht, das leidet weder meine Liebe noch mein Stolz. (L II, 358f)

Sophie's abject recanting has been sharply criticised. Keim finds the fact that Sophie retires from her previous life "mit einer ewigen Liebe zu *dem* Manne im Herzen, der immer nur Genuß beim Weibe gesucht hat [emphasis Keim, MV],"⁸⁷ is an affirmation of the order which defines women as adjuncts to men, required to exercise absolute self-abnegation in love. Storz and Margaret Ward similarly focus on the limitations placed on the character, stating

⁸⁷Keim 245.

that Sophie's "new profession is just another self-sacrificing alternative, in which the woman cannot attain the true fulfilment of her desire."⁸⁸ Schneider, in contrast, comments ironically on the change in Sophie's views and status in the narrative, but without analysing the implications in terms of narrative strategy or the construction of gender, stating simply: "aus exponierter Stellung begibt sich Sophie zur Buße der sittlich-moralischen Verfehlung, der sie sich schuldig gemacht hat, in eine dienende: die Vertreterin der erotisch-sinnlichen Liebe repräsentiert nun als barmherzige Schwester die Caritas, Liebe am Nächsten."⁸⁹ These comments are relevant to questions of the text's motivation of Sophie's absolute capitulation to the bourgeois moral code, her decision to leave the stage, and also the status of her continuing love for Julian.

As indicated above, in its figuration of Sophie's recantation, Lewald's text mirrors Fichte's insistence that women carry the moral responsibility for sexual transgressions, their own and those of male partners. That such a recantation of her previous credo involves radical self-abnegation, is recognised within the text by Sophie's decision to leave the stage, thus killing off the identity of the actress. The actress Sophie cannot survive and have her tenets accepted by bourgeois society. Once she leaves acting, her survival in this society is contingent on her adoption of its moral code.

Sophie articulates the nature of her challenge and its failure in acknowledging that her project of single-handedly challenging a moral order regulated by the church, the state, and social convention has failed on a number of counts: "Ich habe mich getäuscht. Ich habe dem Herkommen, der Sitte Hohn gesprochen, jetzt rächen sie sich an mir." (L I, 271) She concludes that the moral code asserted by the church, the state, and social convention can also be an enabling authority which could provide protection: "Ich habe gefehlt gegen die Gesetze der Sitte, die Gott und Menschen mit hoher Weisheit zwischen uns und unsere Leidenschaften stellten." (L I, 273) Sophie's dilemma leads her to view the regulatory power of mores and conventions as positive aspects of the institution of marriage, and she emphasise their protective agency. However, this protection is only extended to women who subordinate

⁸⁸Storz and Margaret Ward 268.

⁸⁹Gabriele Schneider 119.

themselves to their regulatory agency. Schneider views the text as presenting a defence of marriage which is in opposition to the Young German and Saint Simonian challenges. Where Young German writers equated love, or rather, sex with marriage, Lewald's text redefines marriage as love.⁹⁰ However, Sophie's insight and thus Lewald's text demonstrates that the institution only protects those who submit to its discriminatory regulations and practices, which reduce women to the chattels of men, thus further exposing the complicity of moral authorities with the sexual contract.⁹¹

This is underscored by Alfred's depiction, in a discussion with Julian, of the "schöne[n] Begrenzung der Sitte" in a discussion of the relative virtues of Therese, Eva, and Sophie (L II, 90f). This discussion emphasises that there are no fundamental differences between Alfred, the idealist, and Julian, the pragmatist and opportunist, in the area of their views of sexual morality and practice. The two men contrast Therese, Eva, and Sophie as three quite different upper class products, "die Resultate unserer socialen Verhältnisse auf die Bildung der Frauen in den höhern Ständen" (L II, 90). Julian acknowledges Sophie's "glühende Genialität," Therese's "tiefe, durch Welt- und Menschenkenntniß gebildete Wesen," and Eva's "neckische Sorglosigkeit," while Alfred provides a more analytical reading of the women. He typifies Eva as "eines von den vielen harmlosen Mädchen, die von ihren Müttern für den Heirathsmarkt erzogen und mit jenen oberflächlichen Reizmitteln geschmückt werden, die die Käufer anlocken und blenden" (L II, 90), "diese armen kleinen Odaliskinnen" (L II, 90) who remain without any inner strength to deal with the more serious aspects of life. Alfred likens the irresponsibility of mothers who raise their daughters in this way with that of "die Prediger der Frauenemancipation" who do not think of the misery to which they consign natures such as Sophie:

Herausgerissen aus der schönen Begrenzung der Sitte, der Gewalt ihres Liebedürfnisses, der wechselsuchenden Leidenschaft des Mannes überlassen, müssen

⁹⁰Gabriele Schneider 168. C.f. Gutzkow's declaration: "Die Vikare des Himmels ... mögen mir ihre Kirchtüren verschließen, die ich nicht suche, und Sakramente entziehen, deren Symbole ich im Herzen trage! Auch zur Ehe bedarf ich Eurer nicht: nicht wahr, Rosalie?" Gutzkow, *Vorrede* xxxvii.

⁹¹The contrast between Sophie and Caroline emphasises that while Caroline will at least be materially compensated, the woman discarded by a man in a relationship of "free love" has no recourse to any protective social mechanisms.

gerade die reichsten Frauenherzen am schwersten darunter leiden und ewig sehnsuchtsvoll nach jener reinen Höhe blicken." (L II, 90f)

It is significant that Alfred finds the proponents of emancipation to be at fault rather than social mores. If women transgress social convention seeking to live out their desire, then they expose themselves to a male desire which is by definition "wechselsuchend[en]," and enter an arena in which sex, again by definition, does not involve commitment on the part of the male.

In this context, the "schöne[n] Begrenzung der Sitte" functions on the one hand, as Alfred states, to prevent women from falling prey to male sexual desire in an attempt to fulfil their own desire. On the other hand it also functions to desexualise women, or rather, to contain the respectable bourgeois woman's sexuality within the marital union and thus the home. There is no social place for the sexually active bourgeois woman to act on her own agency. According to Alfred, women are expected to deny their own sexual desire, and instead strive for the heights of purity and femininity such as those embodied in Therese. The novel in turn reveals the implications of this ideal in Therese. The model of ideal and sexually sanitised womanhood acts as a control on women and on male sexuality in the private sphere. According to this model, which duplicates the ideal model formulated by Fichte, bourgeois women carry the responsibility of re(s)training male sexual desire into a socially acceptable mode, while men are under no compulsion to exercise responsibility towards women who do not conform.

While Sophie's final capitulation to the moral order imposed by convention is complete, the imperative of love which she lives out, and to which she still adheres, enables Therese to acknowledge the validity of her own feelings for Alfred.⁹² The catalytic effect of Sophie's beliefs on the conservative Therese, who is fearful of "das Urteil der Menge," is significant if subtle, as Therese is not forced within the narrative to demonstrate agency by actively pursuing Alfred. Sophie's capacity to love is thus positively valued by the text, while the essence of her radicality, which is to live her love outside conventional guidelines, is shown to be self-destructive, as it leaves her without protection. Sophie's ultimate choice of the path of social service - she becomes a nurse - rather than suicide or entry into a convent is

⁹²Keim 251; Storz and Margaret Ward 267, 269.

more ambiguous than suggested by previous scholars, who state that "Sophie's new profession is just another self-sacrificing alternative."⁹³ instead, I would argue that it is most significant that she is not killed off, and that her challenge is not punishable by death, as the conventions of such narratives would normally demand.⁹⁴

The ambivalence in the character may thus be seen as a strength of the text's narrative strategy, allowing a subtly differentiated view to be put forward. In *Sophie*, Lewald presents a woman who attempts to contest the gender-specific coding of bourgeois sexual and moral convention and falls. The death of the actress can be read as an indictment of Lewald's society, signalling that Sophie's challenge is socially unacceptable, and that the contested conventions will not change in the short term. I would thus argue that Sophie's survival, together with her positive impact on Alfred and the positive influence of her belief in the supremacy of love on Therese, signal that Sophie's challenge as well as her ideals are validated within the text.

II.3.2.III. Love as a challenge to the sexual contract.

The above discussion of the relationships of the primary and secondary narrative strands has shown that they valorise love. The narrative argues strongly, that in the space regulated by codified law, the function of marriage should be to give a positive sanction to love. It should thus be an institution that facilitates happiness through the capacity of granting divorce. As Julian states, the aim of the state should be: "[g]lückliche Ehen möglich zu machen, ... nicht unglückliche Ehen zusammenzuhalten." (*L* II, 139) Lewald's presentation of the inexorability, the transience and the primacy of love can be viewed as the aspect of the novel that links it most directly to its literary predecessor, Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*. Lewald's autobiographical acknowledgement of Goethe's work⁹⁵ includes an ambivalent

⁹³Storz and Margaret Ward 268.

⁹⁴In addition, the text figures service to others as one option available to damaged women (*L* II, 76f). Sophie has been damaged by her unsuccessful challenge to the prevailing order, but remains a participant in society, albeit in a profession recognised in the text as the domain of damaged women.

⁹⁵She acknowledges Goethe's importance by stating: "Für einen Deutschen ist es aber fast unmöglich, das Thema von den sittlichen Zerwürfnissen innerhalb der Ehe zu durchdenken und abzuhandeln, ohne sich dabei der "Wahlverwandtschaften" zu erinnern, ohne sich mit seinem Für und Wider an sie anzulehnen." (*ML* III, 215)

statement of homage when she relates how her own interpretation of the novel changed. Although she initially regarded it as a defence of marriage at all costs, reflecting the moral views inculcated by her upbringing (*ML II*, 72), she later changed her mind. She decided that while it in fact supported "die äußere Berechtigung der Ehe" it emphatically presented "die Unsittlichkeit solcher Gewalttat." Lewald asserts that the novel thus "beweist als notwendig, was er zu tun für Unrecht erklärt" (*ML II*, 72), identifying this as "das Verderbliche und Verwerfliche in dem Inneren Wesen dieser in tausend Beziehungen so unvergleichlichen Dichtung." (*ML II*, 72) In this concluding section of my reading of *Eine Lebensfrage* I will look at aspects of the literary lineage of Lewald's novel in order to show how her rewriting of morality presents a fundamental challenge to the sexual contract and its implementation through the law and the moral code in mid-nineteenth century Germany.

Lewald's statements about Goethe's novel in her autobiography, and the discussion of the novel by the characters of *Eine Lebensfrage* centre on its morality or otherwise, and also concern the question of the nature of the crimes committed (*ML III*, 215). This focus on questions concerning the profanation of marriage in Goethe's novel is typical for the time, according to Bolz. He states that: "Auch Dichter, deren handwerklich-technische Kompetenz außer Frage steht, wie etwa Friedrich Hebbel, haben die *Wahlverwandtschaften* in diesem Sinne als Roman einer profanierten Ehe verkannt."⁹⁶ Kolbe, who compares Lewald's novel

For discussions of Goethe's influence on Lewald and this novel, see the following: Möhrmann discusses the influence of Goethe's *Werther* and *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* on Lewald's early novels (132f, 139), and Margaret Ward looks at Lewald's admission of and struggle against Goethe's "literary paternity" in her treatment of renunciation in the early novels (Ward). Gabriele Schneider reveals Goethe to be a strong influence on Lewald's early writing and thinking, but leavened by other influences such as Sand, Heine and the younger Young German writers, who are much stronger in the early period. As Stahr's influence in her life becomes stronger, Lewald increasingly identifies with Goethe as the ideal role model (327). Katherine Goodman treats Lewald's emulation of Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* in her autobiography, and notes the contradictions resulting from the writer's attempt to draw parallels with Goethe's life in her literary stylisation of her own life. Goodman contrasts claims made by Lewald with textual evidence asserting the contrary, and in this way reveals gender-based differences in the two writers' lives. (*Dis/Closures: Women's Autobiography in Germany Between 1790 and 1914* (New York: Peter Lang, 1986) 147-165). See also her dissertation which forms the basis of the later study. ("German Women and Autobiography in the Nineteenth Century: Louise Aston, Fanny Lewald, Malwida von Meysenbug and Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach," diss., Department of German, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1977 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1977) 7725821, 65-126).

⁹⁶See discussion of the novel's reception by contemporaries in Bolz, *Wahlverwandtschaften* 179-181, Kolbe 85. Quotation Bolz, *Wahlverwandtschaften* 179. In his preface to *Maria*

with its antecedent, concludes that the discussion of Goethe's novel by Lewald's fictional characters is "ziemlich falsch," despite their "beachtlich[es] Engagement." In his opinion, Lewald uses Goethe's novel "gewissermaßen als Kronzeuge" for the argument that marriages entered into without "gegenseitige tiefe Neigung" are immoral and are therefore to be dissolved.⁹⁷ Gabriele Schneider's review of possible parallels in the cast of characters of the two novels demonstrates that Lewald does not reproduce Goethe's quartet, nor are there extensive thematic similarities.⁹⁸ Asserting that Lewald reduces Goethe's novel to an "Eheroman," Schneider contrasts *Eine Lebensfrage* with Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften*, in which:

Die Ambivalenz von Mächten wie Natur, Liebe, Schicksal, Wunder führt zu einer unauflösbaren Spannung zwischen individueller Leidenschaft und gesellschaftlicher Ordnung, die von Anfang an auf die Katastrophe hindeutet.⁹⁹

She adds that Goethe's novel is "todesüberschattet" from the very beginning,¹⁰⁰ having previously commented that Lewald structures the fable of her narrative such that it avoids catastrophe.¹⁰¹

In fact, although there are no deaths in Lewald's novel, and although it does not embody the ambiguities and complexities of Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften*, it nevertheless does allow entry to one unpredictable force, namely that of sexual love and passion. In its depiction of both Alfred's and Caroline's marriage, and Julian's extra-marital "Theaterintrigue" with Sophie, the novel presents a strong case for Lewald's argument that marriage should be based on love. It thus goes beyond arguing that divorce is an ethical necessity in a social context in which marriages are entered into for the wrong reasons. Instead, Lewald's text effectively shifts the focus onto the moment of entry into marriage, and more specifically, onto the reason for marital union. Its linking of the question of divorce with marriage practice thus

Magdalena (1844). Hebbel views Goethe's novel as the depiction of "eine von Haus aus nichtige, ja unsittliche Ehe." Cited by Bolz, *Wahlverwandtschaften* 179.

⁹⁷Jürgen Kolbe, *Goethes "Wahlverwandtschaften" und der Roman des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1968) 83-84.

⁹⁸Gabriele Schneider 158-160.

⁹⁹Gabriele Schneider 160.

¹⁰⁰Gabriele Schneider 160, citing Benno von Wiese, Nachwort, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*, Hamburger Ausgabe, ed., Erich Trunz, vol. 6, 681.

¹⁰¹Gabriele Schneider 158.

does more than criticise the bourgeois marriage of convenience or arranged marriage, particularly since Alfred's and Caroline's marriage cannot be categorised in this way. Both Alfred's marriage to Caroline, and Sophie's relationship with Jullan assert the transient nature of sexual love and passion. The novel's argument for the retention of the right to divorce can be viewed as a defence of the one remaining point of flexibility in the juridical regulation of the marital relationship. Lewald's text thus implicitly thematises the social regulation of sexual relationships between women and men according to laws and conventions that attempt to contain sex, love, and passion by implementing ever more rigid forms of practice in order to impose a certain concept of morality.

In this sense, Lewald's novel actually does have more in common with Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften* than has previously been thought. Bolz summarises Goethe's intention in pitting the positivistic discourse of science against the inclinations of the passions as follows: "Es geht ihm [Goethe MV] nämlich um eine exakte experimentelle Darstellung des naturwissenschaftlich Undarstellbaren - sozialer Verhältnisse unterm Gesetz des Begehrens."¹⁰² According to Bolz, the novel highlights the impossibility of controlling or containing desire: "Unmöglich ist es offenbar, mit Hilfe von Gesetzen dem komplexen System des Begehrens, den dynamischen Rekonfigurationen nach der Chemie der Leidenschaften Ordnung aufzuprägen."¹⁰³ Lewald's novel similarly argues that love cannot be subject to legislation, and that marriages entered into "ohne innere Notwendigkeit ... nur zu häufig den Keim zu einer unheilvollen Entwicklung in sich tragen" (*ML III*, 214). The presentation of the failed marriage between Alfred and Caroline examines the failure of such a union. Alfred's and Caroline's marriage fails because he no longer loves Caroline when he marries her, and is in fact in love with Therese. Equally, Lewald's critique of such marriages as themselves immoral, even though they might be sanctioned by "die bloße Gewohnheit und die kirchliche Erlaubnis," (*ML III*, 214f) provides the basis for her positive presentation of the relationship between Alfred and Therese in the novel.

¹⁰²Bolz, *Wahlverwandtschaften* 165.

¹⁰³Bolz, *Wahlverwandtschaften* 180.

Lewald's assertion of the primacy of love and passion thus provides an implicit argument for the admission of an element of instability into the legal codification of the marital relationship, arguing also that this is the only morally sound way to proceed. Lewald's novel thus presents a radical contestation of the philosophical jurisprudence current at the time, and demonstrates that Savigny's proposals would transform marriage into an institution that supports an unethical moral code. The text thus poses a challenge to the instrumentalisation of women in the marital relationship according to the disciplinary model of love developed by Fichte, as discussed in the introductory section of the present thesis. As I have shown, there is a line of continuity from Fichte, through the Revisor¹⁰⁴ to Savigny, that enables the latter to state that divorce is a threat to women's moral stature.¹⁰⁵ In a context in which women are to subordinate themselves to the male and identify themselves with his desire in the name of love, Lewald's insistence on a different kind of love is contestatory. Her depiction of the primacy and of the transitory nature of passionate love, which cannot be contained by the disciplinary activity of the law, in fact replicates Hegel's formulation of the destabilising element within marriage in his *Grundlinien einer Philosophie des Rechts*, although her recommendation is opposed to that of Hegel:

Die Ehe soll nicht durch Leidenschaft gestört werden, denn diese ist ihr untergeordnet. ... Weil die Ehe das Moment der Empfindung enthält, ist sie nicht absolut, sondern schwankend und hat die Möglichkeit der Auflösung in sich. Aber die Gesetzgebungen müssen diese Möglichkeit aufs höchste erschweren und das Recht der Sittlichkeit gegen das Belieben aufrechterhalten (§163, Zusatz).¹⁰⁶

The contrast between Hegel's acknowledgement of feelings and passion, and Savigny's presentation of love as a disciplinary mechanism could not be more stark, and demonstrates that the pragmatic lawmakers avoided acknowledgement of the element that could destabilise their efforts to transform marriage into a predictably performing institution of the state. In

¹⁰⁴The Revisor states: "Denn sie ist eine natürliche aus dem Wesen der Ehe von selbst nothwendig entspringende, welche der Gesetzgeber als ein vor allen Gesetzen vorher gegebenes Faktum schon vorfindet. Sie zum Objekt eines Zwangsrechts zu machen ist aber auch unrichtig; denn sie beruht lediglich auf dem freien durch die eheliche Liebe bedingten Willen der Frau." Revisor, Gerhard *Verhältnisse* 406f. See discussion above: 1.2. Fichte's "Family Law" as an expression of the sexual contract.

¹⁰⁵See Savigny's view of "die sittliche Erhebung des weiblichen Geschlechts" in marriage above. Quotation, Gerhard, *Verhältnisse* 174. See discussion above: 1.2. Fichte's "Family Law" as an expression of the sexual contract.

¹⁰⁶Hegel, *Grundlinien* 314-15.

this light Lewald's advocacy of equal education for women and men, and her insistence on the primacy of love is a manifold challenge to Savigny's concept of the morality of marriage. Lewald's text shows morality to be a crude construct used to implement the subordination of women within marriage according to the sexual contract.

A final comment needs to be made about the narrative strategies Lewald deploys in arguing her case. *Eine Lebensfrage* divides her challenge to the divorce law reform between the story of the male protagonist and the story of Madame Berendt in such a way as to defuse its contestatory nature. Thus, Alfred, whose feelings are not as great a threat to the stability of the institution of marriage as a woman's would be, is presented as demonstrating the transitory nature of love. He gains sympathy as a man who suffers in his union with a poorly educated woman, and his increasing desire for Therese is understandable in this context. The suffering of Madame Berendt is in turn used to depict the failure of a marriage of convenience. Thus, men as well as women are depicted as being potentially disadvantaged by the law reform proposals, while at the same time it is also clear that neither case is a potential threat to society or the maintenance of public morality. Through its implementation of this strategy, Lewald's text presents an argument for divorce which redefines morality as a function of the ethics of love. The duty of the state is to recognise the primacy of love, to acknowledge that permanency in this human relationship is not possible, to retain the possibility of divorce, and to ensure that women may enter into love relationships and marriage as men's equals.

II.4. Ida Hahn-Hahn: *Aus der Gesellschaft* (1838); *Gräfin Faustine* (1840).

My discussion of Hahn-Hahn focusses on two novels in which the female protagonists display extremes of adherence to, and divergence from, the model of ideal female subjectivity and sexuality prescribed by the sexual contract. In the moment in which they acknowledge their love to a beloved bourgeois male, Ilda Schönholm in *Aus der Gesellschaft*, and Faustine, the eponymous heroine of *Gräfin Faustine*,¹ both appear to display exemplary adherence to the model of ideal love as it is explicated by Fichte. However, their conduct of heterosexual love relationships otherwise contests the developmental path prescribed for women, as does their intellectual and artistic development and their view of their destiny. Although the contestatory behaviour of these heroines has been highlighted by Hahn-Hahn scholars,² and although there has been some acknowledgement that there are two sides to Faustine's character,³ the aspect of self-abnegation displayed by both heroines in their love relationships with bourgeois men has not been fully explored.⁴

¹*Aus der Gesellschaft* (1838) is the title of the first edition of this novel. Ida Gräfin Hahn-Hahn, *Aus der Gesellschaft* (Berlin: Duncker, 1838). When republished in the edition of Hahn-Hahn's collected works in 1845, it was renamed *Ilda Schönholm*, and the entire collection was titled *Aus der Gesellschaft* (c.f. Möhrmann *Frau*, 175, fn.151). Scholars have since used either title. I will use the original, as does Möhrmann (*Frau* 100). Gerlinde Maria Geiger uses the later title and erroneously refers to the 1838 edition as "Ilda Schönholm" in her list of title abbreviations. (*Die befreite Psyche: Emanzipationsansätze im Frühwerk Ida Hahn-Hahns (1838-1848)*) (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1986) 11.

Future references to the novel *Gräfin Faustine* will be abbreviated to *Faustine*. Ida Gräfin Hahn-Hahn, *Gräfin Faustine*, Nachwort von Annemarie Taeger (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1986).

²Gerlinde Geiger *Psyche* 61. Möhrmann states that Ilda is one of Hahn-Hahn's emancipated figures, "die sich nicht mehr zu traditioneller Unterwürfigkeit oder altbewahrter Heuchelei hergeben wollen, sondern unangepaßt und selbstbewußt, jenseits der konventionellen Moral, ihre eigenen Wertvorstellungen zu behaupten versuchen." (*Frau* 101) She finds that Ilda's "Nichtanpassung bereits so extrem ist," that the latter challenges society's valorisation of motherhood as "das Höchste" that a woman can accomplish (*Frau* 101). Although Möhrmann links Hahn-Hahn's critique to Rahel, it in fact strongly expresses the author's sentiments, as Gerlinde Geiger has shown. Geiger cites a letter that suggests that Hahn-Hahn viewed "das Ausleben Ihrer Kreativität als Schriftstellerin mit dem Muttersein im familiären Rahmen" as irreconcilable opposites (*Psyche* 42-3).

³C.f. Gerlinde Geiger states that Hahn-Hahn thematises the "Doppelnatur der Frau" through the juxtaposition of Faustine and her twin sister Adele, who finds fulfilment with her husband and married life. Geiger comments that in Faustine's decision to marry Mengen the twin sister in her wins the upper hand (*Psyche* 187).

⁴Annemarie Taeger's psychoanalytic reading of the dynamic of the marital relationship with Mengen looks at aspects of Faustine's self-abnegatory behaviour. See discussion below Nachwort, *Gräfin Faustine*, by Gräfin Ida Hahn-Hahn (Bonn: Bouvier, 1986) 245-268.

This aspect of Hahn-Hahn's work is particularly interesting in the context of the present thesis for a number of reasons. Firstly, in all the works I consider in this thesis, and in all Hahn-Hahn's pre-conversion novels, *Ilda* and *Faustine* provide the only detailed examples of a female figure who voluntarily relinquishes her desire and allows her self to be re-inscribed by the desire of the beloved in a manner that appears to accord with Fichte's model. Secondly, while Hahn-Hahn is the only writer to present a model of self-abnegatory female love as an ideal, she is also the only one to explore the negative dynamics of the resultant marital relationship. This exploration, truncated in *Ilda*'s story by Otto's refusal to accept *Ilda*'s sacrifice of her self, becomes a feature of *Faustine*'s story. In Hahn-Hahn's first novel, *Ilda* thus remains captive to her love while otherwise asserting her autonomy and determining her destiny outside the boundaries of love and marriage. *Gräfin Faustine* then traces the story of a heroine who succumbs temporarily to the shackles of marriage, but manages to free herself.

My discussion will show that each novel problematises the difference between the ideal of love promoted by the female protagonists and that promoted by their bourgeois beloveds. In doing so, each novel teases out the difference between the self-surrender enacted by the women, and the model of female self-abnegation promoted in the bourgeois model of ideal love according to Fichte. While the women expect the love relationship to be one of mutuality, the bourgeois model requires that the woman surrender her self within the love relationship. *Ilda*'s and *Faustine*'s expression of self-abnegation to their lover is instead an internally directed surrender. While *Ilda* maintains the illusion of mutuality until she receives Otto's letter of renunciation, this illusion is shattered for *Faustine* much sooner, in the lengthy scene in which she and Mengen acknowledge their love for one another, and she agrees to commit herself to Mengen.

Otto and Mengen do not separate love from marriage. They thus consider their love for *Ilda* and *Faustine* in terms of its social contextualisation and consequently in terms of the social regulation of sexual love relationships by the bourgeois sexual moral code. While the difference of perception is only implicitly drawn out in Hahn-Hahn's first novel through the contrast in *Ilda*'s assumptions and Otto's description of marriage in his letter of renunciation,

it is presented much more clearly in *Faustine*, where Mengen delineates his view of marriage and the marital relationship as a disciplinary exercise to which Faustine must subject herself. In each novel, the bourgeois view of marriage and the marital relationship is presented by the male rather than by the female protagonist or the narrator, in the first novel in Otto's letter, and in *Faustine* through Mengen's narration of his marriage to Faustine. The theory of bourgeois marriage practice is thus clearly allocated to the bourgeois masculine voice in Hahn-Hahn's texts, and presented as quite distinct from that of the female.⁵

Both these love relationships have an autobiographical basis in Hahn-Hahn's relationship with Heinrich Simon,⁶ and have been viewed as Hahn-Hahn's writing cure.⁷ However, although there are similarities, there are also differences between the author's relationship and those of her fictional characters.⁸ My focus in the present discussion is solely on the novels' working through of the differences between love as it is experienced by the female protagonists and the different models of love and sexual love relationship inscribed in social practice.

Both *Aus der Gesellschaft* and *Faustine* demonstrate that the bourgeois ideal of love relies upon female self-abnegation and women's absolute subordination to their husbands according to the sexual moral code enforced within bourgeois society. Like Lewald's *Jenny* and *Eine Lebensfrage*, these two novels by Hahn-Hahn assert the incompatibility of the bourgeois definition of marriage with the love felt by the female figures. However, while the female figures of each author contest the bourgeois ideal of the heterosexual relationship and

⁵Although Taeger notes the "die zweifache perspektivische Brechung der Erzählstruktur" (252) in *Faustine*, she analyses it only from the perspective of Faustine's silencing. Gerlinde Gelger provides a similar reading of Mengen's narration of the marriage (*Psyche* 150).

⁶See Marie Helene for an account of the relationship. [pseud. for Marie Helene Elisabeth le Maistre], *Gräfin Ida Hahn-Hahn: Ein Lebensbild nach der Natur gezeichnet* (Leipzig: Fleischer, 1869) 31-41.

⁷C.f. See Gerlinde Gelger's discussion of *Faustine* (*Psyche* 150).

⁸Simon renounced Hahn-Hahn when she would not marry him, and he did not attempt to force her to give up Bystram. Marie Helene, Hahn-Hahn's first biographer, cites a passage from Simon's farewell letter, in which he states he renounces Hahn-Hahn because he cannot bring himself to make her take action against herself: "Du stehst in einer Verbindung, die Du nicht brechen kannst, ohne wahrhaft unglücklich zu sein, ohne dich selbst aufzugeben." He refers to their discussion of two different kinds of unhappiness, one of which is brought about by fate, the other "welche allein tödtlich ist, weil das Unglück durch Aufgeben des Menschenwerthes herbeigeführt." Simon describes the violence of his inner struggle, and states: "Ich habe es gewußt, daß Du mir gehörtest, - und ich habe Dir entsagt." Marie Helene 38-9.

marriage, Lewald's novels do not present the possibility of a de facto relationship outside these boundaries. Hahn-Hahn's immunity from the bourgeois sexual moral code in her relationship with Bystram probably enabled her to present the de facto relationship, or "wilde Ehe" as a positive alternative in *Faustine*. The slightly more relaxed aristocratic sexual moral code meant that Hahn-Hahn's social milieu tolerated the relationship, even if the tolerance was aided by the rumour that they had secretly married.⁹ I would suggest further that, on the basis of the documentation available on her experience with Simon, Hahn-Hahn's own experience shows that she was only immune from the bourgeois code while in a relationship with a like-minded aristocrat such as Bystram. Otto's letter explaining his reasons for renouncing Ilda indicates that at the very least, Hahn-Hahn was exploring two different aspects of the social regulation of heterosexual relationships. Firstly, the novels present the incompatibility of the ideal of mutual self-surrender in love with the aristocratic and the bourgeois codes. Secondly, they present the fact that female aristocrats falling in love with bourgeois men were likely to be subjected to the disciplinary practice of the bourgeois sexual moral code.

Hahn-Hahn's perspective as a member of the aristocracy is complementary to the perspectives of Gutzkow, Mundt and Lewald.¹⁰ These three writers present a largely

⁹Marie Helene 59.

¹⁰Hahn-Hahn has been both positively and negatively identified as a "Salonschriftstellerin," and her novels accordingly assessed as positive and negative contributions to the genre of the "Salonroman." Sengle I: 92. Möhrmann shows that Sengle contradicts himself in negatively assessing Hahn-Hahn and the Young Germans as "Salonschriftsteller" while acknowledging more positively the "Restauration des Adels" during the Biedermeier period (*Frau* 92). Taeger states that the exclusion of "den Bereich der politischen Partei- und Klassenkämpfe" from Hahn-Hahn's works enables the exploration of "das Konfliktpotential von Intimität" (264). Equally, Hahn-Hahn's focus on the aristocracy has been viewed as a limitation by most scholars until Möhrmann's statement that the writer's significance lies in the fact that she "erbrachte nicht mehr und nicht weniger als den frauenemanzipatorischen Beitrag ihres Standes." Möhrmann *Frau* 93. Gerlinde Geiger provides an excellent review of Hahn-Hahn commentary and scholarship which shows that aristocratic elitism was but one charge levelled at the writer (*Psyche* 17-32). However, Geiger's assertion that the author presents mainly aristocratic heroines for strategic reasons is rather tenuous. She claims the author "will die Frauen von der bürgerlichen Sphäre abheben, um ihr [sic MV] die Möglichkeit zu geben, ihre Psyche von der bürgerlichen Moral zu befreien." She reasons unconvincingly that this is the case because Hahn-Hahn presents "die schädliche Auswirkung eines solchen Ideals auf den Körper der Frau" in the figure of a bourgeois character" (*Psyche* 50). As I demonstrate, Hahn-Hahn presents the negative effects of this ideal on the body and the psyche of an aristocratic woman, Faustine, who is able to escape because her economic and social circumstances grant her independence from its regimen, and she displays the psychic

bourgeois viewpoint which was probably determined by their desire to remain or to rise within the educated bourgeoisie. In turn, Lewald's ethnicity condemned her to the position of the doubly other in the German Christian bourgeois society of the time. While each of these three writers contests the prevailing sexual moral conventions, they view themselves as members of the educated bourgeoisie, and the challenges issued in their texts are not as far-reaching as those of Hahn-Hahn's texts. None of these writers presents a viable alternative outside the social structures of bourgeois society. Except for Lewald's Jenny, the contestation of the bourgeois female ideal by Mundt's and Lewald's bourgeois female figures is limited in the final instance by the fact that they have no option but to live in the society that enforces the ideal. Gutzkow's aristocratic Wally is not subject to the same external pressures, but cannot survive because she has internalised the requirements of the ideal of self-constitution through the beloved male other to the point where she cannot realise any alternative model of self-constitution. Lewald's Jenny, exercises great freedom in her choice of male partner, as she is not bound by the requirements of the sexual contract. Just as Jenny's life is not determined by the notion that it is her duty to marry, so too Hahn-Hahn's figures Ilda and Faustine exercise similar freedom as aristocrats of independent means. However, Jenny could never propose a *de facto* relationship as an alternative to marriage, as this would serve to cast her out completely. Hahn-Hahn is the only writer who has the freedom to present an ideal and viable relationship that is free of the bourgeois code and at the same time imbricated within a social context, that of aristocratic salon society.¹¹

The lives of Ilda and Faustine thus present an exploration of the disciplinary effects of the aristocratic marriage of convenience and the bourgeois sexual moral code on aristocratic women, while simultaneously showing how the aristocratic and bourgeois codes were implemented in this time of social transition. Aristocratic women who married within their own caste were subject to arranged marriages, while those who married a bourgeois were in turn subject to the disciplinary effects of the bourgeois sexual moral code. Each code defined

strength necessary to escape its imposition in her personal relationship with Mengen.

¹¹Faustine states: "eine Gräfin Obernau, der die Salons verschlossen sind, ist eine verlorne Person (F 69).

women as subordinate to men, and love as irrelevant, in keeping with the terms of the sexual contract.

II.4.1. *Aus der Gesellschaft.*

II.4.1.a. Love and bourgeois marriage: Ilda and Otto.

The novel's interest in exploring different kinds of love and love relationship is foregrounded in its juxtaposition of Ilda's and Otto's climactic mutual acknowledgment of love to each other with Otto's letter of renunciation, and Werffen's proposal of a "Vernunftehe" to Ilda. These juxtapositions contrast Ilda's complete surrender to her love and her utter lack of concern for its social viability with the concepts of love and marriage held by the two men. Different though the men may be in terms of personality, drive and social caste, both of them view their relationship with Ilda in terms of marriage rather than love. Even Otto, who is passionately in love with her, renounces her because he views their relationship as socially unviable. He is unwilling to live in a *de facto* relationship, but recognises that she would be destroyed by the demands of bourgeois marriage.

Otto is described as an authoritative powerful "Persönlichkeit," a man who, according to the narrator, makes an impact despite being "ohne Namen, ohne Vermögen und Rang" (AG 120). He is an exemplar of the nineteenth century "neue[r] Mensch," the man who has emancipated himself from "Haus und Stand," and instead has "'persönlichen Stand;' sein Verhalten wird innengeleitet, er handelt aus Reflexion und Abstraktion."¹² Ilda is attracted by these characteristics in a man who looks like "ein Mensch, nicht wie eine Puppe" (AG 105).¹³ Werffen, the aristocratic counterpoint to Otto, who takes exception to this "Erscheinung der Zeit" (AG 120) and the latter's success in salon society,¹⁴ is himself the target of Ilda's critique of the aristocracy ("sie hat keine Kraft im Blut mehr" (AG 121)). Of the aristocrat, who must now rely on the force of his personality to give him the status he

¹²Nipperdey 451.

¹³According to Marie Helene, this was precisely what Hahn-Hahn said on first meeting Heinrich Simon, the model for Otto (AG 34).

¹⁴Werffen complains: "Vor fünfzig Jahren wäre so etwas unmöglich gewesen, ... damals blieb ein Herr Otto in der Schreibstube oder wo er sich sonst placirt hatte, und figurirte nicht im Salon auf glänzende Weise." (AG 120)

previously enjoyed as a birthright, she observes: "[E]s ist freilich kläglich zu sehen, wie selten ihm das gelingt." (AG 123)

Ilda's and Otto's mutual declaration of their love on the eve of Otto's departure is the climactic point of the novel. Ilda's articulation of her love in fact emphasises the mutuality of their love for each other. While Ilda emphasises the lasting power of their love, and stresses "vor Allem: keine Trennung" (AG 215), Otto's deep-seated ambivalence about the possibility of entering a lasting relationship with her becomes clearer in the course of the conversation. Even while he acknowledges the depth of his love, Otto is pessimistic about the possibility of their remaining together. When they part, Ilda is under the illusion that he shares her view of their future together until she receives his letter of renunciation.

Ilda's complete self-surrender to Otto cannot be distinguished from the self-abnegation required by the ideal of love as formulated by Fichte. Ilda expresses this extreme form of self-abnegation twice. When Otto proposes to her, her response is to grow pale, while replying: "Wenn Du es wünschest" (AG 217). She explains her response as a reaction to her previous marital experience, but when he asks whether she would then prefer to become his lover, she gives the same response, namely: "Wenn du es wünschest" (AG 218). When he becomes a little impatient and asks: "wünschest du denn nichts?", Ilda replies: "Nichts - als Dich zu lieben und bei dir zu sein." (AG 218) This absolute passivity, subordination, and self-abnegation in a character who up to this point has consistently been able to express what she wants, and act to get it, is a remarkable phenomenon. Its absolute nature is only called into question by Otto in his letter of renunciation.

Otto refuses to accept Ilda's willingness to sacrifice her self to him as his wife or his mistress, stating that he cannot accept the latter because of the gossip that would ruin her reputation (AG 221). Equally, he cannot accept responsibility for her certain unhappiness in the "Hühnerhof" (AG 221) that is bourgeois marriage. He presents marriage as limiting and constricting for someone such as Ilda, stating: "Du bist an Beschränkung keiner Art gewöhnt, bist frei, reich, gebietend, kurz, das Alles, was ich Deiner Existenz nicht schaffen kann, und

was du mir opfern müßtest" (AG 221).¹⁵ Ilda is devastated when she receives Otto's letter, and when her friend the Baron finds that Otto has acted correctly, as an "edler Mensch" (AG 224) she states "... er kann kein Opfer annehmen, und wer keins annimmt, ist unfähig, eins zu bringen." (AG 224) While Ilda insists that she wants nothing but to love Otto and to be with him (AG 218), and that she wants to remain with him under whatever conditions he proposes, he asserts it is impossible (AG 218). He emphasises in his letter that he will never love anybody but Ilda, and that the alternatives for him are work or death (AG 228). The epilogue describes him as making his way "sicher und ruhig durch die Welt; der Mann, der sich selbst beherrschen kann, ist geschaffen um sie zu beherrschen." (AG 281) Two years after Otto's departure, Ilda reportedly lives in Italy and Switzerland, "bewundert, gefeiert, sorgsam den Purpurmantel über ihrem Herzen zusammenhaltend" (AG 281), protecting herself from further pain in love.

The key to Ilda's insistence on her desire and capacity for self-abnegation is provided by a conversation with the baron, in which she argues that when the time is out of joint, or "verkehrt" (AG 160), as the weakness of the aristocracy in the present historical period demonstrates, women are also affected, and must seek to save themselves (AG 160-61). Ilda criticises salon culture, which has also perverted the women of her social caste, requiring that they expend their energy in the superficial pursuit of appearing beautiful and witty (AG 163). When the Baron asks whether she wishes women to be "Sclavinnen oder Mägde," Ilda asserts:

Glauben Sie wirklich, daß Porcia, Arria, Cornelia, Sclavinnen Ihrer Gatten waren? und nennen Sie die deutsche Rittersfrau Magd, weil sie dem Willen ihres Herrn und Gemals gehorchte? Lieber Baron, glauben Sie mir, es ist für keine Frau ein Unglück, wie Porcia Sclavin des Brutus, oder die Hausfrau eines Götz von Berlichingen zu sein. (AG 163)

¹⁵Gert Oberembt identifies this reading of caste difference as Otto's reason for separating himself from Ilda: "Ilda und Otto heben sich deshalb von den anderen Personen ab, weil sie am reinsten den privaten Charakter ihrer Beziehung realisieren und weil sie, als eigentlich vorurteilslos über die Institution Ehe denkend, am schärfsten den Widerspruch der Institution erfahren." *Ida Gräfin Hahn-Hahn: Weltschmerz und Ultramontanismus: Studien zum Unterhaltungsroman im 19. Jahrhundert* (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1980) 99.

While she expresses a self-abnegatory ideal of love and marriage here, the ideal she expresses to Werffen when he proposes a "Vernunftehe" to her (AG 246-251), is one predicated on love, complementarity, and unity in the couple (AG 248). Moreover, Ilda's insistence on her desire to subordinate herself completely to the beloved male is not tested in the narrative. Otto's refusal to accept her self-sacrifice suggests that although her ideal of love is that of complete subjection to the will of the male, she is unlikely to carry it out in practice. The ideal thus cannot be equated with the model of love proposed by Fichte. It is, however, clear that Ilda's surrender to Otto is a surrender to love rather than a socially-imposed behavioural code.

II.4.1.b. Love and libertine codes.

The relationships between Regine and Polydor, and Ondine and Casimir in *Aus der Gesellschaft* present the clash of the ideal of self-surrender in love with the aristocratic libertine code for men and the related code of the female *précieuse*.¹⁶ Both Casimir and Regine are described as heartless manipulators of the aristocratic code of seduction, adept at the manipulation of social moral codes defining love and virtue: each ensnares their victim using a socially sanctioned code of behaviour to their own advantage. In contrast, Ondine and Polydor act with authenticity: unaware of the codes governing seduction, they are unaware that love can be a game.

Although Casimir is presented as weak and unredeemable, Regine is presented as an orphan brought up in a corrupt environment, a victim of her upbringing. Her duplicity as a *précieuse* revolves around maintaining her unblemished reputation as a virtuous woman

¹⁶In his review of changes in the code of passionate love of the Middle Ages during the seventeenth century in France, Luhmann states that the significant change involved the fact that "the unattainability of the woman worshipped was shifted by virtue of being transformed into a decision made by the woman herself. ... In France, care was taken to ensure that the social status of women was endowed with greater freedom and with the possibility of the woman deciding things for herself. This led to the distinction between the '*précieuses*' and the '*coquettes*': the former always said no and the latter always said yes. It comes as no surprise that the '*précieuses*' were the more worthy objects of pursuit." (Luhmann 49-50). Regine, of course, always says no, while deploying an arsenal of strategies to entrap men. This contradicts Gert Oberembt, who calls Regine a "Kokette." (134)

while practising strategies of entrapment.¹⁷ Brought up for "die Anforderungen der Welt" (AG 131), her concept of virtue is based on a corrupt and hypocritical moral code: "Einen andern Begriff von Tugend, als den eines makellosen Rufes hatte Regine nicht." (AG 131) Regine's breakdown thus marks her as a person capable of an authentic response and her suffering, limited though her capacity for love may be,¹⁸ redeems her. Her collapse prepares for her redemption,¹⁹ and also adumbrates Ondine's mental decline. Möhrmann describes Casimir as one of the "Roués des Salons,"²⁰ and notes Ondine's ignorance of the "amouröse[n] Usancen dieser Kreise."²¹ She concludes that Casimir's behaviour is typical male behaviour, viewing Ondine as an example of "den unselbständigen und hilflosen Frauentypus, welcher an der gesellschaftlich tolerierten männlichen Skrupellosigkeit zerbricht."²² However, Casimir's behaviour is legitimated by the sexual moral code that expects both parties to play the same game.

Ondine's madness and death,²³ and Askanio's suicide in an attempt to spare Ondine and his family the shame of her defection can be viewed as the result of Ondine's transgression.

¹⁷Möhrmann describes Regine as a bored and beautiful young widow who whiles away the time as an "allumeuse d'hommes," entrapping "die Neulinge der Gesellschaft in ihre raffiniert ausgespannten Netze" (*Frau* 102).

¹⁸Both Ilda (AG 271) and Polydor (AG 279) view Regine as incapable of great passion.

¹⁹The novel's epilogue states that Regine is about to marry well, and for love. Oberembt expresses disbelief that Regine's character can develop as it does. His reading focusses on the clichéd aspects of Regine's and Polydor's character, re-christening Polydor as Gaston. (Oberembt 134)

²⁰Möhrmann, 102.

²¹Möhrmann, 102.

²²Möhrmann, 102.

²³In the epilogue it is reported that: "Ondine schlummert an der Pyramide des Cestius" (AG, 281). This final resting place of Ondine's is a gravestone in Rome, fashioned in the form of a pyramid, and sufficiently well-known in the nineteenth century to be mentioned in the first edition of Grimm's dictionary. Grimm, XIII, 2287. The specific reference to the Cestius pyramid probably underlines the meaning of "schlummern," since it denotes a well-known gravesite. According to the Grimm brothers, the term "Pyramide" may be used for "ein in pyramidenform errichtetes grabmal, z.B. die Pyramide des Cestius in Rom." The reference would indicate that attempts to revive her broken spirit failed, but that she has found peace in her final resting place. Geiger misreads the account of Ondine's mental illness and death, maintaining that Ondine, the fallen woman, is helped "wieder zu einem positiven Selbstbild" by her friend Ilda. Geiger writes: "Auf die latente Kraft des Begehrens, die in Ondine schläft, wird am Ende des Romans hingewiesen: sie "schlummert an der Pyramide des Cestius." Geiger appears to assume Cestius is an Egyptian reference, since she notes the significance of Egypt in Hahn-Hahn's work, stating that it is a topos which denotes "den unbestimmten Ort "Mutterland." Geiger concludes that: "Ondine ist zwar schon durch die Hilfe Ildas dorthin gekommen, aber die in ihr schlummernde Energie muß von ihr selbst gefunden werden,

However, this in turn can be viewed as the result of society's transgression in prescribing a path for women which does not allow them to develop mentally or emotionally before requiring them to marry and bear children while children themselves. Characters such as Ondine can only come to know and understand their own desire once its fulfilment has the potential to endanger more individuals than just themselves. Through the figure of Ondine Hahn-Hahn thus provides a critique of the forms of the sexual contract, demonstrating the artificiality of a social form which does not allow women the autonomy of subjecthood.

Hahn-Hahn's re-writing of the Undine myth emphasises that the sexual act that is the linchpin of the sexual contract does not automatically provide a woman with the kind of soul she requires in order to fulfil the demands of the contract. The story of Undine in Fouqué's text depicts a progression from activity to passivity, from a freely lived-out sexuality to its suppression. The literary Undine does not possess a soul until her wedding night, when her sexual union with Huldbrand von Ringstetten also transforms her from a sexually precocious young woman into a "leidendes liebendes Weib."²⁴ Upon receiving a soul, Undine thus begins to behave as required of the ideal wife under the conditions of the sexual contract. The acquisition of the soul can be read metaphorically as an entry into the terms of the sexual contract. Iida's emphasis in her description of Ondine is on a sexuality that incites the sexual desire of men (AG 11). Hahn-Hahn's Ondine is, as Stephan writes of the mythical Undine, "Person gewordene Natur, auf die sich das Begehren des Mannes richten kann."²⁵ Although Ondine does possess a soul, she, like her literary predecessor Undine, represents unsocialised nature. Ondine is not versed in convention, as are Regine and Iida, and does not possess Iida's intellectual interests, or strength of will or character. She also does not know the dangers of following her heart. She unequivocally follows her heart, and does not negate the validity of her feelings or attempt to rewrite them, even when they have proved destructive, and the

indem sie von alleine aufwacht. Dabei kann ihr keine/r helfen" (61).

²⁴C.f. Gisela Dischner, Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué: *Undine*. (1811) *Romane und Erzählungen der deutschen Romantik*, ed., Paul Michael Lützeler (Stuttgart: Reclam 1981) 264-284, 271.

²⁵Inge Stephan, "Weiblichkeit, Wasser und Tod: Undinen, Melusinen und Wasserfrauen bei Eichendorff und Fouqué," Berger, Renate and Inge Stephan, eds. *Weiblichkeit und Tod in der Literatur* (Köln Wien: Böhlau) 117-139, 121.

object of her desire is false. Through this figure Hahn-Hahn depicts the dangers of a path which consigns women to marriage and childbirth without any education or access to broader experience of life. Ondine's story also exposes a society which tolerates men like Casimir, and the libertine code that gives men licence to behave as they will, while punishing only women for sexual transgressions.²⁶

Taken together, the three relationships of *Aus der Gesellschaft* thus do more than simply demonstrate "die Auswirkungen, die der aristokratische Sittenkodex auf die Beziehungen der Geschlechter zueinander hatte."²⁷ Rather, the three relationships look at the effects of the socially-enforced aristocratic and bourgeois sexual moral codes on individuals who view love as a relationship of equals, and as an emotion rather than a regulated social practice.

II.4.2. *Gräfin Faustine.*

My discussion of Faustine's development in terms of the sexual contract focusses on her critique and contestation of its terms in the course of her involvements with Andlau and Mengen. I will also consider Faustine's decision to leave her marriage and her son in pursuit of her spiritual vocation. In allowing Faustine to choose this path, the novel contests many of the limitations placed on a woman's development by the normative female ideal and by definitions of appropriate female behaviour. In embarking on a spiritual quest, Faustine inserts herself into a position marked as male, and challenges the definition of women according to their sexual and biological functions.

²⁶Gerlinde Geiger discusses the figure of Ondine as one of the ways in which Hahn-Hahn takes issue with and rewrites images of women propagated by male authors in early nineteenth-century texts such as Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué's *Undine*. Geiger argues that the literary model is rewritten in a way which shows that Ondine is in fact without power in her society. According to Geiger, Hahn-Hahn's reconfiguration of the mythical literary predecessor contextualises behaviour in terms of social reality, exposing the hypocritical double standard of social morality, which forbids women to live out their desire outside marriage, and which does not forgive their lapses (60). The power of Ondine's sexuality thus destroys her rather than Casimir, as Geiger points out (61).

²⁷Möhrmann, *Frau* 101. Oberembt in contrast asserts that the organising thematic link is more tenuous: "Die äußerliche Legitimation der Bündelung der Vorgänge, ihrer Zusammenstellung mit dem Leben ist freilich schlicht: es ist die Kommunikationsfreude der begeisternden Künstlerin, die Tatsache, daß sie alle Welt kennt, einen Salon hat." (Oberembt 97)

II.4.2.a. Extra-marital idyll vs bourgeois containment.

Faustine's relationships with Andlau and Mengen contrast an idyllic non-marital partnership, regulated by Andlau's ethical code of "Grundsätze" (GF 18) with a marital relationship governed by the "anerkannt[es] fest[es] Gesetz" (GF 222). Andlau is her "'Vater oder Freund, Lehrer oder Geliebter,' nicht der Herr und Gatte, der ein verbrieftes Recht hat an der Gewalt über die Person der Frau."²⁸ As Taeger writes, Faustine's time in paradise with Andlau comes to an end with the entry of her passion for Mengen,²⁹ who forces her to decide between himself and Andlau just after they have acknowledged their mutual love to each other.³⁰ When Faustine first acknowledges her love to Mengen, she places herself in a submissive position at his feet, and refuses to allow him to raise her (GF 180-81). When she finally accedes to him she subordinates herself to him: "der Augenblick beherrschte sie, die Gegenwart siegte; sie vergaß die Vergangenheit und dachte nicht an die Zukunft" (GF 199)). She also acknowledges the power relations that obtain between them by placing his arms around her neck "wie ein Joch," and asking if he has understood her (GF 199). The narrator emphasises: "Sie war ganz von ihm beherrscht" (GF 199), acting according to his will, and negating her own feelings about Bystram. Faustine also accedes to his insistence that they marry, even though she has explained her antipathy to marriage by telling him her brutal marital history.

As Taeger argues, the terms of Mengen's refusal to countenance a relationship without marriage negate her past, and "damit ihre Identität."³¹ In addition, they signal that he is likely to continue to negate her as a person when her views conflict with his perception of the law governing their relationship. From the outset he thus places Faustine in the position she will occupy in the marital relationship, in which her opinion is of no value. He states:

Meinst du, ich würd' es mir gefallen lassen, daß die Frau, der ich meinem Leben weihe, meinen Namen zu tragen verschmähte? meinst du, ich könnte mich zufrieden

²⁸Taeger 258.

²⁹Taeger 258.

³⁰Taeger notes that Mengen forces the decision by not allowing her time for reflection (258). In contrast, Möhrmann radically simplifies the narrative by claiming that Faustine simply overcomes her antipathy to marriage, writes Andlau a farewell letter and marries Mengen (*Frau* 106).

³¹Taeger 259.

geben in einem schiefen, aller Mißdeutung fähigen Verhältnis, wenn dieses durch nichts motiviert wird als durch die Laune der Frau? (GF 201)

Mengen, like Alfred in Lewald's *Eine Lebensfrage*, reproduces the conditions of the bourgeois code and therefore the sexual contract that place women in positions subordinate to men under the guise of protecting them: "Wie soll ich sie [i.e. the woman he loves MV] schützen, wenn sie nicht öffentlich freiwillig unter meinen Schutz getreten ist? ... Tausende können dir huldigen, einzelne dich lieben, dein Gatte kann dich schützen und ehren - er allein so, wie es dir gebührt." (GF 201)

However, although Faustine submits to Mengen's greater power in agreeing to marry him, his account of his marriage to Faustine, both reveals his disciplinary project, and discloses its failure. He retrospectively describes his tutelary aims as follows: "Meinen Erziehungsprojekten zufolge sollte sie sich aber an den geregelten, einförmigen Gang der Existenz im Verkehr mit anderen wie in der bürgerlichen Stellung gewöhnen." (GF 228) Mengen describes his desire that she submit to the law, and indeed refers to her "Fügsamkeit." However, he does not confirm that she did indeed internalise the disciplinary mechanisms as he desired:

[B]ei allen Angelegenheiten des Lebens hatte sie eine Fügsamkeit in den fremden Willen, die sich nie verleugnete, und die ich tausendmal auf harte Probe stellte; denn ich wollte, daß sie sich fügen lernen sollte - nicht mir! ach, daß sie mich liebte, war mein Triumph, nicht, daß ich sie dominierte! - aber dem anerkannten festen Gesetz. Ich glaubte, die allmähliche Gewöhnung würde auch ihre innerste Wesenheit nach und nach zügeln können [emphasis added MV]. (GF 222)

Faustine's escape from her marriage confirms her ultimate resistance to the discipline of love and marriage imposed by him, and shows that she manages to retain her identity.

As I suggested above, Faustine presents the working through of the bourgeois marital relationship based on female self-abnegation and self-constitution through the beloved male according to Fichte's ideal of love. Taeger's psychoanalytic reading of Faustine's relationship with Mengen argues that the melancholia that develops parallel to her artistic career derives from the same cause as Faustine's desire for continuous ecstatic love and for fame. According to Taeger, Faustine's reaction to the countless restrictions this relationship imposes on her, and to its negation of her person, is to turn her feelings of aggression against the person who

would break her will against herself instead: "Die Liebe, die unter solcher Konstellation empfunden werden kann, trägt masochistische Züge, da nicht nur die Selbstrastung (Depression) der ekstatischen Entäußerung folgt, sondern die Leidenschaft selbst aus einer Anstrengung und nicht aus Freiheit produziert wird."³² Under these conditions the necessity to perpetually maintain her "Liebesleistung" consumes all Faustine's energy, but the necessity of keeping "die fixierende Aufmerksamkeit vom Objekt auf das Selbst" does not allow her to pause in her efforts and take the rest she so desperately desires.³³

II.4.2.b. Spirituality.

In keeping with her focus on Faustine's emotional life as being fully determined by her relationship with Mengen, Taeger reads Faustine's decision to enter a convent as a compromise chosen because there is no other alternative.³⁴ Geiger similarly views Faustine's retreat to convent life as a retreat to the only place she can find peace from the relationship with Mengen.³⁵ Faustine's entry into the convent has thus not been considered as an expression of a spiritual quest, Gerlinde Geiger even stating explicitly that it is "metaphorisch und nicht religiös zu verstehen."³⁶ This lack of consideration of the spiritual aspect of Faustine's development, with the concomitant focus on her emotional path, mirrors the second narrator's final assessment of the protagonist. This nameless Countess, who knew Faustine by repute, presents the latter's progress as a journey to self-destruction, claiming of Faustine that "eine solche feingeistige Vampirnatur verbrennt und verbraucht - zuerst den andern, dann sich selbst" (GF 244). This is similar to Mengen's view, which asserts that Faustine is spent when she enters the convent, and that her death follows on "dumpfe[r] Trostlosigkeit" and results from "ein Irrtum" (GF 243).

³²Taeger 262.

³³Taeger 262.

³⁴"Ein radikaler Ausbruch ist nicht mehr möglich." Taeger 259.

³⁵She adds that Faustine's retreat to a convent is to be read metaphorically (Geiger, 153). She argues that: "Das Kloster repräsentiert bei Hahn-Hahn einen Ort des Weiblichen - als dunklen Innenraum -, der den Frauen die Möglichkeit gewährt, sich zu entdecken, zu besinnen, zu sich zu kommen. Es ist abseits, oder jenseits der sich als brutal erweisenden patriarchalen Welt." (Geiger, 83)

³⁶Gerlinde Geiger *Psyche* 153.

However, Faustine's statements that she is tired and wishes a little "Ruhe diesseits [sic MV] des Grabes," and that she is tired "vom Lieben und Leben" (GF 239), are complemented by her statement saying: "Ich habe das Meine getan! nun ist's genug für die Welt!" (GF 240) She disclaims any feelings of guilt or remorse, stating: "Ich will nur Aug und Seele unmittelbar in Anschauung Gottes versenken, statt, wie bisher, in seinen Werken und Geschöpfen ihn zu lieben und zu verherrlichen und statt mich durch das Sichtbare an das Unsichtbare - durch das Vergängliche an das Ewige erinnern zu lassen." (GF 240) The text also provides a counterbalance to Mengen's negative view of her decision to take the veil, and of her death one and a half years after that. Mengen is certain that she did not die as a result of illness, as stated by the church, but that she never attained the third stage of convent life, and died "am langen Gram, an der bitteren Enttäuschung, vielleicht an der zermagenden Reue" (GF 243) of disappointment at her failure. Mengen's view is countered in the text by three people. The priest who mentors her initial decision to take the veil states "gelassen und überzeugt" (GF 242) to Mengen that Faustine has a vocation (GF 241-42). After her death, Faustine's confessor and the head of the convent write to him praising her conduct and assuring him she died at peace (GF 243).³⁷

The readiness of scholars and commentators to reproduce Mengen's view rather than treating Faustine's spiritual quest seriously is a product of the prevailing focus in scholarship on her sexuality and her emotional life, a focus that reproduces the normative definition of women and their social role.³⁸ In the same way as scholars have been reluctant to engage with the aspect of spiritual inquiry in Wally's religious scepticism and Jenny's religious crisis, so too they have not taken Faustine's spiritual vocation seriously, the

³⁷The church authorities would have been regarded positively by Hahn-Hahn. See discussion below.

³⁸Oberembdt has written the only Hahn-Hahn monograph that treats both the pre- and the post-conversion work. However, his readings of the literary texts are episodic, and he fails to provide an integrated overview of Hahn-Hahn's oeuvre. See Patricia Herminghouse for a comparative reading of the pre- and post-conversion novels *Zwei Frauen* (1845) and *Zwei Schwestern* (1863) together with an informative analysis of Hahn-Hahn's conversion and her post-conversion activity. See also her discussion of the focus in recent feminist scholarship on the pre-conversion works, i.e. 1838-48. "Seeing Double: Ida Hahn-Hahn (1805-1880) and her Challenge to Feminist Criticism," *Out of Line/Ausgefallen: The Paradox of Marginality in the Writings of Nineteenth-Century German Woman*, *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur neueren Germanistik* 28 (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1989) 255-278, 267.

general silence on this matter replicating the taboo identified by Blackwell.³⁹ Hahn-Hahn's spiritual interests have thus not been considered by many scholars who focus on her pre-conversion works, and the idea that her spiritual development might have taken root relatively early in her life has thus not been suggested up until now. Hahn-Hahn's confessional text, *Von Babylon nach Jerusalem* (1851),⁴⁰ written after her conversion in 1848, asserts that she had always been "eine schlafende Katholikin."⁴¹ However, she recounts that at the time of her visit to the Mount Carmel monastery in Jerusalem (1843) the idea of conversion to Catholicism had not yet occurred to her.⁴² She adds that some of the letters written from Mount Carmel and published in her *Orientalische Briefe* "später manche Protestanten veranlaßten zu sagen, ich sei katholisch geworden, und einige Katholiken, ich würde es werden."⁴³

Despite the polemical nature of Hahn-Hahn's defence of Catholicism in *Von Babylon nach Jerusalem*, it provides evidence of Hahn-Hahn's interest in spiritual questions many years before her conversion. Given this interest, and given Faustine's history, it is more likely that the latter's desire to take the veil arises from a spiritual vocation than from the sense that this is her final escape route. I would thus read *Faustine* as a novel that presents the possibility of a woman's spiritual quest even while her life appears to be confined within the framework of the marital heterosexual relationship and her creative activity as an artist. In suggesting this line of continuity between Hahn-Hahn's pre- and post-conversion works, I would thus propose a reverse focus from her later to her earlier works.⁴⁴ The fact that

³⁹C.f. discussion in Wally above: II.1.iv. Wally's development I: love and religion. Eda Sagarra notes that Hahn-Hahn had to work quite hard to convince the church of the seriousness of her intention to convert. "Gegen den Zeit- und Revolutionsgeist: Ida Gräfin Hahn-Hahn und die christliche Tendenzliteratur im Deutschland des 19. Jahrhunderts," Gisela Brinker-Gabler, ed., *Deutsche Literatur von Frauen*, vol. 2 (München: Beck, 1988) 105-119, 114.

⁴⁰Ida Hahn-Hahn, *Von Babylon nach Jerusalem* (Mainz: Kirchheim, 1851).

⁴¹Hahn-Hahn, *Babylon* 12.

⁴²Hahn-Hahn, *Babylon* 126-27.

⁴³Hahn-Hahn, *Babylon* 127.

⁴⁴Hahn-Hahn's *Sibylle* (Berlin: Duncker, 1846, 2 vols.) could also be read from this perspective. I am thus proposing the opposite of that suggested by Patricia Herminghouse, who writes that "the double focus of the 'schiele[n]der Blick'" might be a possible model for "read[ing] beyond her [i.e. Hahn-Hahn's MV] own explanations of her religious metamorphosis to see how the choice she made may have been a form of resistance that enabled her to situate herself beyond confinement in the traditional role of daughter, wife,

Faustine chooses to enter a closed order (GF 241-42) leaves the final one and a half years of her life open to interpretation, as I have stated. While it underscores the significance of the change of narrative perspective, making quite clear that Faustine's voice is lost from the moment of her marriage onwards,⁴⁵ it also has another function. Faustine's silencing means that Hahn-Hahn can suggest the option of a life of devotion as a positive prospect without arguing her case directly.

In effecting this multiple challenge through the presentation of Faustine's developmental path, the novel explicitly deconstructs some taboos in place on women's development and activities, demonstrating that women may experience desire on their own behalf and wish to fulfil themselves in arenas other than those of motherhood and marriage. By presenting Faustine's spiritual quest and asserting her right to be in this arena, the novel goes beyond a mere interrogation and critique of the sexual contract to establish an alternative for women's intellectual development as well as their destiny. In so doing, *Gräfin Faustine* connects with but goes beyond the trajectory drawn in Gutzkow's "Wally." Although Wally is able to analyse the constraints imposed upon women, she remains unable to break through the barriers she identifies. Unlike Wally, whose quest is limited by the fact that she seeks recognition and validation from Cäsar even outside their love relationship, Faustine's actions are not directed exclusively by a desire for recognition from the male other, and her desire is thus not circumscribed by the terms of the sexual contract. Her quest, and also her psychic development, ultimately transcend the possibilities offered by heterosexual interactions that are inevitably defined according to the terms of the sexual contract.

mother, lover." (276) Sagarra makes the point that Hahn-Hahn did not reveal the motivation for her conversion, "nicht im wortreichen Briefwechsel und schon gar nicht in der sogenannten Bekenntnisschrift *Von Babylon nach Jerusalem*" Sagarra 113.

⁴⁵C.f. Gerlinde Geiger states that "die Verfasserin (zensiert) völlig den negativen Aspekt von Faustines Lebenslauf: das alltägliche Eheleben mit Mengen." (*Psyche* 150) Taeger notes that Faustine's voice is replaced by that of the husband, "der mit dem Ehekontrakt zum Repräsentanten seiner Frau wird." (252)

Conclusion.

The two-part project of the present thesis has been to establish and then apply a model for the interpretation of female figures in mid-nineteenth-century German literary texts which would enable literary representations of female subjectivity and sexuality to be assessed according to criteria that were relevant at that time.

In Part One of this thesis I provide a reading of Fichte's "Family Law" as an expression of the sexual contract in the sense of Carole Pateman's discussion of classic contract theory in her book, *The Sexual Contract*. According to Pateman, the sexual contract is implemented in modern society through the judicial mechanism of the marriage contract. My analysis of Fichte's text reveals that the judicial mechanism is in fact supported by a range of extra-judicial disciplinary mechanisms. Fichte's text thus shows that the sexual contract which determines women's (sexual) subordination to men and their lack of autonomy in civil society,¹ is supported by the normative ideal of womanhood, and the bifurcation of sexual practice into ideal and non-ideal forms. It is further supported by externally and internally imposed disciplinary mechanisms. The externally imposed mechanisms are public opinion and the behavioural codes that support social, moral and sexual conventions. The internally implemented regulatory mechanisms are love, modesty, virtue and honour.

My exploration, in Part Two, of works by Karl Gutzkow, Theodor Mundt, Fanny Lewald and Ida Hahn-Hahn through the explanatory model of the sexual contract shows that each text presents a critical exploration of the negative impact of the contract on women, heterosexual relationships and sexual practice. The assessment of the contestatory nature of novels by the different authors shows that Gutzkow's *Wally* was in fact the least so, even though its author remains best-known for his challenges to the sexual moral code and its implementation by the established authority of the church. Thus, although Wally is able to analyse the effects of restrictive mechanisms of the sexual contract on her person and on women, she is not able to

¹That is, in all three senses of the term civil society. Pateman, *Contract* 10.

free herself of its determination of her psyche. In contrast, the female figures conceived by Mundt, Lewald and Hahn-Hahn all assert their psychic autonomy in resistance to the sexual contract, and many also pose challenges to its determination of heterosexual relationships and sexual practice. Even though individual female figures such as Mundt's Maria or Hahn-Hahn's Faustine might appear to negate this challenge, or even die, as Lewald's Jenny does, their contestations of the status quo are validated in the texts through the narrative strategies deployed. Mundt's Maria, Lewald's Sophie and Jenny, and Hahn-Hahn's Faustine, issue the most radical resistances to the sexual contract. Maria's rewriting of the psychosexual model of female identity established within Christian doctrine is validated by the text, which also shows that her apparent change of heart occurs for strategic reasons. Sophie's far-reaching challenge to the gendered sexual moral code is successful in terms of its impact on the key figures of the principal narrative strand of the novel, and it is validated by the author allowing Sophie to live. In contrast, the development of Jenny and Faustine, who both initially believe in the ideal of female self-subordination to the beloved, demonstrates its destructive impact and thus the destruction caused by the enforced negation of the female self. In this context, Mundt's presentation of the life and suicide of Charlotte Stieglitz provides the most sobering example of the destructive impact of the model of self-constitution of love that obtained in the sexual contract.

The textual analyses also demonstrate ways in which the normative model of stereotypical masculinity supports the sexual contract and the social status quo through the regulatory mechanism of the duelling code. This reveals the interdependence of models of femininity and masculinity, and their status as disciplinary mechanisms for both the educated bourgeoisie and the nobility in mid-nineteenth century Germany. In all the novels explored, the normative female stereotype and women's subordination to men are enforced by bourgeois men, who are the embodiment of normative masculinity, despite holding politically liberal views. The exceptions, who contest the status quo by stepping outside the boundaries of convention in their conduct of a heterosexual relationship, are the aristocrats Walter and

Andlau, and Mellenberg, the student of theology. Their deaths are the only significant male deaths in the narratives, and all die directly or indirectly as a result of their unconventional love relationship.

My thesis thus attests to the pervasive nature of the sexual contract on the interpersonal level, and its function on the broader social level. The determination by the sexual contract of female identity, women's destiny, and their love relationships with men supports its agency in maintaining the social status quo through the separation of the genders on the one hand, and the public and private spheres on the other. Each literary text I have discussed shows some acknowledgement of the broader social implications of the challenges issued to the sexual contract by its female figures. However, while valorising these challenges and thus the need for social change, each text also demonstrates that the possibilities for women are limited, particularly within heterosexual relationships.

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