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by

Anne Catherine Reitz

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**Reforming the State by Re-forming the Family:**

**Imagining the Romantic Mother**

**in Pedagogy and Letters, 1790-1813**

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**Reforming the State by Re-forming the Family:  
Imagining the Romantic Mother  
in Pedagogy and Letters, 1790-1813**

by

Anne Catherine Reitz, B.A., M.A.

**Dissertation**

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**Reforming the State by Re-forming the Family:**

**Imagining the Romantic Mother**

**in Pedagogy and Letters, 1790-1813**

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This dissertation examines ideological and political elements of portrayals of the family, especially the mother, in early romantic German literature. It claims that Proto-Romantic writers used conservative, traditional images of mothers to conceal much more radical political agendas of egalitarian relations or republicanism.

The first chapter offers an overview of motherhood in the historical German context. It investigates two pedagogy treatises, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi's *Wie Gertrud ihre Kinder lehrt* (1801) and Jean Paul Friedrich Richter's *Levana, oder Erziehlehre* (1806), before moving to the letters of Caroline and Dorothea Schlegel. Both treatises depict mothers as central to the family and creators of socio-political change,

who, in schooling children, shape nations. They instill social consciousness and foster national self-identities in their children, thereby changing social power structures. Early-childhood education tracts thus produce an ideology that elevates mothers as contributors to free nations in a peaceful Europe.

The correspondences of two Romantic mothers, Dorothea Schlegel and Caroline Schlegel Schelling, demonstrate how mothers themselves used conventional rhetoric about maternal dedication to negotiate social expectations, veiling unacceptable choices a traditional rhetoric of mother-love. The notions that mothers are central to their children's lives and dedicated to their welfare expand, in these mothers' letters, an older social order into an emerging Romantic public sphere.

This dissertation thus reconsiders scholarly debate about the ideological weight of the feminine and the maternal in Romantic thought. These mothers, like their contemporaneous treatises, made daily maternal practices into a facet of the Romantic agenda for rethinking social structures. They married the tasks of maintaining a communal, multi-generational artists' household with an ideal of friendship and the responsibilities of motherhood, and integrated writing, editing, and personal correspondence with Romantic theories of education. The result questions canonical generic and epochal divisions in German literature by interpreting new possibilities for the images and ideology of traditional maternity.

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## **Introduction: Images of Mothers in the Romantic Era**

This study investigates images of mothers and of the family in German Romantic works of pedagogy and personal correspondence in order to understand the way these images were used to envision a more humane, tender and democratic society in the wake of the French Revolution and the conquests of Napoleon. During this era of profound socio-cultural change, an ideal of motherhood developed, hand-in-hand with Romantic redefinitions of the human being, man, woman, or child. German-speaking authors wishing to differentiate themselves, especially from the French, posited a distinctly German and Swiss notion of family that included idealized representations of mothers.

In creating these images of mothers and the home, concerned authors reassessed the place and value of individuals within the family and of families within society. They then presented their readers an image of the mother-child relationship as the cradle of human morality and consciousness and showed German mothers to be the agents fostering those qualities for the benefit of wider society. These maternal images and representations of family, which I will examine as they appeared in two works of pedagogy of the period, thus presented a new vision of family hierarchies, of mothers'

roles, and of effective, mother-directed childhood education. Familial images provoked the readers' self-awareness as members of a community greater than their own family, village or province, and led to a conception of themselves as specifically German or Swiss fathers and mothers, raising their children in a manner consistent with those values and cultures. This endeavor connected their work with the nation-building ambitions so central to the Romantic program.

In proposing idealized maternal and domestic images, Romantic and proto-Romantic authors provide a literary alternative to the *Bildungsroman*, in which the hero must leave his home and family to achieve adulthood, the works I investigate present the home, especially the mother, as crucial to an individual's development. The authors I specifically investigate in this context, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, Jean Paul, and members of the Schlegel family, employed images of mothers with their families to illustrate changing social structures and relationships, which could signal possibilities for a new social order based on love and on individual worth.

For example, Pestalozzi, in his polemic, *Wie Gertrud ihre Kinder lehrt* (1801), insists on the importance of dedicated mothers to their children's moral and intellectual development, claiming that an ennobled populace could result from mothers assuming responsibility for elementary education. Jean Paul's educative advice, from his *Levana, oder Erziehlehre* (1806), evoked a spirit of parents respecting the inherent individuality and natural development of each child as they ready the next generation for life in society. Finally, the entire Schlegel household of the Jena years lived and worked

together to create a communal society that could serve as a model for a new kind of family, in which informal or fluid ties between individuals lent mutual support. The challenges, pleasures and obstacles to this new kind of family are recorded in the personal correspondence of Caroline, and, later, Dorothea Shlegel, the mothers in the group. Their letters, like the published texts by the other authors in this study, document the family hierarchies, affective atmosphere, and crucial maternal attitude that could serve as models for wider society.

My dissertation will demonstrate that these Romantic and Proto-Romantic writers used conservative, traditional, and ideological images of mothers to conceal much more radical political agendas of egalitarian relations, expanded personal freedoms, even for mothers, or even outright republicanism. Previous scholarship has not recognized the progressive desires hidden by the conservative veneer of conventionality.

There is an evident disparity between post-Enlightenment philosophical ideas, such as of the autonomous individual or the emphasis on the rational over the emotional or physical self, and the impossibility wives and mothers of the time faced in ever realizing, or even imagining these ideals for themselves. The realization of then-current ideals seemed to be a specifically male endeavor that necessarily excluded mothers, since childbirth and child-care prevent autonomous control over one's physical self, and make personal liberty perhaps less appealing than inter-dependence between the sexes and generations. I felt that scholarly research had not explored how mothers, who had neither biological control over their status as mothers, nor political influence over the status of

mothers, responded to ideologies that seemed to promise liberty yet neglected their needs. Eighteenth century women had only limited access to the intellectual, moral, or public ideals of the Enlightenment, and were often relegated to a childlike dependency and limited arena of engagement. At the same time, however, mothers were seen as increasingly crucial to their children's development. A conception of the family as the elemental unit of the developing nation arose along with the heralding of the mother as the household's anchor. This notion of the family as cradle of the nation offered mothers, as the determining influence in that fundamental unit, a narrow path from the nursery to the work of nation-building.

Feminist and literary-historical scholarship often overlooked the notion of mothering as nation-building, or the various possible political ways authors might use images of mother-love and maternal devotion. The image of the dedicated, affectionate mother in the midst of her children, or with babe in arms, became a convention that seemed to write mothers out of the sphere of educated public discourse, and therefore a convention that many feminist scholars objected to in their desire to discover other, more subversive images. As a topic for scholarly research, therefore, maternal imagery had, to some extent, been neglected until recently, a situation my study hopes to ameliorate.

In Pestalozzi, Jean Paul, and the Schlegel sisters-in-law, however, I have found three writers who used the conventional, and ideological, images or *langue*, associated with mothers, to authorize liberal, and unconventional, maternal behavior. My dissertation demonstrates how these writers used an already acceptable set of tropes to propose

completely new, even radical familial and political structures or to justify subversive actions or rebellious attitudes. Caroline Schlegel, for example, justified her close association with politically provocative writers by claiming it was an educational milieu benefiting her daughter. These authors' images of mothers dedicated to their children's moral and civic development became, I have discovered, a forum for openly advocating republicanism, equality between the sexes, especially in marriage, religious freedom, and universal schooling for boys and girls.

This dissertation thus reassesses the political values of apparently conservative rhetoric about mothers. Mythologized visions of the mother in the village household, or the mother teaching her child the ABC's, contain an overlooked political objective that seems at first to adhere to an acceptable ideology of motherhood, but in fact undermines it, much the same as Jean Paul's dedication to Queen Caroline of Bavaria simultaneously celebrates and slights a monarch's motherly concern for her subjects.

This work also attempts to open up a space for the analysis of the practices of motherhood, to see the choices women make regarding their children as acts that participate in the public discourse on social structures, visions of humanity, or hopes for the future. Just as Caroline Schlegel's hospitality contributed to the Romantic cult of friendship and created a space for communal artistic achievement, so, too, did her relationship with her daughter affect the Romantic image of mothers, and perhaps of home-education and of children. Further, I show that mothers' or pedagogues' textual descriptions of the actions and ideas that affect children also participate in the literary

discourse of personal autonomy, moral obligation, national objectives, or social norms, among other things.

### **Dissertation Chapter Outline**

The central two chapters of my dissertation address two works devoted to formulating theories of early childhood care, and to the mother's place in providing that care: Pestalozzi's ground-breaking epistolary work calling for mothers to take over the education process, *Wie Gertrud ihre Kinder lehrt* (1801), and Jean Paul's multi-volume pedagogical guide for families, *Levana, oder Erziehlehre* (1807). The images of each present an ethics for the family unit and its place in society, by arguing that mother-love is crucial to raising a generation of children who can contribute to their countries' welfare and to peace in Europe. The literary images of mothers that these two much-read authors created are therefore intimately linked to the social, religious and political debates of their era. They contain the tensions and contradictions inherent in pursuing a new understanding of the family in an era of political unrest, and betray their authors' competing desires for national identities and for a pan-European unity, for egalitarian family relationships and for hierarchies of authority, for a "natural" mother and an educated, culturally defined one, for individualistic religious sensibility and for traditional Christian teachings. These contradictions characterize the era as a whole, and underlie many of the difficulties facing nineteenth-century Germany and Switzerland. These authors, in turn influenced the struggles to create nations out of principalities and a

vanquished confederation, and the struggles to determine women's roles in the family, in the state, and in the newly emerging public sphere of opinion. These two important treatises on childhood thus contributed to public expectations about how the state and society would situate mothers, in family roles and in public.

My final, concluding chapter will examine the works and lives of the women of the famous Schlegel family, Caroline (1763-1809) and Dorothea (1763-1839), as examples of how women engaged in articulating a Romantic world view incorporated maternal practices into theories of individual education, national identity, family structure and morality. Their work as mothers and as writers provides a backdrop against which one can examine Pestalozzi's and Jean Paul's theories of maternal potential more practically. The Schlegel family constituted perhaps the most important group of writers in the Romantic era, and both their fiction and their personal lives can be seen in part as attempts to re-write the notion of family for a new era. They thus provide both textual and lived evidence of the desire to reformulate mothers' roles in ways that differed from the prescriptions of the emerging bourgeois era. In their lives and personal correspondence, the Schlegels provide examples of literate men and women engaged in debate, both public and private, about mother-love, marriage, romantic love and the search for autonomy.

The maternal images appearing in the correspondence of these two famous and complicated women depict mothers in personal situations quite unlike those envisioned by pedagogical theory, working to realize for mothers many Enlightenment and Romantic

ideals originally proposed for men. Their images, less fictional and meant for a private discourse, in some ways oppose or amend Pestalozzi's and Jean Paul's assumptions about mothers' desires and effectiveness.

On the other hand, the personal correspondence of Dorothea and Caroline Schlegel (later Schelling) reveal mothers closely engaged in expanding their spheres of activity and effectiveness, and in negotiating the space between the theorized potentials and real-life possibilities. In several marriages and in an interim as a widow, Caroline, for example, lived the historical family transitions that scholars describe, and the ad hoc family arrangements which surely occurred but which historians often overlook. In adult life, she often made her most important decisions based on her constraints as a mother and on her children's needs.

For example, when imprisoned by the French during the siege of Mainz and hiding an out-of-wedlock pregnancy, she rejected the lure of suicide because of her remaining child: "Ich bin isoliert in der Welt, aber noch Mutter, und als solche will ich mich zu erhalten und zu retten suchen" (15 June 1793).<sup>1</sup> She thought of herself the way that many authors thought of mothers generally: "geschaffen um nicht über die Grenzen stiller Häuslichkeit hinweg zu gehn," who was nonetheless, like many women, "durch ein unbegreifliches Schicksal aus meiner Sphäre gerissen" (from the same letter). Her letters therefore employ images of motherhood not unlike those of the authors of fiction and

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<sup>1</sup> Georg Waitz, ed. *Caroline. Briefe an ihre Geschwister, ihre Tochter Auguste, die Familie Gotter, F.L.W. Meyer, A.W. and Fr. Schlegel, J. Schelling u.a. nebst Briefen von A.W. und Fr. Schlegel* (Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirzel) 1871, 127.

pedagogy, but to much different ends. For her, citing maternal obligations allowed her some measure of independence and the freedom to make unconventional choices.

Caroline Schlegel's maternal imagery gives form to her own experience, and defines for herself and her close circle of family and friends the meaning that the obligations, sorrows and joys of motherhood impart.

In comparison, Dorothea appears to make life-altering decisions in spite of, rather than because of, her status as a mother. Her willingness to risk custody of her sons by divorcing her husband and uniting with an unacceptable partner, Friedrich Schlegel, counters Pestalozzi's and Jean Paul's arguments that maternal love is the essential, and most powerful, womanly characteristic. Her actions therefore appear not to validate the belief in the power and singularity of mother-love that so characterizes the bourgeois era. Rather, they demonstrate that mothers, too, navigate unrealistic images of family unity as they expand the possibilities of personal liberation.

Notably, these writers employed the traditional rhetoric of maternal desire and mother-love in those literary forms that evolved and became central to the development of German letters at the onset of the nineteenth century: advice manuals to parents, letters, and novels. Although letters and pedagogy are not usually subject to literary analysis in the same manner as fiction, poetry or drama, "the psychosymbolics of the...political imagination are also apparent...in less conventional sources for historical

analysis.”<sup>2</sup> These very popular nonfiction sources depict imagined realities presented as norms for human behavior that can be examined for their hidden political and social assumptions and conclusions.

The juxtaposition of texts from two different domains (pedagogy and private correspondence), I will contend in the conclusion to the project, illuminates the way Romantic theory attempted to transform itself into everyday practice to create new social relationships and new hierarchies in both the public and private spheres. These two central genres of the Romantic movement proved malleable enough to contribute to widespread, socio-political conversations while appearing only to describe the private, intimate household or naturally ordained relationships. These works attempt to create an “imagined community” (Benedict Anderson’s term), consisting primarily of German and Swiss mothers engaged with their very young children, a community that is educated and Christian, enjoys an open market for commerce, experiences little interference from its monarchs, and above all, relies on peaceful interpersonal exchange among German-speaking neighbors. It defines itself against the French excesses of the Napoleonic era, and rejects a model of fraternity in civic society, looking instead to a gentle but disciplined vision of maternity.

The texts in this study also contribute to the ongoing debate over literary periodization, by demonstrating that nonfiction works can be classified into movements.

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<sup>2</sup>Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992) 13-14.

In this case, two authors usually designated as representative of Sensibility (Pestalozzi) or as a bridge figure between periods (Jean Paul), exemplify qualities most often associated with Romanticism. When we examine these two novelists' generic innovation, rhetorical gestures, tropes and images, and topical concerns in their expository writing rather than limiting ourselves to fiction, these two writers appear frankly Romantic. This study will contribute to the fields of German studies, the history of the family, and women's studies. It hopes to bridge literary studies and cultural studies by incorporating the ideas of both social theorists and historians, and literary scholars, in order to advance our understanding of German Romanticism as it played out in its writers' and readers' every day lives. We will gain an understanding of how the material circumstances of Romanticism's leading writers affected their ideas of their countries' strengths and potentials at the onset of the nineteenth century.

In the next chapter, directly preceding the chapters analyzing my primary texts, I turn to the historical background and methodological premises which will allow me to make these claims. I offer an analysis of the historical context from which these writers wrote, both the actual and demographic historical situations they inhabited, and the ideological, or even propagandistic set of expectations that created the parameters their actions and endeavors negotiated.

## Chapter One: Historical and Scholarly Background to German Mothers

Motherhood is at times thought to be a biological condition, or a sociological reality, independent of ideology or politics. Because mothers and children do not live in isolation, however, but rather participate in human society, mothers and their children are always either part of, or outcasts from, the culture they inhabit. Their place within their society is neither fixed nor atemporal, but negotiated and changing. Examining written representations of these changes and negotiations reveals that the rhetoric and discourse surrounding mothers in an evolving society, and the myths and truisms that purport to interpret motherhood, contain otherwise overlooked assumptions and objectives.

Rhetoric about mothers often seeks to define possibilities or limitations for them, to position them within an existing or imaginary social order, or to secure or sway domestic or public power structures -- choices which amount to an ideology.

In describing this desire to modify public or private power structures, Julie Kipp explains that literary depictions of mothers and their children, or works directed at them, constitute an ideology. They “participate in a disciplinary framework that moves individuals toward cultural consensus as well as operating through more overt methods of social, moral, and legal coercion.”<sup>3</sup> This is the same persuasion and coercion that Joan Landes describes as a “shift in the organization of public life” to a “transformation of the

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<sup>3</sup> Julie Kipp, *Romanticism, Maternity, and the Body Politic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 2003, 5.

system of cultural representation.”<sup>4</sup> In this vein, I examine images of mothers in Romantic texts as one part of a historical transformation of a system of cultural representation, hoping to uncover the cultural shifts occurring with re-organized public life and with the literary inscription of this change. The remaining sections of this chapter therefore examine rhetorical strategies used to describe motherhood as they encode an ideology of maternity within images of family dynamics, maternal devotion, and elementary childhood development.

European writers of the eighteenth century, who were redefining women and children and determining their place in social structure, commonly employed rhetoric aimed at women, mothers, and the family order. Much of their poetry and prose tended to mystify motherhood, a tendency that was already a part of general European culture before the 1790s. Not surprisingly, much of the recent work on families in the eighteenth century examines the evolving context of the French Revolution.

Since Phillipe Ariès’s groundbreaking history of the private life of the family, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life* (1960, trans. 1962), many scholars have made the rise of the bourgeois, nuclear family in the modern era their subject. They record the emergence of the family type that came to dominate European cultures well into the twentieth century, and that is characterized by bread-winning fathers, devoted mothers, and beloved children. This family structure became so

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<sup>4</sup> Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution*, (Ithaca: Cornell UP) 1988, 2.

stereotypical as to be considered ordained by nature, and an ideology of masculine commercial success, maternal instinct and children's needs for parental love grew up to support this image of modern family structure.

In the words of Lynn Hunt, historian of the French Revolution, the "idea of women's separate, maternally defined destiny had gained greater precision during the eighteenth century," a trend she partially ascribes to doctors, who "began to construct a coherent view of the effects of women's physiology" (156). In their work, as well as in that by other "experts," the exaltation of motherhood (that is, the care of babies and children by their own mothers) was frequently an intentional maneuver to position women within the private sphere and domestic arena, often for political or economic reasons. Elisabeth Badinter seeks to demonstrate in her study of maternal practices in eighteenth-century France, *Mother Love: Myth and Reality* (1981), for example, that maternal love and devotion are not inherent or natural traits in women, but were culturally mandated by government-sponsored publicity and medical tracts. Badinter's goal, similar to Ariès's, is to debunk myths of the traditional nuclear family. She thus posits that the cult of the loving mother and her sentimental attachment to her children was popularized during and after the Enlightenment.

In consequence of that epochal shift in the European mindset, political, medical and religious propaganda of that era glorified devoted mothers, encouraging mothers to keep their babies at home and raise them themselves. Badinter shows that this was in order to combat France's extremely high infant mortality rate, a goal set not so much for

the joy of the mothers, but rather to secure the population growth France needed to increase its national economic output and to expand its military. Badinter demonstrates that most French mothers from before the Revolution sent their newborns away to the countryside to be raised by peasant wetnurses,<sup>5</sup> a practice which led to a mortality rate of over fifty percent, in some areas approaching ninety percent. The children who survived were not returned home until about four years of age, at which point provisions for either boarding school or in-home tutoring were sought. Most children of seventeenth century France seem to have reached adulthood with only superficial knowledge of their mothers.

With the Enlightenment, and the newly developed study of demographics, however, French population experts demonstrated that a growing population would lead to increased national economic and military strength, and thus authored a propaganda campaign designed to increase maternal nursing and at-home care of infants.<sup>6</sup> (The

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<sup>5</sup>She demonstrates that all classes of French women who could have had their babies nursed by others, thus freeing up mothers for other activities, whether work or pleasure. In some regions, wetnurses themselves were the only women who didn't send their babies away. Rousseau himself had his children sent away to be nursed in foundling hospitals.

<sup>6</sup>The question of breast-feeding by the mother versus engaging a wetnurse is an often-debated topic in the literature on the family. Breastfeeding seems to be often used as an indicator of maternal devotion and parents' roles in the household, although Ariès addresses the topic only once, almost at the end of his work. He recognizes the widespread, seventeenth-century practice of sending babies out to the country to be nursed, which he interprets as a protective measure. He reasons that concern for the baby, rather than a desire for convenience or the social and sexual availability of the mother, would lead parents to have their children wet-nursed in the outer regions of France. Although it's clear why wet-nursing was preferred to unhygienic and difficult feeding with cow's milk, what is less apparent from Ariès's handling of the question is why concerned mothers would have had their children nursed by other, perhaps far-away, women at all. Here he is unwilling to rely on the answer he has already provided in his discussion on boarding schools and apprenticeships: that at one time each and every baby might not have been the object of complete sentimental attachment by its parents. Certainly this is the conclusion Badinter and the more recent socio-biological study by Sarah Blaffer Hrdy draw.

benefits of this practice had to be sold to fathers, as well, who were not especially enthused to have either a squalling infant or a wife with divided attentions at home.) An ideology of the devoted mother who gladly put the needs of her infant above her own concerns and embraced the practice of breastfeeding was therefore cultivated over the course of a century and a half, until at-home care of infants by their mothers became common practice.

By labeling the numerous governmental and medical publications appearing during and after the French Enlightenment ideological and propagandistic, however, one runs the risk of reducing the actions that thousands of mothers and fathers took in order to secure a future for their babies to simplistic responses to an aristocratic regime. From a practical perspective, Badinter implies that nearly all mothers who sent their babies out must not have greatly desired their survival, an implication that was doubtless true of some mothers in an era before reliable birth control. That perspective, however, fails to account for mothers who simply felt compelled by social norms, marital or family relations, their own poor health, or the lack of reasons not to have their babies wet-nursed. Mothers are not only passive receivers of ideologically driven propaganda, but active representatives who seek out reliable evidence to negotiate possibilities for themselves and their children.

Indeed, Badinter's documentation of the ensuing increase in the use of in-home nurses, and of mothers willing to nurse their own infants, demonstrates that mothers, when presented with evidence regarding the wisdom of specific maternal practices which

can guarantee the well-being of their children, incorporate those practices into the routine of maternal care, even if it demands great personal sacrifice. Further, mothers during the Enlightenment and other eras, like mothers of today, made and make these decisions consciously, based upon the best scientific documents available to them. Despite being subject to ideological imperatives and propaganda campaigns, therefore, mothers also surely acquire, discuss and implement available information, and thus help to shape a culture of maternity as well as respond to it.

That the evidence upon which eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French mothers based their decisions was ideological, and not disinterested science, does not diminish the quality of their decisions, or make them into passive conductors of a social vision they had no role in creating. Both the earlier scholar Ariès and the more recent Badinter tend to de-emphasize the role that parents play in negotiating social norms and re-inventing notions of childhood and of family. When tracing the movements of social forces or historical developments, one easily overlooks the fact that these movements are made up of the private decisions of many individuals, each attempting to gain space for his or her own personal desires. The fact that children were eventually kept closer to home for longer periods of time, as Ariès, Badinter, and later scholars such as Ute Gerhard and Verena Ehrlich-Haefli generally demonstrate, surely had something to do with the fact that parents wanted it that way, and used day schools, home nursing, private tutors, or whatever other means were at their disposal to achieve that.

More crucial for the discussion here, Badinter's examination of changing maternal practices demonstrates that mother-love of the sort that is meant by "maternal instinct," is not a naturally occurring phenomenon, but a social construct. Maternal devotion must often be culturally mediated, changes, and is subject to evolving political, medical and social norms. Sarah Blaffer Hrdy confirms this thesis in her book, *Mother Nature: A History of Mothers, Infants, and Natural Selection* (1999), a socio-anthropological investigation into the norms of motherhood on a global scale. She applies evolutionary theory to a sociology of motherhood, intending to discern its cultural and its biological aspects. Refining the notion of "maternal instinct," Blaffer Hrdy finds a biological basis for the idea in such physical evidence as female nurturance among primate groups, hormonal effects of childbirth and infant care, and newborns' tactics to ensure a mother's attention. Thus on this side of the discussion, her study incorporates historical and worldwide anthropological research into such practices as breastfeeding and supplementing, contraception and infanticide, marriage and extra-marital sexual activity, fertility rates and childhood mortality, in an attempt to separate what is natural about mothering from what is cultural.

Of course, there is no clear separation of the biological from the social, and, although there are universal themes and concerns related to the bearing and raising of children, mothers' decisions regarding the care and importance of their children varies greatly according to socio-cultural possibilities and on an individual basis. Because of that truth, Blaffer Hrdy also illustrates a spectrum of maternal practices available to

women in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, from infanticide and abandonment in foundling hospitals, to wetnursing and boarding schools, to maternal nursing and home schooling. This range of possibilities shows that mothers' actions often conflicted with prevailing ideologies or widespread religious beliefs, and certainly with the concept of an essential mother-love.

As in France, the nineteenth-century dominance of the modern, nuclear, middle-class family, autonomous and self-contained, emerged in the German-speaking lands during the contrasting historical transition from smaller, monarchical and disharmonious states, to an expressed desire for a unified, German-speaking, even democratic, nation-state. The desire for a German nation as a primary motive for Romantic writers has been well-studied: its connection to domestic ideals of family life less so.

Yvonne Schütze examines the German context of historically changing attitudes towards maternal duty.<sup>7</sup> She demonstrates that although the mother-child relationship has been portrayed in the “mother-love” paradigm since the mid-eighteenth century, mother-love as a normative model or prescription, “an interpretive cultural model” (40), appears in written images with the beginning of bourgeois society, in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries. The transition to the cultural dominance of the bourgeois family type was accompanied by a body of rhetoric attesting to the naturalness of its structure, perhaps because the real demands on a bourgeois housewife were in conflict

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<sup>7</sup> Yvonne Schütze, “The Good Mother: The History of the Normative Model of ‘Mother Love’,” *Sociological Studies of Child Development*. Patricia A. and Peter Adler, eds. (Greenwich, Connecticut: JAI Press Inc., 1987) 39-78.

with the ideals of the Enlightenment generation and the one following it. Such literary or rhetorical images intensified in the eighteenth century into an ideal of “heilig apostrophierte Mutterliebe.”<sup>8</sup> The images glorifying the notion of the dedicated and loving mother, and emphasizing her determining role in the family, tended to raise the status of mothers in the family while circumscribing their effectiveness outside of it.

The new status that German and French women enjoyed in their role as mothers was not without its costs, however. The mystification of motherhood that accompanied the development of the bourgeois family meant that women were often expected to find their sole occupation and fulfillment in their roles as mothers. The historian Ute Gerhard claims that

erst mit der Verallgemeinerung der bürgerlichen Familienform zum verbindlichen Familienmodell für die ganze Gesellschaft, ja, mit ihrer Verkehrung zur Naturform von Familie schlechthin, wird die Bindung aller Frauen an Haus und Familie perfekt, gewinnt die Abhängigkeit der Frau ihre historisch neue, bürgerlich-patriarchale Qualität.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, women belonging to the *Besitzbürgertum* and the *Bildungsbürgertum*, which developed in the wake of the Enlightenment, were unable to access “the strong desire to shape one’s life as an individual” (Schütze, 43), that characterizes the modern era. “Solely the male members fulfilled this desire in the organization succeeding the ‘whole house,’ the bourgeois family,” Yvonne Schütze continues. “As for the family’s female

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<sup>8</sup>Hans Martin Kirn, *Deutsche Spätaufklärung und Pietismus; Ihr Verhältnis im Rahmen kirchlich-bürgerlicher Reform bei Johann Ludwig Ewald (1748-1822)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998), 342.

<sup>9</sup>Ute Gerhard, *Verhältnisse und Verhinderungen: Frauenarbeit, Familie, und Recht der Frauen im 19. Jahrhundert*, (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1981) 74.

members, the structure of the traditional family did not fundamentally change with regard to the individual woman's shaping of her own life." Or, in the words of Joan Landes, in her text *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution*, "The universal bourgeois subject was from the outset a gendered subject. Only male rights to full individuality were protected" (158). The Enlightenment notion of autonomy simply did not seem to apply to mothers, or women generally, who were constrained by reproduction, by its ties to the body and its lack of free will or personal agency.<sup>10</sup>

Like the ideal of autonomy, other ideals passed down from the Enlightenment to bourgeois society, "freedom, equality, and education - which in principle also applied to women, ran counter to the internal structure of the family, which was necessarily menaced by an educated woman enjoying equal rights," explains Schütze (46). The Enlightenment principle that there are no divinely granted class roles contradicted the assertion of divinely scripted biological or gender roles, an assertion that usually argued that extending liberty and equality to women would disrupt the natural order.<sup>11</sup>

Philosophies that essentialized woman's character, making into essential feminine qualities characteristics previously defined by social position, finessed this dichotomy.

Family structure was maintained by granting greater status to the wife's position,

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<sup>10</sup> Christine Everingham, *Motherhood and Modernity: An Investigation into the Rational Dimension of Mothering*, (Buckingham, Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1994). She argues that the Enlightenment vision of autonomy, and of the autonomous individual, was inherently constraining toward women because of their work as mothers, which tied them to the body, to emotional life, to laws of nature surrounding reproduction, and to a lack of free-will or personal agency. Her book therefore "aims to reconstruct the notion of autonomy, to include the agency of women carrying out nurturing activity" (6).

<sup>11</sup> Karen Hagemann, *Nation-State-Family: The Nationalization of the Enlightened "Society of Citizens,"* International Conference in European Studies, European Studies Consortium, Hubert Humphrey Center, University of Minnesota, 19 May 2001.

sentimentalizing and mystifying motherhood, and sacrificing, to some extent, the chances for women's individuation. The normative model of mother-love that helped determine mother-child relationships within the context of the evolving bourgeois nuclear family of the early nineteenth century, and the vision of personal autonomy that was inadequate to the needs of women, thus contributed in an important way to women's belated individuation.

According to historian Ute Gerhard, the desire, or prescription, for greater emotional connection between mothers and their children was not the only force driving increased ideological defense of the bourgeois nuclear family. She claims that the new demands made on housewives as a group were such that women, too, needed to be convinced of their situation:

Enge Häuslichkeit, verstärkte Abhängigkeit, Funktionsverlust und Isolation - es ist nicht verwunderlich, daß es eines ungeheuren ideologischen Aufwands bedurfte, der Frau die neue Situation schmackhaft zu machen. (95)

The tightened emotional connection between mothers and their children reflected the heightened intimacy expected of spouses when the ideal of a love marriage arose to replace the ideal of the economic marriage of convenience.

At the time the authors I study were writing, a new ideal of togetherness and complementarity between husband and wife appeared. Christina von Braun links this ideal intimacy to the image of the self-sacrificing mother in her historical study of fasting

and anorexia, "Das Kloster im Kopf. Weibliches Fasten von mittelalterlicher Askese zur modernen Anorexie."<sup>12</sup> Evolving notions of marriage and unity meant that

Es entsteht um 1800 ein neues Ideal der Zweisamkeit, das von Begriffen wie 'Symbiose' und 'Harmonie' definiert wird - also gerade in der Aufhebung der Zweiheit besteht und die Verwandlung von Zweisamkeit in Einsamkeit beinhaltet. (45)

Harmony and unity extended from new wife to new mother to become the cornerstone of the mother-child relationship. Von Braun argues that the emphasis on unity grew along with the historical repression of the individualized feminine self, leading girls to express their sense of diminished self physically:

Aber warum empfanden gerade die Töchter - und nicht die Söhne - die neue Familienliebe als Einschränkung emotionaler und geistiger Autonomie? Mir scheint die Tatsache, daß nur die Töchter "anorektische Hebel" in Bewegung setzten, damit zusammenzuhängen, daß auch die neue Idee der "Familie" - ähnlich der Liebesbeziehung der Geschlechter - zutiefst geprägt war von einem Weiblichkeitsideal, in dem der Frau die Rolle der 'Erlöserin' zugewiesen wurde. Dies zeigt sich besonders deutlich am Kern dieser Familie, dem Ideal der "sich aufopfernden Mutter," das mit der Aufklärung entstand und das für die Pädagogen und Ärzte des 19. Jahrhunderts zum Leitbild eines neu entdeckten 'Mutterinstinktes' wurde. (50)

Thus we see that the expectations that arose during and after the Enlightenment regarding women and the ties that bound them to their families changed in ways that had lasting ramifications for the generations of women who followed. Sentimental ideas about mothers and their duties, which were in direct contradiction to the prevailing notions of

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<sup>12</sup> Christina von Braun, "Das Kloster im Kopf. Weibliches Fasten von mittelalterlicher Askese zur modernen Anorexie," Thomas Nessler and Mechthild Blum, eds., *Weibsbilder: das neue Bild der Frau in Gesellschaft und Politik*. Freiburg im Br.: Rombach Verlag, 1994, 31-59.

individual self-determination and applied reason, became physical constraints that determined mothers' choices.

### **Rhetoric, Politics, and Mothers: From Ideas to Ideology**

While Gerhard offers the best overview of women in the nineteenth century, and these historians together provide an outline of the material conditions of women on the cusp of the nineteenth century, this knowledge does not yet explain motherhood as an idea. Because mothers' roles are socially constructed, and subject to religious, philosophical, and ideological speculation, an understanding of the rhetorical discourse establishing the parameters in which they function helps us to tease out the political intent behind the rhetoric. Not surprisingly, rhetoric regarding women and mothers contrasted with that regarding men in the German Idealist and Romantic movements, and sought to position them differently within the social network of the emerging modern world. Positioning people within social hierarchies is always political, and in this instance was related to other major political concerns of the era. As most scholars of the eighteenth century would agree, the concerns at the outset of the nineteenth-century included: the status of the individual in relation to a monarch, elaborating or transitioning the status of the educated bourgeoisie vis-à-vis the aristocracy, creating a more republican German-speaking state and maintaining independent Swiss confederacy, and avoiding the violence and bloodshed of the French Revolution and France's experiment with

republicanism. An investigation of texts written specifically for, by, or about mothers will necessarily demonstrate that situating mothers both within the family and within greater society, and situating the family in the social context is part and parcel of determining a new political order.

In formulating a representative and morally invested role for mothers, Pestalozzi and Jean Paul conveyed new possibilities for maternal agency, in part through the creation of fictional characters. They created characters who could function for the readers as models to be emulated or discussed, as models for the duties and politics of the era's every day life. To make clear why it is important to link these fictional types with historical facts, my subsequent investigations will both draw on and contribute to what Karin Hagl-Catling, has dubbed an "imagology of the sexes," a proposal for a scholarly method for analyzing images of women in literary texts.<sup>13</sup> This neologism refers to her study of literary images of women. She carefully differentiates between cultivated public images and the reality of women's lives, uncovering discrepancies between "imaginierte Weiblichkeitsbilder" (23), which are often "ein von der Authentizität weit entferntes Bild eines Geschlechtscharakters," and authentic female experience, characterized "durch die Individuation immer mit einer Tendenz zur Unüberschaubarkeit und Desorientierung sowie mit Vielheit und Polyvalenz verbunden" (51). The disparity between idealized

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<sup>13</sup>Karin hagl-Catling, *Für eine Imagologie der Geschlechter*. (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang) 1997. The classic discussion of the issue in the German context is Silvia Bovenschen's *Die imaginierte Weiblichkeit: Exemplarische Untersuchungen zu kulturgeschichtlichen und literarischen Präsentationsformen des Weibliche*. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag) 1979.

images employed by authors, and actual female experience, she argues, always work to the detriment of women:

Der erlebte/erlittene Gegensatz zwischen gesellschaftlichem Rollenangebot und weiblicher Persönlichkeit, zwischen patriarchalischem Machtanspruch und emotionaler Bindung führt zu Krisen, die sich - je nach Lebensumständen und Situation variierend - in Identitätsproblemen und charakterlichen Widersprüchlichkeiten bis zu hysterischen Ausbrüchen der Protagonistinnen offenbaren. (22)

Here Hagl-Catling describes the creation of ideal images as a reduction, in which the artist first drains woman to a non-entity, thus creating space for a poetic reconstruction. Thus the kind of glorification in which, for example, Pestalozzi engages, ultimately works to the detriment of women, according to Hagl-Catling:

Während die Mythisierung vom männlichen Standort aus zu einer Erhöhung der Frau führt, muß diese sich umsomehr erniedrigt fühlen, da ihre menschliche Individualität durch den Mythisierungsprozeß völlig verdrängt wird. (69)

This “process of making myths” is crucial, I will argue, to effecting change in the structure of the family. Although my project relies on Hagl-Catling’s exploration of images of women as authorial projections and as objects of the cultural imagination, it will also focus on the potential for change and development authors hope to present when creating these images. Thus, by including Dorothea and Caroline Schlegel in my analysis, I will argue that both male and female authors can employ conventional images to write their way out of social constraint. ‘Real’ women, too, can react to literary images in a thoughtful way, using them as a springboard for their own discussion of the possibilities for women’s lives. My own application of Hagl-Catling’s ideas will

therefore ask why such images, whether authorial projections or cultural imaginings, were drawn, whose purposes they served, and how they were received, especially when they are used in varying contexts.

I am not alone in asserting female agency in adapting fictions and realities to each other. Ann Taylor Allen, for example, makes a clear case that mothers in the nineteenth century were never merely passive receptors of ideological rhetoric.<sup>14</sup> Her work demonstrates that maternal consciousness plays an active role in the social transformation of the family and of women's roles. Allen demonstrates that, at least in the German context, the rise of the bourgeois family was in part propelled by mothers interacting with and relying on a specific ideology of motherhood they both articulated and implemented. For them, "the maternal role, whether conceived as biological or social, provided a basis for the entrance of women themselves into public life as speakers and actors" (17), doing whatever public work required a nurturing attitude. German mothers thus expanded the concept of mothers' duties into public education and administration, in order to give women a public voice and a role in society.

This history of mothers, children and the family includes therefore a history of the development of an ideology, which Allen has called "maternal feminism," or "maternalism." This term indicates a feminist ideology that became the dominant strain of German feminism by the late nineteenth century, and that defines women's importance

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<sup>14</sup> Ann Taylor Allen, *Feminism and Motherhood in Germany, 1800-1914*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP) 1991.

in society according to “the concept of a widened, or social, motherhood” (41). Maternal feminism elevates the role of mothers in society by emphasizing the special experience and outlook that mothers have, which could provide an important moral counterbalance to the public, and less personal, authority of men. Allen concurs with Schütze that this role elevation gave post-Enlightenment women a new position of moral authority within the family, based on their supposedly natural function of nurturing the physical, emotional and spiritual growth of their children in an intimate and trusting relationship.<sup>15</sup>

Rather than feeling confined by this maternal ideology, however, the women of Allen’s study employed it as a means to gain authority in German society. Mothers’ roles as teachers and trainers of the next generation, and therefore as bearers of culture, gained them an eventual acknowledgment of their own need for education, and foregrounded their later claims to equality and individuality. Educating children requires that one’s intellectual and moral capacities be acknowledged and developed, and which thus brought women in contact with the cultural resources of society (Schütze, 47). Women writers and activists working later in the century posited the essential difference of women, and validated the need to incorporate that difference in the public sphere, expanding mothers’ opportunities and their responsibilities.

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<sup>15</sup> Previously, the Prussian Legal Code and other such edicts gave fathers all decision-making authority in the family, despite the fact that they did not participate in the child’s routine physical care (Allen, 19). For a full account of women’s and mother’s legal situation in late-eighteenth century Germany, see Isabel Hull, *Sexuality, State and Civil Society in Germany, 1700 - 1815* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

For the present purposes, it is significant that Allen relies on essays and literary evidence, drawing her conclusions from memoirs, textbooks and treatises. She demonstrates the broad influence enjoyed by Pestalozzi and Friedrich Froebel, especially, as well as that by Jean Paul, Schelling, Fichte, and Schleiermacher. The lesser-known but egalitarian work of Theodor Hippel also supports her depiction of evolving notions of family. Additionally, Allen presents often overlooked women writers of the nineteenth-century, exploring their views on family, mothers' duties, and social engagement. Because Allen's focus is on the written record left by individual women, her book can represent a specific point of view towards the historical situation, because the women she turns to for evidence make their attitudes clear.

The women's voices that emerge from historical anonymity all express an explicit dissatisfaction with social norms, and they:

frankly record the subjects' dissatisfaction with many, if not most, aspects of women's status, including the obligation to obey fathers and husbands, the tedious duties of the household, the vapidness of conventional education, and many others. (43)

These written expressions of dissatisfaction with role expectations and conflict with social convention shed some light on the motivation for some of the historical trends and changes of nineteenth century Germany. The quotes and literary evidence in *Feminism and Motherhood in Germany, 1800 - 1914* thus reveal the continual interplay between public and private, desire and contentment which impels change and the loosening of

boundaries. Ultimately, the interplay between individual mothers, social norms and new ideas is complex and continuous.

As noted, Allen's assertions regarding women's feelings towards their children and their status as mothers are textually supported, and they emerge as clearly linked to cultural prescriptions regarding mother-love, albeit in a surprising way. In general, those women who accepted a maternalist ideology, who believed that the work of motherhood prepared empathetic citizens to participate in a just nation, found that motherhood, rather than being the burden that Badinter, or perhaps Gerhard, describe, was an enhancement to their self-esteem (43). The mothers who left a written record of their experiences seem proud of their contributions as mothers, where childless women such as Rahel Varnhagen and Malwida von Meysenbug often expressed the desire for children, and spent countless hours helping with siblings, nieces and nephews, and the children of friends (47-48). In general, maternalists saw the nurturing role as a reinforcement of their own development as individuals, rather than as a hindrance to it.

Allen claims that the experiences of fatherless families and of mothers whose children had all died inspired many women's social and political engagement. For those who needed to defend their public activities, whether income-earning or as the result of social consciousness, the maternalist ideology available in the German context provided moral support for their endeavors, and made them more acceptable. Those widows and unmarried daughters who became writers often participated in the creation of literary images that constituted an ideology of woman's essential difference. A greater (moral)

authority arising from the practice of nurturance and elementary education within the family, early feminists argued, should lead to opportunities for women in the related fields of public education, public health, charity, and social welfare. The first public method of practicing “spiritual motherhood,” that is, nurturing growth among children other than one’s own, that became a real career opportunity for women in the German-speaking world, was teaching (Allen, 92). Especially in the new kindergarten movement, teaching both expressed the desire to create new, feminized authority structures in civil society, and allowed unmarried or childless women a role of public engagement and means of economic support.

The German exaltation of motherhood that emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is thus shown by Allen to be a social force of real significance. Contrary to the claims of Schütze and Gerhard, Allen depicts a maternal-oriented philosophy which allowed women to gain authority and independence in society based on their status as women, even when they weren’t mothers. A restatement of her basic argument demonstrates that the German context differs from that of France or Great Britain specifically because of its maternalist ideology:

Thus the emergence of early feminist positions... defined women’s individual status as inseparable from their roles as builders of families and communities. They urged the cultivation of specifically female qualities, based largely on a uniquely female experience--the mother-child bond--but applicable to both private and public realms. The assertion of the culture-building function of the home, and especially of the maternal role, challenged rather than affirmed conventional domestic ideology that associated motherhood with subservience, intellectual inferiority, and childlike dependence. By criticizing conventional views of the private as

the mere 'shadow' of the public sphere, and making it the source of important ethical values, writers... created the foundation for a public role for women. (35)

This public role for mothers and other women differs qualitatively from the role offered to women in the newly formed republics of France and the United States. In those countries, rhetoric of "Republican Motherhood" arose to define for women their role in newly restructured society. Joan Landes, author of *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (1988), explains that the core notion of republican motherhood is that mothers serve their families and specifically contribute to their republics by instilling a sense of patriotism and a respect for the public good in their children.<sup>16</sup> What Allen describes as two sides to the same coin in the German context, the prescription of motherhood for women as a source of identity and effectiveness within and outside of the home, appear in Landes's study of France after the Revolution to result in two different and competing currencies. She explains that, "gender consciousness was a paramount feature of post-revolutionary life... Domesticity, including republican motherhood, and feminism can be viewed as the two variant outcomes of the transformation of the absolutist public sphere" (171). The rhetoric regarding mothers within the republican state therefore "implies that the home and women's role within it can be given a civic purpose; and, consequently, that women may come to be satisfied with a domestic rather than a public existence" (Landes, 129). Despite the obvious

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<sup>16</sup> Julia Grant includes the eighteenth century American understanding of republican motherhood in *Raising Baby by the Book: The Education of American Mothers* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press) 1998.

parallels to German notions of maternal agency which I examine, the notion of republican motherhood, which at any rate proved “to be insufficiently supple to allow women to join on equal terms the armed and virtuous citizenry of the militant republic” (Landes, 147), never achieved the same dominance in the monarchical states and confederacy that made up the German-speaking regions.

### **Rousseau’s Influence and Rhetoric**

Even in the absence of an ideal of republican motherhood, however, the ideals of Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712 - 1770), did find a broad popular and educated audience in the German areas. Some scholars argue that Rousseau’s fictional work *Emile* (1762) became perhaps the single greatest influence on the rhetoric and ideology surrounding womanhood at the end of the eighteenth century throughout Europe. His work introduced the idea that the contributions parents made in raising their children according to specific principles renewed and reformed society, and set the standard for other Enlightenment figures such as Kant, Montaigne, Locke, and Wollstonecraft in addressing theories of child-rearing. Scholars generally agree that Rousseau pushed the question of education into public consciousness, creating a zeal for educational reform that characterized the eighteenth-century.<sup>17</sup> Rousseau’s influence on the ensuing generation

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<sup>17</sup> See, for example Josef Rattner, *Grosse Pädagogen* (2nd ed., Munich/Basel: Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, 1968), 69, for a typical, or canonical, treatment of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Jean Paul. His history represents the norm for mid-century German histories of pedagogy, which very often begin with Rousseau: “Vom *Emil* her datiert der bewunderungswürdige Erziehungseifer des 18. Jahrhunderts.”

of pedagogues in Germany was greater even than other German writers', such as Basedow, Campe, and Salzmann.

Isabel Hull, author of *Sexuality, State and Civil Society in Germany, 1700-1815*, provides documentation of Rousseau's influence on German thought.<sup>18</sup> She confirms the lasting popularity of *Emile* in Germany, calling it a central text. "But like most icons of cultural opinion," she reminds us, "Rousseau was probably less influential in terms of setting a trend, than he was in marking views that had been current for some time," most notably those regarding female subordination and sexual repression (252). Unlike the implicit arguments of Gerhard, Landes and Hunt, Hull asserts that the sexual inequality Rousseau advocates had always been a defining element of German society; what changed was the context into which he put it. German writers used Rousseau to reinvent "the old notions of male dominance and female subordination: the education of people to become citizens of new civil society." Rousseau, she continues, "placed great weight on the importance of the individual and his or her sexual constitution to the social order; the linking of the sexual/gender foundation of individualism and society was new, because both individualism and civil society were new" (252).

Most pertinent to my discussion of an ideology of motherhood, along with his assertions regarding the mothers' roles in the family, is Rousseau's depiction of female subordination and lack of personal or sexual will in the work's fifth book, *Sophie ou la*

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<sup>18</sup> See especially page 252, notes 91 ad 92 for a list of articles tracing the reception history. Hull's work traces evolving notions of gender relations and the position of women and mothers from the perspective of a legal historian, providing the changing legal definitions and consequences of personal events and social hierarchies which marked women's lives.

*femme*. Feminist critics in particular are united in their belief that Rousseau's arguments had long-term effects on the German understanding of naturalness and womanliness. Yvonne Schütze, for example, claims that our notion that parents, and especially mothers, are to a large extent responsible for the moral outcome of their children stems from Rousseau's positions. She argues that since him, mothers were to plan carefully their children's upbringing, adapting it to the specific nature of their children under the guidance of experts (45). Ute Gerhard, who traces the advent of the traditional housewife model of marriage and the nuclear family to the generations following Rousseau, links the reception of his work in Germany to that historical development:

In der Tradition dieses eigentümlich deutschen Ideals von biederer und tüchtiger Hausfrau, das die bürgerlichen Autoren voller Ressentiment der oberflächlichen Galanterie und Parlierkunst der Französinen gegenüberstellen, liegt ohne Zweifel der Grund für die Überinterpretation des *Emile* durch deutsche Pädagogen...bei der Rezeption Rousseaus in Deutschland von den Pädagogen "vor allem die den Bildungsanspruch der Frauen einschränkenden Gedanken" übernommen und verbreitet wurden, während die von Rousseau vorausgesetzte, auf Gleichwertigkeit und Bildung der Frau gegründete Ergänzung der Geschlechter der banalen Tüchtigkeit und Tugendhaftigkeit bürgerlichen Hausfrauentums Platz machte. (129)

In an article which considers the psychological effects of Rousseau's rhetoric, ideology, and methods on the developing feminine psyche, Verena Ehrich-Haefeli calls *Sophie ou la femme* "die wichtigste Schaltstelle im Übergang zu jenem neuen, dem bürgerlichen Diskurs über die Frau."<sup>19</sup> She calls his text "ein Diskurs, der es erlaubt, die

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<sup>19</sup> Verena Ehrich-Haefeli, "'Sein Glück sei dein Glück!' Rousseaus *Sophie* und die Entstehung der bürgerlichen Geschlechterideologie," Blum, Nesseler, eds. *Weibsbilder. Das neue Bild der Frau in Gesellschaft und Politik* (Freiburg im Br.: Rombach, 1994) 8.

neu verengten Rollenzuschreibungen der Frau nun durch ihre ‘Natur’, durch einen spezifisch weiblichen Geschlechtscharakter zu legitimieren.” The feminine characteristics Rousseau depicts amount to, according to Ehrich-Haefeli, a fundamental narcissistic disturbance. Freud discovered many of the same symptoms in his patients some 150 years later, and they became the hallmark of femininity in the psychoanalytic interpretation: passivity, feminine masochism, a deficient super-ego, narcissism, and repressed sexuality (9). This image of womanhood, as exemplified by Sophie, carried over, therefore, into a broader cultural understanding of women. In her examination of literary images, for example, Hagl-Catling states that in the character of Sophie

Das Erziehungsziel ist eine passive, gehorsame, ihren Pflichten im Hause, den Kindern und dem Manne gegenüber nachkommende Frau. Der persönliche Wille und die eigene Sexualität werden unterdrückt und so weit verdrängt, daß sie zum Aufopferungswunsch verwandelt wieder an die Oberfläche der Persönlichkeit gelangen. Dieses Frauenbild wird in der Gesellschaft des ausgehenden 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts verinnerlicht und durch literarische Vorbilder wie z.B. Schillers *Lied von der Glocke* oder seine *Würde der Frauen* tradiert und bestätigt. (88)

By the time the authors I investigate in the following chapters were working, therefore, Rousseau’s image of womanhood had penetrated German society and found widespread resonance. The mothers in my studies had grown up in the shadow of expectations created by Rousseau, even when they themselves had not fully internalized them.

Besides the subordination of women and the denial of their sexual nature, Rousseau’s text made several other contentions to which those coming after were forced to respond. These contentions pertain to my investigation insofar as they established

images of children and of mothers that held sway in German society at the end of the eighteenth century. The most notable among these for my study is the idea that a mother's love is absolutely imperative to a baby's or child's well-being. According to *Emile*, mothers are the teachers nature chooses, because nobody besides the mother is so situated or created to sympathize with her child's natural development. Rousseau dictates that mothers nurse, protect, and comfort their own babies, for "where there is no mother, there is no child. Without mother-love, an infant's heart dies before even awakening."<sup>20</sup> With this declaration, Rousseau participates in the continuing debate regarding maternal breastfeeding, and proclaiming a baby's and mother's necessary physical interdependence.<sup>21</sup>

Besides the declaration of the critical role that mothers play in the lives of their babies and very young children, Rousseau determined the rhetoric that echoed through subsequent generations of authors and parents. He declared that nature itself validated his ideas, establishing the primacy of nature and natural law as the rhetorical foundation. His program, therefore, was to raise a natural person who developed according to

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<sup>20</sup> Here paraphrased from Rattner, 70-71.

<sup>21</sup> Although Verena Ehrich-Haefeli examines Rousseau's effect on the upbringing of girls, her statement, "Er macht klar, daß diese Erziehung nur gelingen kann im Medium der Liebe zwischen Mutter und Tochter," (20) could be broadened to demonstrate Rousseau's belief in the importance of the mother's presence for the young child of either sex. Historians and critics, such as Blaffer Hrdy and others, like to point out the irony in the fact that Rousseau had his own children sent to foundling hospitals, denying their mother the chance to nurse them. There is a consistency between his words and his actions, however. If there is no child when there is no mother present, then the opposite must also be true. By refusing to allow the babies to remain with their mother long enough to be nursed or loved by her, he guaranteed that there was no baby, and hence, in a practical sense, no mother, consigning his children's mother to a state of continual childlessness, or non-maternity. He thus put into practice the insistence that being a mother is more than merely bearing a baby.

unchanging laws of nature, unspoiled by corrupt habits of society.<sup>22</sup> For that, Rousseau needed a mother who was also natural, a sort of pure expression of an enduring feminine essence. Ehrlich-Haefeli shows that three motifs run through his book: Rousseau postulates a specific feminine essence which subordinates women to men while at the same time prescribing an educative program that restores woman to her submissive nature, both in a style which spreads an affective, poetic shimmer over this new image of womanhood and the suggestive idyll of the home (14, 22).

The poetic gloss enhancing his imagery regarding “woman’s nature” thus made his claims all the more compelling. His images and rhetoric supplied a sturdy groundwork for arguments for many years following, among both women and men. Joan Landes argues that the language Rousseau initiated determined the rhetoric encompassing the debate on mothers’ roles even among those who rejected his ideas:

Though Jean-Jacques Rousseau was an obvious target of feminist wrath, feminists spoke a language in which Rousseau’s virtuous self is the model for political discourse and domestic reform. Ironically, then, feminists adopted many of the contradictory assertions of the republican movement, as between an ideology of rights and a commitment to nature in which women are assigned a subordinate place. They sought, of course, to turn the claims of nature to their own advantage. The terms ‘nature’ and ‘virtue,’ however, had an ambivalent quality in republican discourse. They functioned to preserve difference and hence guarantee sexual inequality, even as they were yoked to a universalist, egalitarian protest. (123)

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<sup>22</sup> Blaffer Hrdy, whose work does attempt to find the ‘natural’ and biological elements in mothering practices notes that, “like other early moral philosophers, Rousseau was strong on what it was biologically ‘natural’ for mothers to do, and took for granted both that ‘in the animal kingdom the laws of nature reign unencumbered.’ He also took for granted that he knew what those laws were.”

The authors I examine in the chapters that follow therefore inherit from Rousseau a vocabulary heavily dependent on the claims of nature, and a concern not to appear to transgress the boundaries ordained by natural law.

Concomitant with his assertion of woman's nature, Rousseau reappraised the nature of children, paralleling the historical development Ariès describes. He posits that the child is an individual whose development will unfold, if undisturbed, in a naturally occurring sequence. This natural and healthful development of the individual requires that the physical self be exercised and encouraged before the intellectual self, particularly for boys (Rattner, 70). Further, Rousseau argues that this natural development of the physical and intellectual or spiritual capacities, which begins at birth, leads an educator to raise a child not to a specific profession or place in the social hierarchy, but rather to full humanity, freedom and responsibility. Jean Paul, Pestalozzi, and the Schlegels respond to these demands on behalf of the modern individual in their works, portraying just such concerns. They adhere to his precept that a child is not merely an underling whose duty is to obey the unregulated dictates of his tutor.

Finally, Rousseau instituted a profound change of rhetoric regarding children when he posited not only their uniqueness but also their inherent goodness. Scholars such as Hans-Christoph Koller demonstrate that the goal of an Enlightenment-era moral education, as proposed by Rousseau, was not to teach the child obedience to authority,

but to lead the child to desire what the teacher desired.<sup>23</sup> The “goodness” that the child wants “muß sozusagen von innen her einleuchten, indem es der ‘Natur der Sache’ entspricht und so mit dem inneren Empfinden des Kindes übereinstimmt.”<sup>24</sup> The idea of children’s inherent goodness, or potential for goodness, which could be made to be brought in line with the goals of external society became a pervasive theme in the post-Enlightenment environment in which the authors I study lived and worked.

That doesn’t mean, of course that the authors whose works I investigate in subsequent chapters wholeheartedly endorsed Rousseau’s and his followers’ prescriptions regarding childrearing practices or familial structures. Jean Paul and Pestalozzi both distanced themselves from Rousseau by explaining that, unlike them, he never actively educated. In fact, Pestalozzi found Rousseau’s methods so inapplicable, he conjectured that “wohl ‘seit Rousseaus und Basedows Epoche eine halbe Welt’ für die Unterrichtsverbesserung ‘in Bewegung gesetzt worden war.’”<sup>25</sup> Jean Paul, for his part, acknowledged the singular importance of *Emile*, but his comment that Pestalozzi was “der stärkende Rousseau des Volks,” betrays his understanding of Rousseau as specifically oriented to the upper- and middle-classes.<sup>26</sup> Even Rousseau’s depiction of the role of wives and mothers was not universally accepted. When Caroline Schlegel

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<sup>23</sup>Hans-Christoph Koller, *Die Liebe zum Kind und das Begehren des Erziehers: Erziehungskonzeption und Schreibweise pädagogischer Texte von Pestalozzi und Jean Paul*, Studien zur Philosophie und Theorie der Bildung, Vol. 10 (Weinheim: Deutscher Studien Verlag), 1990.

<sup>24</sup> Koller, 165.

<sup>25</sup> Also in Anton Luible, “Pestalozzi und Jean Paul,” Großherzogl. Herzogl. Sächsischen Gesamt-Universität Jena, (Kempten: Jos. Kösel, Graphische Anstalt, 1912) 13.

<sup>26</sup> Luible summarizes Rousseau’s influence on both Jean Paul and Pestalozzi in his dissertation, esp. 12 - 14.

first heard Schiller's *Das Lied von der Glocke*, for example, which depicts housewives in much the same spirit as Rousseau's *Sophie*, she "nearly fell out of her chair laughing."<sup>27</sup>

Considering that these reservations were voiced by people who generally admired Rousseau's liberating effect on European society, it is clear that his widespread popularity did not necessarily mean that all parts of his work were equally well regarded.

The works I treat in the chapters which follow therefore provide another, summary version of mothers' images, that held by members of Germany's intellectual vanguard in the Romantic Era. They, too, were responding to images of mothers engaged in creating a newer, better society by raising their children to be a new sort of citizen. Whether they, or the mothers with whom they worked, perceived such depictions as either liberating or oppressive, inspiring or silly remains to be seen. I believe, thus, that only a thorough investigation of the images themselves, set against a contrasting reading of the private experiences of actual mothers (Dorothea Schlegel and Caroline Schlegel Schelling) in the vanguard of intellectual change, can hope to retrieve a broader scale of the interaction between mothers and the textual imagery meant to influence them.

The present study thus examines several authors within that context; as simultaneously responding to and contributing to or creating an ideology of motherhood within the nascent modern era. These writers employed a vision of motherhood that expressed their political and social agendas. They therefore incorporated in that maternal vision references to a bourgeois, rather than aristocratic, society, national unity, and

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<sup>27</sup> From her letter of 21 October 1799, Waitz 272.

republican, or egalitarian, civil rights. In articulating the place and power of mothers in new German society, their capacity for social renewal and their potential as agents of change, the authors this study examines defined or implied a specific understanding of such concepts as citizen, subject, nation, and family. To set up that case, let me now summarize the historical context mothers inhabited.

### **Mothers and Families in Historical Trends**

Many scholars agree that the transition from an empire of small, monarchical states to a larger, potentially democratic nation, as envisioned by German Romantics such as Friedrich Schlegel, was accompanied by two phenomena: The ideal of the autonomous man, who could participate in and effect civic affairs through a public sphere of informed, literate opinion, and the ideal of the autonomous nuclear family which engendered a sense of intimacy and emotional commitment between its members and inculcated a sense of patriotism. Lynn Hunt sums up these two ideals as “the new model of the family as emotional center for the nurturing of children and the new model of the individual as an autonomous self” (21).

Clearly, these two imperatives operated on mothers as competing claims, since they couldn't be autonomous, and their status was as much tied to physical conditions as to *Geist*. Mothers were urged toward greater intimacy in the family while inhabiting a culture advocating an impossible personal autonomy in the public sphere. These two oppositional claims forced mothers into a situation wherein they could affect civic affairs

only as mediated through the family, in their roles as mothers. The bourgeois family demanded a dedicated, emotive mother whose role enjoyed greater status both in the family and as an ideal than in the whole-house organization, but whose opportunity for directly affecting her own circumstances in any way other than from within the role of mother was limited. This dichotomy affected nearly all women of the era, since, once they married, motherhood was an obligation and not a choice.

Understanding the changing roles of mothers requires some knowledge of the historical forms of family life, and the historical and economic context that sustained them, often quite different than in France or England. A fast-growing, predominantly agricultural and feudal populace characterized the German-speaking areas at the outset of the nineteenth century. The surge in population was due not so much to increased birth rates or family sizes, but rather to a lowered death rate and improved agricultural production (Gerhard, 16-20). In fact, material conditions for the “Volk” were better in 1800 than later in the century: Land reform during the *Vormärz* resulted in a massive broadening of the rural underclass, who experienced worsened living conditions and the decrease of means of subsistence from 1807 on (Gerhard, 23). Further, the freeing of the serfs in Prussia in 1810 did not necessarily result in improved working conditions or greater income from the open market, since peasants no longer had access to the benefits of the estate. Moreover, estate owners still had the rights to corporal punishment, and veto power over young people’s educational, apprenticeship, and marriage opportunities. Even as late as 1850, the lagging Industrial Revolution meant that most poor people in

Germany were not factory workers, but rather what Ute Gerhard calls, “knapp und elend lebenden Handwerkern und Heimarbeitern oder ländlichen, landlosen Unterschichten” (69). For most of the German-speaking population, the hallmarks of the first half of the nineteenth-century were rapid population growth and lack of industrial growth or state-sponsored support, leading to widespread poverty. The former serfs, released from their ties to the land, were thus engaged in a demanding competition in the free labor market.<sup>28</sup>

In the period addressed by the works I will be studying, before the freeing of the serfs and ensuing dependence on wage labor, the nature of working life presupposed that the work of husbands and wives contributed equally to domestic financial well-being. Women of all classes, and for the most part, their children, too, contributed to the household in ways that made them more nearly partners than dependents.

Gerhard maintains that the post-feudal uncoupling of the underclass from the land robbed peasant families of much of their income, in that it robbed them of the benefits of women’s production. She reminds us that previously, mothers and children had community rights to the fields and forests, and through them a variety of means for contributing provisions for the family. They provided or manufactured the family’s goods, from foodstuffs, to cloth, to firewood and candles. Men’s wages provided only partial support for the family, a support that family members were increasingly forced to depend on during the course of the century. The husband’s wage-earning role as provider for the family was thus a bourgeois convention that had not yet become standard during

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<sup>28</sup> See also Gerhard, 72.

the time the works I analyze were written. Jean Paul, the Schlegel sisters-in-law, and especially Pestalozzi presuppose that the security of the great majority of the population depended on the communal and continual work done by women and children in the household and the gardens.

Especially for reading Pestalozzi, but also for understanding the real-life situation of most mothers during the era, the importance of women's productive labor in the family and the agrarian economy cannot be overstated. All female members of a household, throughout the spectrum of class positions, ensured the proper functioning of a family community and its economic well-being. Mothers who cared for their children while leading a household were not free to devote themselves to one or several children only, but incorporated the production of daily necessities and the maintenance of the family trade or profession into their daily routines. Thus we see Pestalozzi's fictional character Gertrud spinning and weaving, and Caroline and Dorothea Schlegel editing their husbands' manuscripts and maintaining contacts with publishers, while also providing their families' meals, heat, household goods and domestic order.

### **The Nuclear Family as Social Norm**

Most of this valuable female labor took place within the framework of the spousal family unit. Gerhard argues that the "Kleinfamilie," the nuclear family, was the family

form for the underclass, and therefore for the vast majority of people (101-102).<sup>29</sup>

Wilfried Gottschalch, author of *Vatermutterkind: Deutsches Familienleben zwischen Kulturromantik und sozialer Revolution*, concurs, explaining that even speech habits, which used “Weib und Kind” as a metaphor for the family, indicate the prevalence of the nuclear family. Only a minority of the aristocracy, and wealthy landowners and merchants, could afford a whole-house economy.<sup>30</sup>

Although extended families appeared only among the moneyed and propertied classes, they, too, were eventually reduced to smaller units as the nuclear family became economically and ideologically universal. Gottschalch considers the notion of the extended family of former times a romantic ideal of an ideology rather than an actual historical occurrence.<sup>31</sup> He sees the widespread acceptance of the bourgeois nuclear family, with its sentimental attachment and material arrangements, as an indicator that, in the interest of reducing expenses, the upper class family contracted along the prevalent family-model of lower and middle classes.

The majority of the populace of early nineteenth-century German-speaking regions therefore lived in nuclear family groups, not always centered around a legal marriage, and with a communal economy heavily dependent on the work of the women

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<sup>29</sup> For the same argument in a broadly European, rather than German, context, see Steven Ozment, *Ancestors: The Loving Family in Old Europe*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press) 2001.

<sup>30</sup> Berlin: Klaus Wagenbach, 1979, 11.

<sup>31</sup> Although Anja Müller-Muth, in her review of Naomi Tadmor’s survey of English family history, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England: Household, Kinship and Patronage*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2001, summarizes Tadmor’s thesis that there were two variants of the whole-house family: the “household family,” and the “lineage family.” Neither idea plays a role in the discussion here, since Jean Paul and Pestalozzi concentrate on nuclear families, and the Schlegel sisters-in-law concentrate on mothering their own children, whatever the other family constellations might be.

and children. Their work, often as assistants, servants or field laborers, benefited both their immediate families and the greater estate or community to which they belonged.

Indeed, the contributions of the servant or serf class were so important to the well-being of a family that serfs and servants were, in common parlance, included in the network of relationships that made up a family. The word family thus designated various structures of human relationships, not only the nuclear family or parent-child relationships we know today. For that reason, paragraphs three and four of the Prussian Legal Code of 1794 defines the family as:

Die Verbindung zwischen Ehegatten, ingleichen zwischen Aeltern und Kindern, macht eigentlich die häusliche Gesellschaft aus.  
Doch wird auch das Gesinde mit zur häuslichen Gesellschaft gerechnet.<sup>32</sup>

Although the nuclear family was, then, the widespread norm, and even the larger household became more focused on the marriage pair and their children, the notion of family had to be flexible. We must keep in mind that the early deaths of children and spouses were common. Early deaths were not unexpected events in the lives of past generations of families, who lived through a high incidence of childhood mortality and young widowhood. Stepfamilies were, as the memoirs in Allen's book and Caroline Schlegel's letters reminds us, relatively common, due to the high mortality rate of parents, and widows' need to remarry. Women were therefore commonly expected to raise other women's children. She and Gerhard both remind us that separation, divorce

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<sup>32</sup> See, for example, Gerhard, 85, who also reminds us that the whole-house organization of the upper classes included all persons who lived and worked in the house, such as servants, apprentices, or relatives.

and non-legal unions were more or less common social phenomena.<sup>33</sup> The organization of the family therefore had to be elastic enough to accommodate a variety of groups linked by marriage or blood. Mothers and their children, or even their stepchildren, younger siblings, or younger relatives, constituted recognized family groups after the deaths of husbands or fathers, as did married couples after the deaths of their children.

The death of children, which Ariès and Badinter depict as relatively unemotional for the parents experiencing the loss, appears in the letters of the Schlegel women and the memoirs Allen provides to be both emotional and life-changing. The letters of Caroline Schlegel testify to the importance children's deaths had on the emotional life of a mother, and the role that those losses play in subsequent decisions regarding remarriage and sexual liaisons. For several of the writers she presents, the death of a child provides the motive for increased social, and even political, engagement.

### **The Mother as *Hausmutter***

The *Hausmutter*, or wife of the head of an estate household, had clear duties and expectations from extended family members and servants. Her duties were enumerated in the various almanacs that make up the genre *Hausmütterliteratur*, appearing from about 1780 until 1840. Marion Gray examined a number of these works, originally written to instruct women in overseeing vast agricultural estates with their husbands. She considers these books indicative of societal pre-occupations with setting a normative

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<sup>33</sup> See Allen, 46, 137,145, and Gerhard, 76-81.

standard for the proper function of women within society and the family.<sup>34</sup> They also mark the re-evaluation of the social significance of marriage, gender and family that occurred simultaneously with the development of the bourgeois family. The *Hausmütter* books therefore posit the wife as an economically productive member of the estate, who was responsible for all hoofstock, the production of food and textiles, maintenance of the household budget (with thrift as the ruling virtue), and educating and providing for the moral development of daughters and female servants. The instructions in these almanacs assume an economic system precluding market commerce (420). Frugality, modesty and the appearance of subordination, and orderliness developed into the cardinal virtues of the *Hausmutter*, characteristics carried over to the often economically more modest role of housewife. Later these virtues were no longer economic values only, but “served as foundations for bourgeois social ideals of womanhood, shoring up the notion that women should be the guardians of the private sphere of life” (422).

Gray finds that this genre posited a notion of “productive female domesticity” which legitimized and rationalized women’s work, and differentiates it from later manuals, which fetishize and sentimentalize the housewife’s subordination and relegation to the private sphere. She explains that the authors of domestic instruction manuals, like those I study here, considered women to be equal partners in the economy of the estate or household. Therefore, she claims, domestic work did not constitute a restrictive

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<sup>34</sup> Marion W. Gray, “Prescriptions for Productive Female Domesticity in a Transitional Era: Germany’s *Hausmütterliteratur*, 1780 - 1840,” *History of European Ideas*, Vol. 8, No. 4/5 (1987) 413-426.

ideology, because nearly all economic productivity occurred within the household.<sup>35</sup> Her argument rests on the assumption that work considered economically profitable can constitute a “restrictive ideology,” and that female labor in the household, if it is no longer valued for its economic contribution, becomes confining when valued as an ideal feminine activity.

As demonstrated above, however, not all scholars agree that the ideology of the domestic importance of the housewife/mother role as it developed in the German speaking areas was necessarily confining. Neither were the workload and life’s conditions of the whole house family organization were not particularly liberating, either. Gottschalch reminds us (11) that the whole-house organization rested upon complete social control by the “Hausvater” and “Hausmutter,” including the right to corporal punishment, with no recourse for subordinates or children. Additionally, marital or parental intimacy was not an ideal, or a necessary component for family life.

The heads of such households who practiced such complete authority were often members of the lower or upper nobility, a class with a distinct style of family life. Rather than displaying the physical or emotional closeness associated with lower class families, who often shared livelihoods and inhabited no more than a single room, the aristocratic family found its meaning more in its members’ representational value than in intimate personal relationships, even as late as the early nineteenth century. It was the representational value, or aura of authority, of each individual family member, rather than

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<sup>35</sup>Gray, 423.

emotional closeness, which allowed them to reproduce favorable social hierarchies. The notion of family that prevailed among the aristocracy was thus substantially different from our own:

Um 1800 nach wie vor beherrschend ist die adlige Familie, deren wichtigste Funktion Herrschaftssicherung und Herrschaftsausübung ist... die getrennten Appartements der Eheleute, die persönliche Kontakte auf ein Minimum beschränken, kennzeichnen die soziale Distanzierung, die die Beziehung der höfischen Menschen regelt... (Gerhard, 80)

This was then the concept of the family against which the rising bourgeois, nuclear family defined itself.

Evidence indicates that the growing *Bürgertum* inhabited a middle ground between these two family types, the noble, great-house family and the lower-class nuclear family. It was made up of the small but growing class of wealthy or educated business and civic leaders, and it defined itself partly in opposition to the nobility that excluded it. The class of well-off merchants and *Bildungsbürger* represented themselves, therefore, as able to foster close personal feelings between spouses, siblings, and parents and their children, and found a moral value in this closeness. Members of this class, who gained access to the public sphere through their educations and financial means, both intended to base family relationships, unlike commercial ones, on feelings of love and intimacy, and claimed a new kind of social presence.

In her account of Rousseau's influence on the time period, Verena Ehrich-Haefeli describes the new juxtapositions and challenges facing members of this class. The hallmarks of the era, and of the growing middle class, include a new value for the

individual, greater divisions between home-life and work-life, an emphasis on rationality and competition in the marketplace, and a modern understanding of family as a space for intimate relations. This understanding emphasized a central maternal role, to socialize and educate the children, provide succor to the husband, and mediate between the two.<sup>36</sup> Maternity was thus thematised in fiction and essays in a new way, to accommodate the changing needs of the image of the family.

Jürgen Habermas describes this newly found family intimacy in his treatise *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (1962, trans. 1989),<sup>37</sup> as “the family’s self-image as a sphere of humanity-generating closeness,” in which “the ideas of freedom, love, and cultivation of the person” (48) became key. In this self-image, a bourgeois subjectivity joined to a concept of humanity that emphasized free will in personal relationships. They no longer saw themselves as bound, as in the old style of marriage, by obligations to family line, shared commercial or professional duties, or inheritances. An image of family unity based on love brought a new meaning to family togetherness, according to Habermas:

In the intimate sphere of the conjugal family privatized individuals viewed themselves as independent even from the private sphere of their economic activity-as persons capable of entering into ‘purely human’ relations with one another. (48)

In viewing themselves so, and in proclaiming a distinction between emotional familial relationships and those based on financial gain, members of the developing educated

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<sup>36</sup> See also Ehrlich-Haefeli, 13.

<sup>37</sup> Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991.

class declared a crucial division in types of human interaction. This division proved integral to the development of the private sphere and the consignment of wives and mothers to it, and will figure again in my analysis of the Schlegel women's early experience as mothers.

Aside from this politics of maternal imagery, the popularization of maternal virtue coincided in Germany and Switzerland with the definitive rise of a politically and philosophically engaged community of readers and writers who employed new print technologies and early capitalism to transmit a vision of a reformulated society, according to Habermas. The public sphere, that is the social stratum of serious readers and writers he analyzes, consists of "the private people, come together to form a public... [to] compel public authority to legitimate itself before public opinion" (25). This novel community of readers, enmeshed within a newly capitalist economy, sought to apply reason to social structures. In Habermas's account, they generally advocated the autonomy of the reasonable individual, especially in matters of trade and opinion.

The belief in emotional closeness between parents and their children, spouses, and siblings developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and both caused and resulted from concomittant social changes. Since Ariès, scholars specifically note the changes in the *mores* of sociability which arose in the seventeenth century, and which achieved middle- and upper-class dominance a century later (Ariès, 404 ff.). These changes included the emergence of the family home as a private space, rather than, as in previous times, as a center of community relations, housing servants, local nobles,

apprentices from neighboring communities or extended family and such. In Ariès's account, the developments of codes of privacy and of parents keeping their children with them longer emerge as two of the most important factors in the eventual dominance of the modern notion of family. His account also documents the rise of local day schools as the prevailing method for preparing the next generation for adult life, rather than the earlier practice of sending one's children out for service and apprenticeship in neighboring estates. (None of the writers I study in the following chapters follow this practice. They all either home-school, advocate home-schooling by the mother, or engage private tutors.) This meant that parents knew their children for a longer time and much more intimately than ever before. In short, Ariès traces a long history, from the early Middle Ages, of parents wanting to keep their children ever nearer and ever later in childhood.

### **From *Hausmutter* to Housewife**

Changing patterns of work accompanied the regrouping of household members into new family structures. Women's work, the economic necessity of which has been overlooked, was nonetheless demanding. The virtues Marion Gray claims mark a good *Hausmutter* were carried over to the image of the housewife, whose work had a great financial impact on the family, even when it was no longer recognized as economically productive in the same way:

Das Bild der sparsamen, emsigen und tüchtigen Hausfrau hat nur deshalb einen so prägenden Einfluß in Deutschland gewinnen können, weil die Hausfrau tatsächlich in weiten Teilen des Bürgertums, vor allem im Bildungsbürgertum, ihren wirtschaftlichen Beitrag zum auf diese Weise gutbürgerlichen Lebensstandard leistete und durch persönliche Mehrarbeit das Defizit zwischen zu geringen Einkünften und gesellschaftlich als notwendig erachtetem Lebensstil auszugleichen versuchte. (Gerhard, 65)

Despite the ideological emphasis on freedom from a gross economic basis as the foundation for marriage and parent-child relationships, the economic function of the wife was not irrelevant. Although the encroaching industrial era defined work as that activity that generates income, and generally allowed mostly men access to income-producing employment by the middle of the nineteenth century, wives and mothers of smaller, nuclear families contributed by taking over much of the work that a larger household consigned to servants, becoming, so to speak, their own servants. This will be especially relevant in my Pestalozzi chapter, despite the fact that he wishes to affect primarily the lower class. His model calls for mothers to act as their families' tutors, a recommendation the Schlegel group realized, to some extent, although they also shared tutoring duties.

The transition from domestic production to the separation of domestic and productive spheres did not, therefore, entail a loss of function for most mothers. Most mothers had no less to do than before the elimination of feudalism, although their duties were perhaps differently conceived. With many occupations and means of earning wages closed legally or conventionally closed to them, wives and mothers were now responsible for maintaining a bourgeois lifestyle and bourgeois family relationships. In fact,

housewives, or mothers working in their homes, made up the largest group of working women through the nineteenth century. While men's work became increasingly emancipated from the domestic economy and recognized as professions, women's work was increasingly undefined, and curtailed to a narrow domesticity, according to Gerhard (51). The actual daily activities of past housewives and mothers are therefore less important to this study than what it is they were imagined to do, and where their responsibilities were thought to lie. This study explores the ideology of the imagined maternal function.

My discussion below will question statements that claim women's maternal function was imaginistically reduced at the onset of the nineteenth century, to constrain women to the domestic arena and disempower them in any more public arena. I will address authors who posited new ways of conceptualizing motherhood in the rush of oncoming modernity, recognizing the complexity of the public - private dichotomy and the overlap of the two spheres in a primarily rural, provincial context. Their new ways of conceptualizing motherhood was part and parcel of the Romantic project, with its transformed familial and social hierarchies, its desire for more egalitarian social relations outside the framework of monarchy, and its generic and thematic literary innovations. That is, the writers under discussion here believed that mothers' private, interior work did indeed impact the public, external world, and often even ennoble that world.

The chapters below will outline how the bourgeois conception of mothers' work and family norms incorporates the trends already noted in the previous section, trends

that are integral to the Romantic era. The trends toward social prescriptions for emotionally intimate family relationships, the splitting of economic life into two separate domains, the re-assertion of the importance of the family unit in social life, and the desire to connect family structures to national well-being emerge as especially significant.

### **Materialist Approaches to Mothering**

Beyond imagological and historical approaches taken to understanding women in Europe after the French Revolution, several other scholars offer differing accounts of what women's lives in the era might have been like. They often combine imagology with a materialist impetus, resisting easy categorizing.

One of the most original of these approaches is by Friedrich Kittler, who, in his investigation, *Discourse Networks 1800/1900* (1985, trans. 1990), situates the great change in conceptualizing a mother's role in awakening her children's development with the Age of Goethe, or the years of German Romanticism.<sup>38</sup> To be more precise, he breaks the evolving notion of family into two eras:

The lengthy process of reshaping the population of central Europe into modern nuclear families was directed by paternal figures only during its first phase—in Germany, up to Lessing's time...In a second phase, which coincided with the Age of Goethe... mothers stepped into the position previously held by fathers. (27)

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<sup>38</sup> Friedrich A. Kittler, *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*, Trans. Michael Metteer with Chris Cullens (Stanford: Stanford University Press) 1990.

Kittler's book ties this "reshaping" of the family to two dominant cultural trends of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century: changes in print technology and developments in early childhood pedagogy, especially in teaching children to read.

Like Allen and Ariès, Kittler links the history of pedagogy with that of the family: "The mother, as primary instructor, is, quite literally, an invention of 1800," he claims (26).<sup>39</sup> Here, too, Pestalozzi's groundbreaking ideas are seen as inspiring lasting change, especially putting mothers in the center of their children's first encounters with learning. This new pedagogy, asserts Kittler, employs the new intimacy between mothers and their children, and emphasizes the sensual nature of their relationship. Because the phonetic methods devised in teaching children to read in Pestalozzian theory meant that a child learning to read apprehended written syllables as sounds made by its mother, he asserts, reading brought with it the pleasurable associations of being embodied within the mother's voice. Kittler claims that for the eighteenth and early nineteenth century man, reading always involved hearing, or imagining, the voice of the mother behind the words on the page, as they were originally learned. He points out that Rousseau, whose birth led to his mother's death, was read to by his inconsolable father from a very young age, but couldn't recall how he learned to read:

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<sup>39</sup> For a more strictly historical account of the role of women in early childhood education, and of mothers in the acquisition of literacy, see James Albisetti, *Schooling German Girls and Women* (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 1988. His focus is much more on the later part of the nineteenth century, however. He argues also that, because of the Protestant Revolution and the dogma that makes each individual responsible for his or her own salvation and understanding of the Bible, German girls and women always had some degree of literacy not required in Catholic areas.

Rousseau and Christoph Martin Wieland were taught to read by their fathers, but Friedrich Schleiermacher, Friedrich Jahn, Johann Tieck, Friedrich von Raumer and the brothers Grimm were taught by their mothers. Only for such as them, in contrast to Rousseau, do memories of the earliest alphabetizing become possible, because along with reading the mother taught that her gift of love was unforgettable - as a great range of resulting nineteenth-century autobiographies confirm. (52)

While focused on the age of Goethe, then, Kittler's arguments link reading with orality rather than with writing, and link mothers with orality and the acquisition of language. This emotional link to reading and to the imaginary experience of the mother paralleled a re-organization of families and of society that strongly emphasized maternal values.

What Kittler underplays, however, is how new literary images of the mother fundamentally redefine women and children for their readers. In their new position, mothers made decisions for their children and taught them reading and writing, arithmetic and religion. Tracts informing mothers on proper instructional methods appeared in remarkable numbers around 1800, as the maternal role became increasingly educative.<sup>40</sup>

Despite its suggestiveness, Kittler's metaphorical interpretation of the role of mothers in German literary culture would no doubt have surprised most of the women actually engaged in raising children in the early nineteenth century. He draws a picture of mothers of the era who are passive, and who contribute to German society by inspiring poets or offering their children a sensual reading experience. Those women who actually

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<sup>40</sup> Kittler, 27. Yvonne Schütze traces growth in instructional texts by physicians and aimed specifically at mothers to guide them in more complete and elaborate physical care of their babies, demonstrating that this, too, was increasingly a mother's, rather than a servant's, responsibility. Kittler describes, too, how education for girls after 1800 became an education specifically aimed at preparing them for motherhood (57, 61).

were their children's first educators were surely actively engaged in the demanding tasks of teaching subjects which children find difficult rather than pleasurable. They often divided their attentions between several children, who competed for their mother's attention as concentratedly as children today do. Nonetheless, Kittler demonstrates a new way of understanding German Romantic literary culture. Rather than reading his work for what it offers as a sociology of motherhood or a history of early childhood education, we can understand it as an examination of the interplay between masculinity and femininity, nature, sensuality and literacy, and the meaning of the generations which infiltrate the Romantic consciousness. These themes mark German Romantic literature, and create a rhetoric regarding women that continues through the nineteenth-century and into the twentieth. Kittler offers illuminating insights into the origin and uses of this rhetoric, and the maternal "discourse networks" it incorporates.

Lynn Hunt, historian of the French Revolution and author of *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* offers different insights into the rhetoric and images that seek a new understanding of mothers at the end of the eighteenth century. She has traced changing familial images in the context of French revolutionary politics to uncover "the collective, unconscious images of the familial order that underlie revolutionary politics" (xiii). Literary and artistic images of family life reveal, she claims, "a kind of collective political unconscious that was structured by narratives of family relations" (xiii), the mix of politics and imagination that structure hierarchical and social relations, family relations included. Because most eighteenth-century Europeans "thought of their

rulers as fathers and of their nations as families writ large” (xiv), the individual before the state was conceived of as moving into a phase of intellectual and political maturity ready for civic participation, as the king’s children/subjects grew into men/citizens (Hunt, 17-18). At least in France, political developments increasingly limited civic participation to men only. “The republican ideal of virtue was based on a notion of fraternity between men,” Hunt states, “in which women were relegated to the realm of domesticity... in a republic that was supposed to be shaped by the lessons of good republican mothers” (122). This socio-political ideal was reflected in the literature of the family, which emerged as a prominent popular motif around the time of the revolutionary exchange of power.

I believe that the model Hunt provides of interpreting domestic images in literature is suggestive in a different way than is Kittler’s. It represents a “creative effort to re-imagine the political world, to imagine a polity unhinged from patriarchal authority,” while acknowledging that “much of this imaginative effort went on below the surface, as it were, of conscious political discourse” (xiv). As we shall see, German and Swiss writers of the time engaged in a similar employment of family imagery, but without the resulting revolutionary political disruption. They nonetheless imagined the possibilities of renewed family relations as the basis for a new political structure, one likewise unhinged from patriarchal authority.

Of course, Germany’s history followed a much different course than France’s, and the parallels will be explored in the chapters that follow. Disconnecting the polity

from patriarchal authority took a much different path in Germany and Switzerland than it did in France, which ultimately overthrew its king in order to establish liberty, equality, and brotherhood. Rather than turning to fraternity as an alternate relationship after which to structure social norms, the texts I examine promote an image of maternity, of motherly wisdom, devotion, and even indulgence. The French popularized the ideal of Republican motherhood described previously, which posited that mothers' greatest contribution to the new political order was their work in raising patriots, exemplifying morals, and becoming the nations' home educators (123). Although my work on Pestalozzi and Jean Paul uncovers a parallel impulse to glorify the ability of mothers to educate children to moral and civic maturity, the romantic ideals of motherhood they and others articulated ultimately differed from the French hopes for Republican motherhood. They are aimed, at a very different political constellation. The German "family romance" I wish to uncover is a romance of maternity, a narrative of reversed hierarchies on a global and a personal level, and of the emergence of a feminine discourse, which underlies a politics at once revolutionary and non-violent.

Social scholars who investigate the way a new maternal politics effected children may well agree with Judith Rich Harris, author of *The Nurture Assumption: Why Children Turn Out the Way They Do* (New York: The Free Press, 1998), who believes that moving the workplace out of the home ensured children "a haven from the world," (82) and a break from early employment. Her focus on the well-being of children, rather than an imagistic exploration of mothers, leads her to agree with Ariès that the economic

trends Habermas outlines benefit minors. She concurs with the theory of increased familial intimacy as a feature of the modern notion of family ties:

The family came to be seen as a unit held together by mutual affection rather than by economic considerations. Around the same time, general health improved and more children were surviving to adulthood. These changes, which occurred earlier in wealthy homes than in poorer ones, brought with them a heightened interest in children. Children began to be valued more for themselves and less for what they could contribute in the way of free labor. (82 - 83)

Although she counters critiques of the nuclear family unit and privatized female domesticity with the contention that children's lives were improved, she does not discover an improvement or empowerment for the women themselves, such as this study discovers. The texts under consideration in the following chapters clearly demonstrate a love for the children themselves, as she claims, both on the part of mothers and of those writing about mothers and their children.

In evaluating Habermas's description of the developing public and private spheres of opinion and commerce, and the intimate sphere of the bourgeois family unit, for example, Marie Fleming links changing, and oppressive, relationship structures to the disappearance of the "whole house" organization:

as the bourgeois were making social and economic advances and as they were learning the art of rational-critical public debate, there also occurred deep structural changes at the level of gender relations. The patriarchal conjugal family became the dominant family type within the bourgeois strata, and its eventual consolidation as the norm led to the displacement of [other family structures.]<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> From "Women and the 'Public Use of Reason,'" *Feminists Read Habermas*, Johanna Meehan, ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 1995) 122.

Therefore, Habermas explains, to “the degree to which commodity exchange burst out of the confines of the household economy, the sphere of the conjugal family became differentiated from the sphere of social reproduction” (28). Habermas argues that the appearance of the public sphere of rational inquiry of the Enlightenment and German Idealist eras eventually reduced the private sphere to the bourgeois family and its interior spaces. That private sphere later lost functional independence, according to Habermas, and the power to protect and influence its members, as it lost the means of economic production: “the family increasingly lost also the functions of upbringing and education, protection, care and guidance” (155) of its younger members. That is, its members were no longer able to rely on each other in cases of emergency, in old age and in educating its youngest members.

These claims, which paraphrase Habermas’s assertions, need to be evaluated in the context of the authors I investigate below, perhaps as reflective of a different class or group portrait than Habermas accounts for. According to Pestalozzi, Jean Paul, and Caroline Schlegel, who envisioned mothers educating and guiding their children from the cradle to the wedding day, the Romantic era made room for increased family-based education. Further, given that the realm of capital reproduction increasingly excluded mothers, Habermas’s later claims that the private family sphere “was the scene of a psychological emancipation that corresponded to the political-economic one” (46) must be re-evaluated as applying to fathers only. They are the ones who experienced “the

independence of the property owner in the market and in his own business” (47).

Mothers and children were perhaps more aware of the “complement[ary...] dependence of the wife and children on the male head of the family” (47).

In Habermas’s description of family life in the newly emerging nationalist and capitalist cultures, therefore, his description of the German Idealist era needs refinement. In contrast to Habermas’s claims, the segment of the public sphere I examine is intimately engaged in reformulating a vision of motherhood that increases both the representational value of mothers and their educative potential, and, hence, their moral power in determining the values and identity of the next generation. In contrast to Habermas’s notion of the economic and political nature of discourse in the newly formulated public sphere, Pestalozzi, Jean Paul, and Caroline Schlegel include the work of mothering in their attempts to renew their societies and nations, in texts that test Habermas’s theories.

Further, Habermas’s description of public life and debate succeeding the Enlightenment has provoked feminist critics, who focus on his failure to acknowledge the gendered nature of the public sphere. Nancy Fraser noted in 1989 that “a gender-sensitive reading” of Habermas’s ideas “reveals that male dominance is intrinsic rather than accidental to classical capitalism, for the institutional structure of this social formation is actualized by means of gendered roles.”<sup>42</sup> The roles she specifically

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<sup>42</sup> Her article, “What’s Critical about Critical Theory?” has been reprinted in *Feminists Read Habermas: Gendering the Subject of Discourse*, (New York and London: Routledge, 1995) 21-55, this quote page 36. The contributors to this volume, Nancy Fraser, Jean Cohen, Joan Landes, Marie Fleming,

mentions include worker, client, consumer, soldier and childrearer, roles that link the family to the paid workplace and to concerns of the state. Joan Landes, approaching the debate about women's consignment to the private sphere from a different angle, nonetheless draws similar conclusions:

I argue that the exclusion of women from the bourgeois public was not incidental but central to its incarnation, and... I claim that the bourgeois public is essentially, not just contingently, masculinist, and that this characteristic serves to determine both its self-representation and its subsequent 'structural transformation' (*Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution*, 7).

Both Landes and Fraser point out the inability of women to participate autonomously in the public dialogue, because of their inability to own property and their particular maternal concerns. Such disabilities and concerns effectively hampered their entrance to the universalized public sphere of opinion, citizenship and commercial activity. When compared to the influence of Pestalozzi on mothers and educators, however, or when seen from the perspective of the German women Ann Taylor Allen includes in her work, Fraser's and Landes's claims about the confining nature of the scripted mother-role appear more equivocal.

Concomitant with the developing public sphere and the glorification of affectionate familial relationships arose a much-studied national consciousness among German writers and readers that was more nuanced than what Habermas acknowledged.

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Jane Braaten, Simone Chambers, Seyla Benhabib, Jodi Dean, Johana Meehan, Georgia Warnke and Allison Weir, share a general consensus that the enlightened public sphere as Habermas describes it is both gendered and hierarchical, and that classical capitalism inherently confines women to the home because of the childbearing role.

German romantic writers articulated for the *Bürgertum* a language-based sense of unity and commonality, such as Benedict Anderson describes in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983, revised 1991). Anderson shares with Hunt the belief that a nation arises out of the force of imagination. They both demonstrate what Hunt calls the way that

people collectively imagine-that is, think unconsciously about- the operation of power, and the ways in which this imagination shapes and is in turn shaped by political and social processes. Central to this collective imagination are the relations between parents and children and between men and women. (8)

Rather than existing as a natural or organic entity, a nation is therefore a construct created from the force of people imagining their shared community through space and time. Extending this idea of the imaginative and creative forces necessary for founding nations, Karen Hagemann articulates a theory of the nation as a “social process,” reminding us of the cultural processes that construct a nation. She argues that nation-building must be analyzed in relational terms which recognize that the cultural work of nation-building is often separate from the governmental work of state-building. In the case of Germany and Switzerland, women participated only in the cultural project, giving them a distinct history that must be integrated into men’s history for a fuller understanding of each country’s national history.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Hagemann’s argument was made during her address to the European Studies Consortium’s 2001 conference, *Nation-State-Family: The Nationalization of the Enlightened “Society of Citizens,”* at the University of Minnesota, 19 May 2001.

Anderson, like Hunt, links the rise of nations to the development of narrative fiction, and, like Habermas, describes the connections between nationalism and the development of print technologies and newspapers. My studies of the two pedagogues here also link the German romantic ideology of imagined motherhood with a move to imagine the German readership as a “deep, horizontal comradeship” (7), a nation, albeit with a distinct gendering of social roles. I then compare their ideas to those of two mothers striving to enact this goal of mothering. The authors I investigate in the following chapters imagined mothers as the caretakers of a generation of citizens, who contributed to the creation of a new nation by instilling a sense of public virtue and civic responsibility. They therefore made the private public, to borrow contemporary language, in a very specific, and gendered, way.

As outlined above, I will turn now to two educative texts, to review their facts and fictions as evidence prodding the debate on the value of mothering in German-speaking areas. The public value of an otherwise private endeavor, and the value of publicly justifying and articulating the actions and decisions governing the private realm figures in these texts more complexly than the usual public/private distinction suggests. Mothers are, in these works, the key agents reconciling both arenas.

## **Chapter Two: Pestalozzi's Prescriptions: Mother-Love and Learning**

### **Pestalozzi the Patriot and Pedagogue**

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746 – 1827) was a social reformer and pedagogue who profoundly influenced Europe. He founded schools for poor children and orphans, authored novels, pamphlets and treatises meant to raise social awareness of the problems facing children in the lower classes, and actively promoted constitutional ideals for an independent Switzerland throughout his life. He was a tireless and passionate man, who, in the words of Johann Gottlieb Fichte,

wollte bloß dem Volke helfen, aber seine Erfindung, in ihrer ganzen Ausdehnung genommen, hebt das Volk, hebt allen Unterschied zwischen diesem und einem gebildeten Stande auf, gibt statt der gesuchten Volkserziehung, Nationalerziehung, und hätte wohl das Vermögen, den Völkern, und dem ganzen Menschengeschlechte, aus der Tiefe seines dermaligen Elends emporzuhelfen. (Reden an die deutsche Nation, 1808)

Rarely is a social advocate for children, particularly an author and educator who is, during his own lifetime, widely regarded as eccentric and continually in a state of financial ruin or public scandal, awarded such high accolades by one of the foremost philosophers of his era. Yet Pestalozzi must have been a rare man, whose work with children and the disadvantaged led to educational and developmental theories which, in their humane insistence on the natural unfolding of individual gifts, ultimately advanced the well-being of people throughout Europe.

Pestalozzi was born in Zurich on January 12, 1746.<sup>44</sup> After the death of his father when he was only five, he grew up in difficult economic circumstances raised by his mother, Susanne Pestalozzi Hotz, and an exceptionally devoted servant, a *Kindermagd* named Barbara Schmid, from whom he learned the exceptional devotion some women practice. Pestalozzi completed his education at Zurich's Collegium Carolinum, where he was a central figure in the student circle surrounding Bodmer and Breitinger, Switzerland's foremost Enlightenment representatives, who combined a habit of critical thinking, patriotic ideals and a high degree of social moralism. In this circle, Pestalozzi developed a passionate concern for the Swiss confederacy.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, he even warned his future wife, Anna Schultheß, that he considered "die Pflichten gegen meine geliebte Gattin den Pflichten gegen mein Vaterland für untergeordnet," and that he would be "unerbittlich gegen die Thränen meines Weibes," if she ever impeded him in the fulfillment of his civic duty, "was auch immer daraus entstehen möge."<sup>46</sup>

For most of Pestalozzi's life, he was seen as a clumsy but well-intentioned failure, whose farmland failed to support him and his wife and only son sufficiently. His works, such as the now-canonical *Abendstunde eines Einsiedlers*, his novel *Lienhard und*

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<sup>44</sup> Pestalozzi's biography is mostly taken from Max Liedtke, *Pestalozzi*, ed. Kurt Kusenberg, 15th ed., Rowohlt's Bildmonographien, (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1998) and Arthur Brühlmeier, *Seine Zeit, sein Leben, seine Werke*, 22 Jan. 2001, and from the website at <http://pestalozzi.hbi-stuttgart.de>.

<sup>45</sup> In 1764 he became a member of the Helvetische Gesellschaft zur Gerwe, and was also an active participant in the *Bewegung der Patrioten*, for which he was arrested. His first articles very much reflect the concerns of the patriotic society. He remained a patriot for life, and in 1798 participated in a Swiss revolution and became editor of the "Helvetische Volksblatt." French troops occupied Switzerland beginning in 1798.

<sup>46</sup> Liedtke, 34.

*Gertrud*, and the political tract *Über Gesetzgebung und Kindermord* (in which he called for legal mercy for unwed girls who gave birth, attempted abortions or committed infanticide) achieved an international readership. He nonetheless failed to gain financial security from his writing. Passionate about the social conditions close at hand, Pestalozzi turned his failed farm into an *Armenanstalt*, an institution to educate and employ impoverished local children. It was both overwhelmed by need and underfunded by private charity and local subsidy, and was dissolved in 1780. His work with poor children and his republican oriented writings won him recognition as an honorary Citizen of France in 1792. After a failed republican revolution in Switzerland, Pestalozzi was invited to institute a boarding and day school in Stans that also enrolled orphans, but that lasted only eighteen months. This failure struck him the most deeply of all previous ones, and required him to move to Burgdorf for yet another teaching position. His feeling of failure in being able to provide needy children of Switzerland with adequate schooling led to *Wie Gertrud ihre Kinder lehrt*, his impassioned plea to improve schooling in order to improve the European society. He founded one more very influential educational institution during his life, an orphanage to care for victims of Napoleon's forces in Yverdon.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Iferten in German, and in Pestalozzi's publications.

## **The Mother as Anchor of the State**

Moving from a general understanding of Pestalozzi and his time period to a more specific examination of his treatise, *Wie Gertrud ihre Kinder lehrt*,<sup>48</sup> of 1801, reveals that re-imagining motherhood and transforming the representational value of mothers in society was indeed central to Pestalozzi's project. In fact, investigation of this and similar texts reveals that re-formulating the public value of mothers' roles is a requirement for nation-building. Lynn Hunt and Joan Landes have shown that re-creating the idea of family and re-casting its members were integral to rebuilding the French nation following the French Revolution, similar to the work that Karen Hagemann has done with Prussia. In this vein, Pestalozzi's text contributes to the enterprise of nation-building undertaken by another German-speaking state.

Enlightenment and pre-Romantic writers from across Europe, such as Montaigne, Rousseau, Wollstonecraft, Locke, Kant, and Goethe, had earlier commented on the necessity of a humane education for changing the human condition in Europe. Additionally, governmental concern for population growth and ensuing military and economic strength had already made the family, and child welfare, of interest to the state. Since the Enlightenment, the belief in the need for fundamental change in societal relations had become widely accepted, as was the notion that education was the means for transforming society. As indicated in the introduction to this study, the historical

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<sup>48</sup> References and quotes taken from Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, *Wie Gertrud ihre Kinder lehrt*, ed. Prof. Dr. Albert Reble, 5th ed., Klinkhardts Pädagogischen Quellentexte, (Bad Heilbrunn: Verlag Julius Klinkhardt, 1994). Page numbers indicated parenthetically, and his spelling idiosyncracies remain.

emergence of pedagogy as a field of engagement for numerous philosophers and activists of the era was linked to other historical developments that defined the epoch. These developments include the notion of cultural decay, the emergence of the bourgeois family structure, and the French Revolution. “Fast jeder Denker oder Dichter unterbreitete damals dem Publikum in irgend einer Form seine pädagogischen Ideen und fand bei diesem allemal ein offenes Ohr,” states Anton Luible, an early twentieth-century Pestalozzi scholar. He continues:

...war doch schon um die Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts ein leidenschaftlicher Kampf eingeleitet worden gegen die Erstarrung und die Unnatur, welche sich wie Mehltau auf des ganze deutsche Leben und damit auch auf Erziehung und Unterricht gelegt hatte... Dazu kam, daß der vulkanhafte Ausbruch der französischen Revolution das alte Europa in seinen Grundfesten erbeben machte. Und so war schließlich die Stimmung die: man hoffte alles Heil vom jungen Geschlechte und war überzeugt, daß ‘es allein die Erziehung sei, die uns retten könne von allen Übeln’(Fichte).<sup>49</sup>

The writers who placed their hope in the improved education of the next generation were not only worried about the cultural or spiritual ‘Erstarrung’ of their people, but about their material circumstances as well.

Recalling that Ute Gerhard has found a decline in living conditions for the lower classes in the early part of the nineteenth century, it is understandable that these authors wanted to contribute “ein klärendes Wort in der schon länger im Gang befindlichen, durch die Ereignisse der Französischen Revolution intensivierten Debatte um die politische Opportunität einer Hebung des Bildungsstandes der Landbevölkerung” (Kirm,

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<sup>49</sup> Anton Luible, *Pestalozzi und Jean Paul*, Inaugural-Diss. Jena. (Kempten: Jos. Kösel, Graphische Anstalt, 1912) 1.

242). Those authors who focused on the role of the mother in developing her children's facilities thus formed a consensus that the family could be a nursery to the nation. It is this tradition that Pestalozzi leans on in advocating greater power and recognition for mothers in order to elevate the living situation of the suffering poor. *Wie Gertrud ihre Kinder lehrt* is a text that encouraged its readers to conceive of the family as the cradle of a self-consciousness Swiss national identity fostered by a mother's love.

Just as revising the status of the family within the state had become part of the philosophical discourse of conceptualizing the nation and its people, so too, did revising the status of the mother within the family. Pestalozzi's vision of the family promoted an idealized image of motherhood and depicted the mother as the central figure of her family. Mothers, Pestalozzi proclaims, introduce children to morality, and are thus responsible for instilling public virtue in the next generation of citizens. Rousseau, Pestalozzi's pre-cursor, had already linked child-rearing to civic responsibility: "Sein Eindruck war, dem Vaterlande Bürger zu geben..." and thus "...unsern Kindern Mütter zu geben. Die Muttermilch wird der Freiheit Milch sein. Indem er einen Menschen erzieht, hat er im Sinne, eine Nation zu schaffen."<sup>50</sup> By re-casting this basic understanding of the role of childhood education in a way that affirmed the affective power of mothers, Pestalozzi fathered an educative outlook in which family hierarchies, mothers' roles, and elementary education attained an elevated importance for the nation as a whole. In its

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<sup>50</sup> Richard Schornstein (Direktor der städtischen höhern Töchterschule zu Elberfeld), *Pestalozzi's Mission an die Mutter* (Elberfeld: Bädekerschen Buch- und Kunsthandlung, 1856), 3. His remarks regarding Rousseau would be equally valid if used to describe Pestalozzi..

depiction of the potential of the mother-child relationship, his work shows that German and Swiss mothers hold the key to rejuvenating a moral society and creating a unified nation.

Pestalozzi is calling for nationwide renewal, and believes passionately that “[Die Veredlung des Volkes] ist kein Traum; ich will ihre Kunst in die Hand der Mutter werfen, in die Hand des Kindes und in die Hand der Unschuld” (16). Pestalozzi therefore argues not only that improving conditions for young children is central to improving national public life and securing a nobler future for the public, but also that mothers are the primary agents of this endeavor.

That mothers could be important agents of social and political progress was an innovative, even radical claim. Enlightenment-era interest in child welfare and the family traditionally led states to strengthen the authority of the father. Frederick the Great’s *Prussian Legal Code (Allgemeines Landrecht, proclaimed 1794, but formulated earlier)*, for example, grants absolute authority to fathers in determining their children’s education, religious beliefs, vocations, and financial futures, in keeping with the traditional aristocratic inheritance concerns. Regarding tiny infants, fathers even ordained whether or not and for how long their babies would be breastfed, bottle-fed or sent away for wet-nursing. In most of the German-speaking world, mothers were legally responsible for their children’s physical care only.<sup>51</sup> This means that they were neither

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<sup>51</sup> Ann Taylor Allen, *Feminism and Motherhood in Germany, 1800-1914* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1991) 18-20. However, Ute Gerhard finds in the *Allgemeines Landrecht* an “auch an anderen Stellen sichtbaren frauenfreundlichen Tendenz... die einer wohl historisch einmaligen Mischung aus

free to choose their own maternal practices, nor to make significant decisions for their children's care. Indeed, Ute Gerhard considers "insbesondere die die mütterliche Intimsphäre streng und detailliert regulierenden Vorschriften," to be evidence of a "moralisierenden staatlichen Zucht und... 'wohlmeinender' Gängelung" (88) in the document. Traditional notions of familial power structures, such as those that informed the Prussian Legal Code, thus undermined a mother's ability to greatly influence or enhance her children's moral, social, or intellectual development.

Pestalozzi's vision of motherhood thus suggests a fundamental break with traditional familial power structures as they were generally described in state ideologies of the time. Despite his changing position on democracy, his belief in many traditional forms of authority had been completely overturned<sup>52</sup> well before the Napoleonic occupation, leading him to re-imagine society as a mirror of the bonds and authority within the mother-child relationship. Pestalozzi authors a new ideal of engaged motherhood in *Wie Gertrud ihre Kinder lehrt*, an ideal that became typical in the ideology of the historical transition to the bourgeois family, as described in this study's introduction. Historically, a mother enjoyed a greater role in the nuclear, nonfeudal

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landesväterlichem Wohlwollen und Aufklärung entsprang, auch wenn man den Verdacht nicht loswird, daß sie weniger die Frau als ihre Nachwuchsproduktion meinte" (29). A more detailed analysis of the legal rights of wives and mothers is found in Isalel V. Hull's, *Sexuality, State, and Civil Society in Germany, 1700 - 1815* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996).

<sup>52</sup>Allen, 24. Irmengard von Rappard argues in *Die Bedeutung der Mutter bei J.H.Pestalozzi* (Bonn: H. Bouvier und Co.) 1961, that Pestalozzi was oriented to maternal, rather than paternal, authority from early childhood. Liedtke (66) states that "Pestalozzi's Stellung zur Demokratie wandelt sich mehrfach," and finds some evidence of monarchism in his mid-adult years. He also attempts to sort out Pestalozzi's ambiguous attitude to the French Revolution (96-97). Pestalozzi's responses to traditional authority structures were at any rate never straightforwardly subservient.

family structure than it had in the whole-house arrangement, as demonstrated by Gerhard and Schütze. Mothers were supposed, in the bourgeois family, to possess unique qualifications for raising their children, and an emotional centrality to their children's lives. This essential and emotionally connected vision of a mother, previously appearing in Rousseau's *Emile*, informed Pestalozzi's theories and lent intensity and passion to his arguments. Although Pestalozzi was not alone in imagining the potential power of maternal agency, he was nonetheless his era's dominant and most radical voice calling for change in the mother's purpose.

### **Wie Gertrud ihre Kinder lehrt: A Domestic Educator**

This shift in the value of maternal authority is clearly apparent in Pestalozzi's own works, both in his earlier fiction and his essays. Pestalozzi's epistolary treatise, *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children*, is named after the titular figure of his earlier novel, *Lienhard und Gertrud*, which first appeared in serial form between 1781 and 1787, but which Pestalozzi reworked after the French Revolution. That novel achieved a broad readership and secured his fame throughout Europe. It contained his first portrayal of Gertrude, the fictional character around whom his imaginative restructuring of the mother's role revolved. In it, Gertrude appears as Pestalozzi's maternal ideal.<sup>53</sup> She

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<sup>53</sup> Liedtke claims that Elisabeth Näf, who worked as a servant for Pestalozzi's family in the Neuhof years, provided the model for the fictional Gertrud (56, 81). She is mentioned only in passing by Dagmar Schifferli in *Anna Pestalozzi-Schulthess; Ihr Leben mit Heinrich Pestalozzi*. Käte Silber, author of *Anne Pestalozzi-Schulthess und der Frauenkreis um Pestalozzi* (Berlin, 1932), and Irmengard von Rappard, author of *Die Bedeutung der Mutter bei J. .H. .Pestalozzi*, have also investigated the different women who

cares for both her own children and other children of the village, teaches them spinning and weaving while practicing math with them, oversees their education and religious upbringing, nurses her babies herself, sets up savings for each of her children, serves on the village council, and advocates on behalf of herself, her husband, and her neighbors before the local nobleman. Irmengard von Rappard author of *Die Bedeutung der Mutter bei J.H. Pestalozzi*, demonstrates Pestalozzi's idealism in creating this maternal figure:

Das Tun der Gertrud als solches ist zwar in allen Ausgaben das gleiche; immer ist sie fleißig, ordnungsliebend, tatkräftig, mutig entschlossen und fromm. Individualistische Selbstgestaltung liegt ihr fern. Sie gibt als der führende Teil der Ehe ihrem weichen, verführbaren, dem Trunke huldigenden, aber sonst gutmütigen Mann Lienhard Halt und ist der Ruhepol und die tragende 'Mitte' ihrer großen Familie. Sie tut alles, was eine Pflichtbewußte Frau und Mutter nur tun kann. (119-120)

Von Rappard emphasizes the traditional aspects of this image, and doesn't elaborate on the more progressive use Pestalozzi makes of this image. Her interpretation notes the unreal saintliness of the Gertrud figure, but doesn't yet remark on the novel purpose, anchoring all members of the community, regardless of estate, in an interdependent web that challenges each individual to contribute his or her best to the common good:

Man darf wohl sagen, daß die Gestalt der Gertrud trotz aller ihrer Selbständigkeit und Lebensbeherrschung vorwiegend die Züge des überlieferten Leitbildes von der Frau und Mutter als der Seele des Hauses und des Ruhepols der Familie trägt. Gertrud strömt trotz einer großen

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influenced Pestalozzi's maternal and womanly ideals. All scholars emphasize his lack of a father, despite the ties he had with his grandfather.

Arbeitslast und ihrer großen Kinderschar noch Ruhe aus und findet an der Sorge für andere ihr Genügen. Trotz ihrer Lebenstüchtigkeit erdrückt sie mit ihrer Überlegenheit weder ihre Kinder noch den etwas schwächlichen Ehemann noch sonst jemand aus dem Kreise ihres Umsorgens. (134)

The spirit of the fictional Gertrude inhabits *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children*, enlivening the ideal mother image in an educational treatise meant to convince readers that mothers could become their children's best teachers from infancy through childhood.

Pestalozzi advocates what today would be called home-schooling, imbuing his argument an feeling of warmth and a homely atmosphere. Schornstein describes Pestalozzi's goal in developing a different ideal of early learning:

Die Wohnstube der Gertud war es nämlich, was dieser neuen Schule ihre besondere Richtung gab und das Walten der treuen, verständigen Mutter, woraus der Lehrer die Antriebe und Grundsätze seines Schulhaltens schöpfte. Hier besorgte sie mit den Kindern ihre häuslichen Geschäfte oder arbeitete mit ihnen an den Spulrädern - aber neben diesem und während dessen betete, sang sie mit ihnen und unterrichtete sie... Außerdem das Gertrud ihre Kinder sprechen, zählen, rechnen lehrte, machte sie sie auf die Erscheinungen der Natur, wie sie in dem häusliche Leben, in der Küche und Stube, im Stall, Garten, Holz und Feldvorlagen, auf die vielseitigste Weise aufmerksam und zwar nicht als Unterricht, sondern als Theilnahme an diesen Erscheinungen. (32-33)

Pestalozzi thus creates an image of a dedicated woman, always present and available to her children's needs: "Die Mutter eilt bei jedem Bedürfnis zu seiner Wiege; sie ist in der Stunde des Hungerns da, sie hat es in der Stunde des Durstes getränkt" (131). By employing the sense of urgency many mothers already feel for their babies, and by advocating empathy and intimacy more than discipline, integrated learning over rote

memorization, and nature study and practical skills over classical texts, Pestalozzi's educational system made both learning and teaching more accessible to mothers.

Yet his recommendations also clearly tie into current concerns of post-Napoleonic Europe, as well. Pestalozzi situates his ideal mother in a village setting, in the home and the immediate outdoor environment, which appear as womanly spaces and the site for raising and educating children. Although he seeks to make home-learning possible for every mother and child, he does not mean by this to confine women to the home. A mother teaches first at the crib, and then “auf der Gasse, im Garten und in der Stube,” (22), not because women's proper place must necessarily be within the home, but rather because improved elementary education is based on observing and integrating objects and scenes from within the immediate environment into a fundamental understanding of the world. Appropriate places for women's work, for guiding and teaching children, are therefore wherever a mother finds herself working, whether in the home, the workshop, the fields or the forests. The important point is that the educational process is at first “an häusliche Verhältnissen, und der Wohnstube orientiert” (Lietdke, 133). The scholar Karl Pestalozzi, in analyzing the fictional Gertrude of Pestalozzi's novel, explains how the “Wohnstube,” a womanly, domestic space, is in fact representative of many realms of human endeavor:

Die Familie wird wieder Konsum- und Produktionsgemeinschaft. Aber diese Produktion ist nun Sache der Frau, Lienhard hat daran keinen Teil. Und damit wird auch die Produktion der Erziehung unterstellt... Gertrud begnügt sich nicht damit, die Kinder kontinuierlich zur Arbeit anzuhalten und sie zur Sorgfalt zu ermahnen und ihren Ehrgeiz anzustackeln, gutes

Garn zu spinnen. Sie benutzt ihr Stillsitzen zum Unterricht... Mit andern Worten: Gertruds Domäne, die Wohnstube, weitet sich aus, von der ursprünglichen Funktion, Ort der Wartung, Disziplinierung und Unterweisung zu sein, zur Produktions- und Unterrichtsstätte. Sie umfasst damit alle Lebensbereiche, ist Universal.<sup>54</sup>

A mother who includes her children in the fullness of her every day life, while mindful about the lessons she can impart while pursuing her own tasks, therefore teaches her child by exposing it to all the places that make up her experience of the world. Thus she guides it in the completion of daily chores and in the observation of the natural world as the first stage in a mature understanding of an individual's place in the world.

In arguing that a mother can become her child's own best teacher, Pestalozzi invariably seems to depict a woman free to devote herself to the patient development of her child's powers of speech, observation, musical and artistic expression, and mathematics. Although he wishes to address the *Volk*, whom we saw Ute Gerhard describe as "knapp und elend lebend" in the previous chapter, Pestalozzi's ideal mother nonetheless has the time and energy to tutor. The fictional Gertrude incorporated childcare into her work as a spinner and manager of the household, but the educational treatise fails to incorporate such work. The mothers he envisions seem unfettered by the competing claims of husbands, other children or pregnancy, paid employment or servitude, parish or community work, or agriculture and animal husbandry. Mothers as

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<sup>54</sup>Karl Pestalozzi, "Gesellschaftsreform im Zeichen der Mutter," *Mutter und Mütterlichkeit. Wandel und Wirksamkeit einer Phantasie in der deutschen Literatur*, eds. Irmgard Roebeling und Wolfram Mauser, Festschrift für Verena Ehrich-Häfelí (Würzburg, Königshausen & Neumann: 1996) 105-106.

they appear in *Wie Gertrude ihre Kinder lehrt* need not interrupt lessons for such practical chores as feeding the fire, nursing the baby to sleep, or hauling water – glaring omissions if this is really the *Volk*, the class which is to build the nation without the benefit of numerous household servants. Pestalozzi's mothers are single-minded in their devotion to their pre-school aged children.

Of course, Pestalozzi knows in a more visceral sense that a mother's day is already filled with people and places, chores and errands, even without incorporating her child's education into it:

Man schreit allgemein, die Mütter werden sich nicht bereden lassen, zu ihrem Wischen und Waschen, zu ihrem Stricken und Nähen und zu allen Mühseligkeiten ihrer Pflichten und zu allen Zerstreungen ihrer Zeit-Lebensweise noch eine neue Arbeit zu übernehmen; (30)

He acknowledges that critics everywhere are certain mothers will not take on the task of educating their own children without first a means of doing it and secondly a reason to do it. “Und nicht nur Menschen aus dem Volke,” try to dissuade him, but “selbst Menschen, die das Volk lehren, Menschen, die das Volk das Christentum lehren” (92). Until every mother in Switzerland and beyond is given the opportunity to inaugurate his method, however, he won't give up on the high ideals he has for them. In order to provide even more inspiration, Pestalozzi calls forth an argument curiously blending a nationalistic identity with a sense of religious pride

Ich will mit den Mitteln, die in meiner Hand sind, Heidenmütter im tiefsten Norden dahin bringen, daß sie es tun, was ich fordere, und wenn es denn im Gegenteil auch wirklich wahr ist, daß Christenmütter im

milden Europa - daß Christenmütter *in meinem Vaterland* nicht so weit zu bringen sein sollen, als ich Heidenmütter im wilden Norden jede Stunde bringen will - so möchte ich diesen Herren, die das Volk des Vaterlandes, das sie und ihre *Väter* gelehrt, unterrichtet und bisher geführt haben... zurufen, sie sollen ihre Hände waschen und es aussprechen: *Wir sind unschuldig* an dieser unaussprechlichen Unmenschlichkeit *des Volkes im milden Europa*; *wir sind unschuldig* an dieser unaussprechlichen Unmenschlichkeit *des gutmütigsten, bildsamsten und duldsamsten* unter allen europäischer Völkern, *des Schweizervolkes* (92, his italics)

The young patriot is still alive in Pestalozzi, leading to a declaration of the connection between a Swiss or European national identity and the work of mothering. Incorporating a national pride into the actions and essence of a mother goes beyond teaching civic responsibility or love of nation to the younger generation, as was the case with Republican Motherhood in France and the United States. Here, Pestalozzi links the acquisition of particular characteristics, “good-naturedness, malleability and patience,” and above all Christianity, with a patriotic self-identity accessible to mothers.

To reach his goal, then, Pestalozzi both encouraged a new self-esteem and bent practicalities toward his idea. He incorporated household skills into his educational theories for both boys and girls. Pestalozzi encouraged real mothers to share their work with their children. Mothers could teach their children mathematics and scientific observation, he believed, by assigning them duties such as maintaining the fire, tending the garden, hauling water, weaving and spinning. In this manner, mothers would free themselves to concentrate on the child’s learning more than on the fulfillment of the chore. Further, he believes that mothers will be ready to take on the work of educating their own children, because of the significance of such work, and its inherent rewards:

...ich mag antworten, wie ich will: es ist keine Arbeit; es ist ein Spiel; sie raubt ihnen keine Zeit, indem sie ihnen vielmehr die Leerheit von tausend sie drückenden Augenblicken ausfüllt. (30)

It is interesting to note that Pestalozzi admits that mothers experience empty and oppressive moments; so much literature that exalts and mystifies motherhood in the glorification of the bourgeois family fails to recognize that “wiping and washing, knitting and sewing and all the burdens of their duties” might be less than fulfilling.<sup>55</sup> Pestalozzi thus seeks to transform these tasks and oppressive moments by making them into educational opportunities to be shared with children. This transformation lends motherhood a new meaning and value.

Pestalozzi further recognizes that being at home without transformative moments of learning and development can lead to “the emptiness of a thousand oppressive moments” for children, too. In one of the very few negative images of mothers in his book, Pestalozzi depicts family and household life for the older child far differently than that same enveloping web of relationships that secured the infant.

Armes Kind! Dein *Wohnzimmer* ist deine Welt, aber dein Vater ist an seine Werkstatt gebunden, deine Mutter hat heute Verdruß, morgen Besuch, übermorgen ihre Launen; du hast Langeweile; du fragst, deine Magd antwortet dir nicht; du willst auf die Straße, du darfst nicht, jetzt reiße dich mit deiner Schwester um Spielzug - armes Kind, welches ein elendes herzloses und herzverderbendes Ding ist *deine Welt*. (135)

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<sup>55</sup> Indeed, much of it seems unaware that mothers even have such tedious chores to fill their days. Take, for example, the above-mentioned Richard Schornstein, who imagines in 1856 “schöne Stunden, in denen das Kind so an der Seite der Mutter weilt, daß die Mutter im Kinde sich und die Welt um sich vergißt und das Kind ihr ganz die Seele öffnet und ihr mit seinem ganzen Dasein gehört - da die Mutter die Gedanken und Gefühle in der schlummernden Seele weckt und den ersten, heiligen Inhalt in kindlich faßbaren Erzählung hineinlegt” etc.

A mother not employing the Pestalozzian method in a household, and not demonstrating constant dedication to her offspring, is no longer attuned to their needs, but distracted and moody. This passage contains one of very few mentions of a wider net of household relationships, including a father, a sister and a children's maid, none of whom the child can rely on, however. This curious image seems not to belong with the rest of the book, which to a large extent separates the mother-child dyad from external persons and depicts mothers as always ready and able to provide what a child needs.

### **Educating Mothers: the Intellect, Nature, and the Heart**

In addition to their already filled days, Pestalozzi realizes that most of the mothers he addresses are hampered in their endeavors to raise their children properly by their own poor education (32, 72, 92), but believes that this condition can be overcome by a method which is both enjoyable and psychologically appropriate to the gradual development of the child and the continued learning of the mother:

Es ist aber hier wie überall der wesentliche Zweck meiner Methode, dem hierin weggeworfenen Volke den häuslichen Unterricht wieder möglich zu machen und jede Mutter, deren Herz für ihr Kind schlägt, durch dieselbe stufenweise dahin zu erheben, ihr bis ans Ende meiner Elementarübungen selbständig folgen und sie mit den Kindern ausüben zu können. Um dahin zu gelangen, braucht sie in jedem Fall nur eine kleine Stufe weiter zu sein als die Kinder selbst. (92)

Pestalozzi's method thus puts the education of the next generation of Swiss citizens in the hands of overly-busy and undereducated women. This nonetheless signifies an

improvement over the existing situation as he sees it; a mother, “whose heart beats for her child,” will prove herself more dedicated, and find more meaning in the task, than the village schoolmaster or pastor.

Mothers as Pestalozzi represents them are limited not only by their heavy workloads and lack of education, but perhaps by limited intellectual development as well. Despite the moral and intellectual authority Pestalozzi cedes to mothers by making them their children’s teachers, they appear in this work to be constrained in specific ways that implicitly paint a fairly dismal picture of the present, as opposed to the future he can imagine. Although he envisions children and uneducated mothers learning together if need be, he guesses that the child’s learning will eventually outstrip its mother’s: “das Kind übertrifft sie bald - die Freude von beiden ist gleich” (139). Until that point, the mother need never be more than one step ahead of her child; “mehr braucht es nicht” (32). Perhaps the future is more important to him than the present, and guides the child’s learning more than the mother’s: “die Ausrichtung auf die Zukunft hat in der Erziehung der Kinder ihr genuines Feld.” In any case, a mother as Pestalozzi portrays her is aware of her work’s impact on the future, in the person of her child: “Sie denkt in der Zeitdimension des morgigen Tages und überhaupt der Zukunft. Ihr Herz verlangt geradezu von ihr, dass sie rational denkt, ‘bedächtlich’.”<sup>56</sup> Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi presumes that all learning the child and mother do together is specifically for the

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<sup>56</sup> Both quotes from Karl Pestalozzi, 102.

advancement of the child. The value of mothers' learning is portrayed only as a service to their children and not for their own achievement or joy.

That mothers' attainment of intellectual or academic achievement is not important to him can also be linked to his conception of mothers as persons of heart, of emotion. Even when teaching their children reading, math, geography, or the natural sciences, mothers represent for Pestalozzi emotions and spirit, rather than intellect and reason:

Der erste Unterricht des Kindes sei nie die Sache des *Kopfes*, er sei nie die Sache *der Vernunft* - er sei ewig die Sache *der Sinne*, er sei ewig die Sache *des Herzens*, die Sache *der Mutter*. (136)

Although later writers sought to use such statements to limit women's social possibility and intellectual advancement, for Pestalozzi this divorcing of the mother from the intellectual sphere of engagement seems to be linked rather to his deep religiosity and cynicism about Napoleonic-era Europe. "Diese Welt, die dem Kinde jetzt vor seinen Augen erscheint," he laments, "ist nicht Gottes erste Schöpfung es ist...*eine Welt* voll Krieg für die Mittel der Selbstsucht, voll Widersinnigkeit, voll Gewalt" (134-135). Misguided cleverness, "die Selbstsucht der Vernunft," (136) separates "die Ausbildung des Geistes von der Glaubensneigung an Gott," and makes "eine mehr oder weniger feine Selbstsucht zum einzigen Treibrad seiner Kraftanwendung" (135). Reliance on the use of reason appears especially dangerous in the realm of religion, and truth is found in feminized feelings. "Gott ist der Gott meines Herzens, er ist der Gott ihres [Mutters] Herzens," while intellectual engagement with theology can mislead, and thus "der Gott

meines Hirns ist ein Hirngespinst... der Gott meines Hirns ist ein Götze" (140)

Apparently, Pestalozzi finds reliance on philosophy and reason which is divorced from sympathy and emotion ineffective: "Ich sah und erfuhr durch mein ganzes Leben *alle Arten* solcher Wortmenschen eingewiegt in Systeme und Ideale, *ohne Volkskenntnis und ohne Volksachtung*" (93).

In this instance, Pestalozzi's rhetoric positions him in the post-Enlightenment era, although his "Grundsätzen des graduellen Fortschreitens und Vermeidens alles Unvermittelten" follow the "allgemeinen Leibniz-Wolffschen Regel, die Natur mache keine Sprünge."<sup>57</sup> Where the previous generation had glorified the use of human reason and linked it to all human development, Pestalozzi links it rather to corruption and violence, preferring to allow the senses to guide humanity. In harmony with his woman-centered vision of human goodness and charity, and in keeping with the tradition of other Enlightenment and Romantic thinkers, who associate reason with maleness, Pestalozzi labels the selfish misuse of reason a male characteristic. Karl Pestalozzi explicates the link between the warm domestic space of learning and religious experience it creates: "Auch ist es das Herz, das die Wohnstube zum Heiligtum Gottes macht; denn das Herz selbst hat am Göttlichem Anteil."<sup>58</sup> This is the other side to women's undeveloped intellectual powers: Mothers use their minds correctly because they are grounded first in love and think with the heart.

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<sup>57</sup> Kim, 341.

<sup>58</sup> Karl Pestalozzi, 106.

Turning back to a concern with the child's learning, rather than the mother's, we see Pestalozzi further claim that the education of the infant begins immediately, a biological imperative ordained by natural law: "die erste Stunde seines Unterrichts ist die Stunde seiner Geburt. Von...diesem Augenblicke an unterrichtet es die Natur" (21). This earliest learning consists of receiving physical care and sensory input, "so ist sie nichts anders als das bloße *Vor-den Sinnen-Stehen* der äußern Gegenstände und die bloße Regmachung des Bewußtseins ihres Eindrucks" (his italics); "der Säugling genießt ihn [den Unterricht], die Mutter gibt ihn" (both 104). The "stirring of consciousness," is not to be seen as merely a physical or visual sensation, but contains a sensual-intellectual element that is "das erste Sichregen des Menschentums."<sup>59</sup> Neither does it require forethought or knowledge: "Spontan quellen aus dem Verhältnisse zwischen Mutter und Kind schon bald nach der Geburt"<sup>60</sup> the earliest kernels of learning. This very early and pleasurable learning is a natural result of a mother's intuitive sense of what her baby needs for comfort and distraction:

Von dem Augenblick an, da die Mutter das Kind auf den Schoß nimmt, unterrichtet sie es, indem sie das, was die Natur ihm zerstreut in großen Entfernungen und verwirrt darlegt, seinen Sinnen näherbringt und ihm die Handlung des Anschauens und folglich die von ihr abhängende Erkenntnis selber leicht, angenehm und reizend macht. (105)

These simple actions of a mother, taking her baby to her lap, calming it, and distracting it with objects from the immediate vicinity, are the foundation both for the

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<sup>59</sup> Luible, 8.

<sup>60</sup> Luible, 8.

educative relationship a mother will have with her growing child and for the child's future intellectual capacity. Her action prepares the child: "bereitet es [das Kind] so zum Gebrauch seiner Sinne und zur frühen Entwicklung seiner Aufmerksamkeit und seines Anschauungsvermögens vor" (105). Pestalozzi therefore aims to extend the mother-baby interactions that lay the groundwork for future development:

Die erzieherische Regel, der Pestalozzi hier folgen möchte, besteht darin, der Mutterbindung so lang Dauer zu geben, bis die sinnlichen Erleichterungsmittel der Tugend mit dem sinnlichen Erleichterungsmittel der Einsicht vereinigt werden können.<sup>61</sup>

And because he describes such attitudes and actions as nearly automatic, Pestalozzi implies that a mother is a person of intuition or with inherent knowledge about the practices of mothering, rather than a person who must be trained to fulfill her duties for her baby or who learns from trial and error.<sup>62</sup> If one could apply Schiller's dichotomy of the 'naiv' and 'sentimentalisch' creative dispositions to women, mothers as they appear in *Wie Gertrud ihre Kinder lehrt* are all naive geniuses with their newborns. Older children, who require pedagogy, apparently turn mothers into sentimental beings who must be trained for their positions. Pestalozzi's rhetoric regarding mothers and their newborns thus positions him firmly within the canon of writers eager to mystify

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<sup>61</sup> Liedtke, 133.

<sup>62</sup> In Pestalozzi's fictional account, *Lienhard und Gertrude*, there is no textual reference to a model or mentor Gertrude might have followed, such as her own mother or an older friend. Apparently she has come by her exceptional mothering and tutoring skills on her own, and displays a singularity that defies the idea of maternal role models or learned behavior. No maternal learning or feminine training program could have imparted the wisdom Gertrude personifies, and no actual rural, eighteenth or nineteenth century mother could have embodied the maternal essence she is meant to exemplify. Thus, his ideal mother relies on nature, intuition, and the gifts of genius to guide her in her maternal practices.

motherhood and essentialize womanhood, and to elevate and transfigure a mother's child-care into a society-changing vocation.

Because, however, the task of educating children beyond babyhood becomes less intuitive and therefore in need of a pedagogy, Pestalozzi guides mothers, "durch die helfende Kunst," to continue "was sie beim Unmündigen durch einen blinden Naturantrieb genötigt tut, beim Anwachsenden mit weiser Freiheit" (105). Despite children's naturally ordained, sequential development, mothers are required to protect and ease that development in the right direction. Reliance on nature alone cannot guide mothers in the care of their children past the preschool stage. What she teaches is important in the elementary and middle school years, too, for it is what prepares children to be future participants in the greater community.

Wesentlicher ist die innere Disziplinierung, die Anleitung, die spontanen Antriebe, auch solche wohlthätig zu sein, Gelüste und Wünsche zu kontrollieren... 'sich besitzen', also Selbstbeherrschung, ist das Ideal... Die Kinder werden klaren Normen unterworfen, und die ganze Erziehung verfolgt das Ziel, dass die Kinder diese verinnerlichen und sich selber kontrollieren lernen. Anders als die von Kant gelehrt ist Gertruds Pädagogik nicht abstrakt-aufklärerisch, sondern auf ihren sozialen Stand besogen, darauf, dass sie weder eine Bürgers- noch eine Bauernfrau ist, sondern die Frau eines Handwerkers, der unregelmässig verdient und seinen Lohn bar ausbezahlt bekommt...<sup>63</sup>

Liedtke, too, stresses the community-oriented nature of Pestalozzi's methods, and the theoretical turn away from Rousseau in Pestalozzi's text.

Das umfassende Vertrauen der *Abendstunde* [eines Einsiedlers] auf die Natur und auf die Bahn der Natur ist gebrochen. Zugleich ist die Trennung

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<sup>63</sup> Karl Pestalozzi, 103.

zu Rousseau vollzogen. Ohne Erziehung wird der Mensch nicht Mensch. Ohne Erziehung wird er nicht gemeinschaftsfähig... Solange der Mensch den Zustand, der ihn über die bloße Natur erhebt, nicht erreicht hat, muß er demnach erzogen werden. (85)

Pestalozzi's ideal mother is thus a paradox. Capable of all fields of learning, to a degree, but educating young children "by blind natural drive," rather than dedication to intellectual pursuit, she nonetheless breaks away from the reliance on mirroring nature that had been a goal since Rousseau. She couples art with nature. Paradoxically, however, her power as a teacher really arises not from her intellectual abilities, but her emotional endowment and her instinctual connection to her own "nature."

The understanding of nature upon which Pestalozzi builds his *Lehrmethode* thus refers not only to the external world, but to the internal world of the human person, too. This understanding of nature had, as Liedtke points out, lost "jeden Rousseauschen Akzent," even by the time that Pestalozzi was working on his third edition of *Lienhard und Gertrude*. Nature connotes the inner, psychological structure of the human person, rather than an unknowable cosmic force. An educative method calibrated to the changing needs of a developing human, but without a "Rousseau-ean accent," remains bound by the developmental stages inherent in children, and uses the child's drives without allowing them free rein in the name of 'return to nature.'<sup>64</sup> "Während Rousseau den Lauf der kindlichen Natur und die kindliche Triebhaftigkeit möglichst wenig gestört wissen wollte," explains Rappard (88), "befürwortet Pestalozzi eine rechtzeitige Einschränkung

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<sup>64</sup> Liedtke, 126.

der Triebe, ohne daß er damit dem Kind ein Nein zu seiner Vitalität hat aufzwingen wollen. Das Kind soll nur über seine Triebe verfügen lernen.”

Further, the “inner structure of a human” that is the key to Pestalozzi’s educative process incorporates the psychological nature of the mother as well as that of the child. Maternal psychology as Pestalozzi depicts it is a network of instincts and emotions. Pestalozzi operates from the conviction that the maternal drive to protect and raise her own child is normally strong enough that only considerable external disadvantages could interrupt her ‘maternal instinct.’<sup>65</sup> Maternal dedication is therefore not a set of practices available to women through examples or instruction, but rather a service to the community and the future partly arising out of an unexplained but inherent maternal essence. Mothers are successful because of a mystical ability to gauge and respond to their children’s changing needs, almost without the mediation of early education experts..

### **Mother Nature and the Divine Mother**

The idea of nature that fills *Wie Gertrud ihre Kinder lehrt* is not only human psychology, however. Pestalozzi links mothers with the senses, intuition and emotions,

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<sup>65</sup> Liedtke, 89, is actually referring in this statement to Pestalozzi’s polemic *Über Gesetzgebung und Kindermord*, in which Pestalozzi argues against legal sanctions, including capital punishment, visited on unmarried “Mädchen” who kill their unborn or newborn babies in order to escape detection as fornicators. In contrast to Elizabeth Bedinter, who argued that infanticide through wetnursing or founding hospitals was a widespread practice among married women trying to control the size of their families, Pestalozzi assumes that mother-love is always the biological norm. He believes that infanticide is a pathology occurring mainly among unmarried girls or very young women in hysterical fear of societal retribution. His solution to the problem calls for public acceptance of the biological imperative of the human sex drive and official easing of marriage requirements, thus allowing all unmarried pregnant women to simply marry their lovers.

and also with the ideal of nature, when he declares that nature teaches a child through its mother. He enacts the rhetorical gesture Kittler believes to be symptomatic of transformed familial relationships at the outset of the nineteenth century:

Everything that people in Europe before 1800 had had to learn - behavior and knowledge, reading and writing - had been passed on within differentiated groups and classes. There was no central locus of acculturation that could claim legitimacy in Nature; in particular, the treasure of formal knowledge reached children via a long path and many representative authorities... But in 1800 the system of equivalents Woman = Nature = Mother allowed acculturation to begin from an absolute origin.<sup>66</sup>

Thus despite Pestalozzi's belief that mothers should take over responsibility for their children's introduction to language and to reading, that is, to culture, he represents women as intimate with, and even as an expression of, nature. A nearly absolute unity with "die Mutter Natur" (57) enables mothers to sense the experiential needs of their infants and heighten their awareness of the external world. This natural understanding of her child's needs becomes the foundation for all learning:

Kraftlos, ungebildet, der Natur ohne Leitung und ohne Nachhilfe anhangend, weiß die Mutter in ihrer Unschuld selbst nicht, was sie tut; sie will nicht unterrichten, sie will bloß ihr Kind beruhigen, sie will es beschäftigen; aber demungeachtet geht sie den hohen Gang der Natur in seiner reinsten Einfachheit... und die Natur tut doch sehr viel durch sie... (105)

The social implications of this description are at best two-edged. This image of a mother teaching her children unwittingly is not the image of an active, intelligent or

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<sup>66</sup> Friedrich A. Kittler, *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*, Trans. Michael Metteer with Chris Cullens (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990) 28.

decisive individual guiding her children to knowledge and power, but neither is she a passive tool, infantilized, uncultured and innocent. Rather, she is a force of nature herself, a kind of genius of nurturance, who brings nature to life in her actions as she improves her family's, and the nation's, future character and culture.

As natural creatures, mothers, consciously or not, introduce their children to the natural world, “in der aufgehenden Sonne, im wallenden Bach in den Fasern des Baumes, im Glanz der Blume, in den Tropfen des Taues,” (138). Although he could be using these images to prescribe a course of study in biology or geography, Pestalozzi is more concerned with mothers showing their children nature to instill a sense of beauty and divinity. The relationship between mothers and their children is imbued with nature: it is a “Naturverhältnis” (137) situated within the “Zusammentreffens instinkartiger Gefühle” (133). Indeed, mothers' actions are “einen blinden Naturantrieb” (105) and “von der Kraft eines ganz sinnlichen Instinktes... genötigt” (131). This force of nature, or expression of a maternal essence, is what Pestalozzi aims to reclaim when he wishes “die Mütter wieder zu dem zu bilden, wozu sie von der Natur so auffallend bestimmt sind” (45). His method re-teaches them to be what nature has already made them. Pestalozzi thus posits not that mothers of his age are participants in their cultural setting and historical moment, but that they have an epoch-transcending natural essence. Because of the corruption of the world around him described above, however, this natural essence must be reclaimed for children's (not their mothers') improvement. Strangely enough, this lost natural essence is to be reclaimed through *Bildung*, through learning.

Good mothering, even as a reclaimed art, therefore expresses nature, so that nature can reassert itself in culture. “The state of *Bildung* turned biological reproduction, that bare recurrence of the same, into cultural production.”<sup>67</sup> The transformation of the raw material of nature into artifice and culture is a common enough Romantic trope: One of the great innovations of romanticism is the idea that nature works through the artist, impelling him to greater artistic creativity, formal innovation, and individual license.<sup>68</sup> The conclusion becomes inverted, however, when this process is applied to mothers, rather than to the male genius-creators to whom it is usually applied. Where the male genius becomes a titanic individual of art and nature, a mother’s actions and attitudes lose their individuality, and their power for individual self-expression, when they are interpreted as the expression of pure nature. Pestalozzi’s rhetoric subsumes a mother’s own personal style, and possibility for natural genius, into an all-encompassing maternal nature or essence of motherliness. The result is an implied universality in the interaction between a mother and her children, which becomes a foundation for his educative methods:

Es [das Wesen meiner Lehrart] geht ganz von dem Naturverhältnis aus, das zwischen dem Unmündigen und seiner Mutter statthat, und ruht wesentlich auf der Kunst, von der Wiege an den Unterricht an dieses Verhältnis zu ketten. (105)

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<sup>67</sup> Kittler, 56.

<sup>68</sup> See, for example, M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp*, 201 – 213, especially as he sums up Schelling’s theses.

Pestalozzi's *Lehrart*, or program, thus relies on the notion that all mother-child relationships conform to a norm that is both natural and unchanging, not subject to the mediating influences of personality, culture or history.

The most immediate, natural way that a mother responds to her baby, Pestalozzi claims, is in breastfeeding -- a literal link of body and mind, nature and culture, provided by the mother. With this argument, Pestalozzi inserts himself into the decades-long public debate<sup>69</sup> on the value or necessity of maternal breastfeeding. Most eighteenth-century physicians and essayists who addressed the subject concerned themselves with the child's physical welfare, claiming that only a baby's own mother guaranteed a clean and abundant milk supply. For Pestalozzi, however, the value of maternal breastmilk far surpassed any concern with a child's physical development only, and became the key to human moral development and our ability to experience love.

This development begins with a mother's need to quiet her baby: "Die Mutter muß, sie kann nicht anders, sie wird von der Kraft eines ganz sinnlichen Instinktes dazu genötigt - das Kind pflegen, nähren, es sicherstellen und es erfreuen" (131). The baby's needs are both sensual and compelling, and nursing a baby is the earliest possible method for placating and satisfying it. Mothers as Pestalozzi depicts them seem to respond to and

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<sup>69</sup> As I explained in greater detail in the introduction to this study, Elisabeth Badinter explores the history of the public debate surrounding maternal breastfeeding vs. wet-nursing in the French context in *Mother Love. Myth and Reality; Motherhood in Modern History*, Foreword by Francine du Plessix Gray (New York: Macmillan, 1981). Wet-nursing seems to have been much less prevalent in the German-speaking regions than in France. Nonetheless, physicians and educators agreed on the need to persuade women that maternal breastfeeding was central to the well-being of children and the structure of the family; see Yvonne Schütze for a more complete history of experts' advice to mothers.

nurse their babies "naturally," whenever they are distressed, rather than adhering to fixed schedules or disciplinary theories. It is, Pestalozzi surmises, the earliest source of pleasure, and thus of learning:

*Die Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts gehet von einer starken, gewaltsamen Begierde nach Befriedigung sinnlicher Bedürfnisse aus. Die Mutterbrust stillt den ersten Sturm sinnlicher Begierden und erzeugt Liebe... (132)*

Breastfeeding thus also has a meaning that transcends any individual mother-baby constellation and contributes to the development not only of any single person but of “des Menschengeschlechts” more broadly.

Pestalozzi’s emphasis on the mother’s breast and, elsewhere, lap and arms, also conveys some sense of Pestalozzi’s imagined mothers as flesh-and-blood characters. His word choice is remarkably physical, even sexual, when describing the role of mother-love in human development: “generation,” (*Geschlecht*), “violent drives,” and a “storm of sensual needs” and, ultimately, the claim that “the maternal breast... begets love.” This word choice is once again in marked contrast to the ideal of “reason” (“Vernunft”) as the key to the further human development or moral improvement, a characteristic Enlightenment (and mostly masculine) ideal from Leibniz to Lessing. By naturally, intuitively, and physically responding to and nursing her baby, by soothing it and giving it pleasure, a mother introduces her infant to what Pestalozzi believed was the basis for human morality, self-sacrificing love. Rather than employing a wet-nurse, scheduled feedings, or rational disciplinary theories, a mother taking a crying baby to her breast

demonstrates the principles of self-sacrifice and active love. Pestalozzi transforms breastfeeding, a biological imperative, into an act of moral value.

The moral virtues developed by the act of maternal breastfeeding are specific and follow a pre-ordained course. According to Pestalozzi, the earliest feelings of love, gratitude, trust, and obedience: “Menschenliebe, Menschendank, und Menschenvertrauen... der menschliche Gehorsam” (131) unfold in the experience of this early maternal devotion. A mother’s simplest actions teach virtue, as she

entfernt von ihm, was ihm unangenehm ist, sie kommt seiner Unbehilflichkeit zu Hilfe... die Mutter drückt es fester an ihre Brust, sie tändelt mit ihm, sie zerstreut es... die Mutter nimmt es wieder in den schützenden Arm und lachtet ihm wieder... Die Mutter eilt bei jedem Bedürfnis zu seiner Wiege; sie ist in der Stunde des Hungerns da... sein Auge strahlt an ihrer Brust, es ist gesättigt, - *es dankt* (131)

This daily devotion not only engenders gratitude, but “der Keim der Liebe... der Keim des Vertrauens... der Keim des Bruderliebe... die Geduld” (131-132) emerge as well.<sup>70</sup> Later, already possessing an intuitive understanding of these virtues, a child can learn obedience to mother and to God; “Aber auch dieses entwickelt sich zuerst auf dem Schoße der Mutter” (132). Mother-love in Pestalozzi’s understanding is therefore both the basis of our sense of human interconnectedness, and our earliest example of religion, which for Pestalozzi is based on love of others. Morality coupled with love and service to others is, for Pestalozzi, the truest understanding of religion.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> See also Rappard, 50-68 for an explication of Pestalozzi’s religious sensibility, and Kirn, 329.

<sup>71</sup> See Rappard, 56-60 for discussion of Pestalozzi’s views on love and religion..

It is because of this experience of love, this sense of natural connectedness, and this introduction to a feeling for the divine that “nur das geordnete Familienleben ist nach Pestalozzi die Heimstätte der Sittlichkeit. Der sittliche Charakter der Familie wird wesentlich bestimmt durch die Mutter. Sie ist es, von der das Gefühl der Zusammengehörigkeit aller Familienglieder ausstrahlt.”<sup>72</sup> In the understanding of Pestalozzi promoted by contemporary critics, the mother’s devotion thus introduces children to religion. Although it was typical for mothers of the time period to teach their children their first prayers, Pestalozzi believed that a mother’s actions in comforting and quieting her young child did far more to teach religion. The child’s experience of the godly in itself is guided by its mother, and grows as the child grows and acquires new knowledge:

...sie zeigt ihm den Allgegenwärtigen in seinem Selbst, im Licht seiner Augen, in der Biegsamkeit seiner Gelenke, in den Tönen seines Mundes, in allem, allem zeigt sie ihm Gott... es umfaßt Gott, die Welt und die Mutter mit einem und ebendenselben Gefühl... es liebt jetzt die Mutter mehr, als es sie liebte, da es noch an ihrer Brust lag. (138)

Growth in knowledge of “den Allgegenwärtigen” is also specifically tied to the acquisition of elementary education, to the fundamentals of reading, writing and arithmetic:

die Mutter zeigte ihm Gott in dem Anblick der Welt; jetzt zeigt sie ihm Gott in seinem Zeichnen, in seinem Messen, in seinem Rechnen; sie zeigt ihm Gott in jeder seiner Kräfte, es sieht jetzt Gott in der Vollendung seiner selbst. (139)

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<sup>72</sup> Rattner, 99.

Learning the order of nature, in drawing, measuring, and arithmetic, and observing his own god-like power and ability to discern makes learning under the aegis of the mother into a chance to encounter the divine. The mother's presence mediates both the preparation for a moral, god-inspired life and a life in the nation, or nation, as stated above. The scholar Karl Pestalozzi explains the greater goal of Pestalozzi's mother-centered methods:

denn Ziel alles dessen, was sich in der Wohnstube unter ihrer Aegide abspielt, ist eine künftige Existenzweise der Kinder, die den Aufgaben des Lebens gewachsen ist. Nicht Glück ist das Ziel, sondern ein gutes Bestehen vor Gott, vor den Mitmenschen, vor der Familie und vor sich selber, angesichts der Gegebenheiten der Zeit.<sup>73</sup>

With such statements, the "genius" of nature, or a theorized divinity, becomes a pedagogical tool, one that only a mother, with her unique physical connection to the child, can provide. This idea constitutes a new application of the dichotomy between subject and object, idea and material, around which German Idealist thought revolved.

Never a believer in rote learning, Pestalozzi was convinced, therefore, that an understanding of the godly lay not in memorizing the catechism, but in humbly submitting to the loving authority of a patient mother. A true knowledge of nature, of "god's creation," happens through a metaphysical force of nature, rather than through abstract formalisms. He presents the child-rearing mother as "Priesterin des Hauses und

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<sup>73</sup> Karl Pestalozzi, 106.

Mittlerin der menschlich-göttlichen Trias von Liebe, Dank und Vertrauen.”<sup>74</sup> Her

example of self-sacrifice then teaches charity and service:

...ich bin durch [das Band der Gefühle] der Vater des Armen, die Stütze des Elenden; wie meine Mutter ihre Gesunden verläßt, sich zu ihrem Kranken einschließt und ihr Elendes doppelt besorget... also muß ich, wenn mir die Mutter an Gottes Statt ist und Gott an der Mutter Statt mein Herz füllet, so muß ich; ein Gefühl wie das Muttergefühl nötiget mich... göttlich zu handeln, wird meine Natur... (139-140).

By the end of the work, the latter half of letter fourteen, then, Pestalozzi elevates the maternal to near equality with the godly, letting the maternal stand in for the divine:

Mutter! Mutter! wenn ich dich liebe, so liebe ich Gott... Mutter! wenn ich deiner vergesse, so vergesse ich Gott... Mutter und Gehorchen, Gott und Pflicht ist dann mir ein und ebendasselbe (140).

Yet there are restrictions in this optimistic presentation: this conflation of mother and god is supposed to happen for babies and young children only: “Sobald aber ‘die entkeimende Selbstkraft das Kind die Hand der Mutter verlassen zu machen’ droht, fällt der Mutter die entscheidende Aufgabe zu, die genannten Gefühle wirklich auf Gott hinzulenken” (Luble, 12). Nonetheless, the child requires her presence for a religious foundation in life. Irmengard von Rappard explains that “ob die Mutter anfänglich Stellvertreterin Gottes ist oder später zur Vermittlerin zu Gott wird - ohne die Erfahrung ihrer Liebe ist die Entstehung des Gottesglaubens nicht möglich” (80). Pestalozzi thus enacts both the mystification of motherhood and mythologizing of the female that Karin Hagl-Catling describes, and the elevation of status with which Yvonne Schütze

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<sup>74</sup> Kirn, 358.

characterizes the incipient bourgeois era when he equates mothers with the traditional Christian God-the-Father. His claims and their implications exceed the exaltation of motherhood or of the feminine in surprising ways, however, which these scholars' analysis somehow fail to encompass.

### **Service and Social Transformation**

Just as Pestalozzi's insistence on the transformative power of maternal breastfeeding and on the elevated status of intuitive emotional knowledge created a break-point with Enlightenment pedagogues, especially in linking bodies and minds, so, too, does the service-oriented, practical description of womanly love set him apart from the romantics. The idealistic image he draws is commensurate with a feminized and highly romantic world view, in which one experiences the divine by opening oneself to female community and to nature. It goes beyond the romantic notion of love as proposed by Fichte, Schleiermacher, and Friedrich Schlegel's *Lucinde*, for example, in its insistence on the potential for economic and social upheaval inherent in any mother's willingness to expand her children's understanding of every-day experience:

Bei der Frau der Romantik, für deren geistige Ebenbürtigkeit sich Schleiermacher einsetzte, war trotz ihrer Emanzipation des Herzens und des Verstandes die Liebe im Sinne der Eros Mittelpunkt ihres Daseins. So beschäftigte man sich in den literarischen Salons nach dem Muster einer Karoline von Humboldt mit Kunst, Wissenschaft und Eros, nicht aber mit sozialen Problemen.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Rappard, 135.

Precisely the moment which many present-day feminists consider curtailing to a woman's expression of self, therefore, the notion that a woman finds her ultimate calling in roles demanding motherly qualities, is the emancipatory key to an early nineteenth century expansion of notions of womanliness and maternity. "Dieses pathetische Monument," Karl Pestalozzi calls the fictional Gertrude, "übergeht ganz die biologische Rolle der Mutter als Gebälerin. Ihr Wirken setzt erst bei der Aufzucht und Erziehung ein; denn erst dort ist sie alleinige Herrin ihres Wirkens."<sup>76</sup> Her maternal effectiveness as an educator forges a link from the feminine/material/natural realm women were supposed to inhabit to the male/idea/cultural realm of expanded fields of activity.

Because of the transformative power of daily maternal devotion on both a woman and her children, women were positioned to effect lasting social changes in both the private and the public spheres.

Das ganz andere bei Pestalozzi aber war, daß die Frau sich zu Sozialität, zum arbeitenden Dienen am Nächsten befreite. Hier steht nicht der wählenden Eros oder nur die weiblich 'schöne Seele' im Mittelpunkt, sondern die allumfassende Karitas, die tätige Agape, ohne welche die volkerzieherische Arbeit der Gertrud nicht möglich gewesen wäre.<sup>77</sup>

Hans-Martin Kirn, who sees a straighter historical line proceeding from the whole house system to a newly formed 'Kleinfamilie' than does Ute Gerhard, likewise accepts the emancipatory possibilities of the vision of motherhood Pestalozzi promulgates. "So

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<sup>76</sup> Karl Pestalozzi., 107.

<sup>77</sup> Rappard, 135-136.

beschränkt dies auf den ersten Blick erscheinen mag,” he declares, when examining the “zum Priesterdienst von Erziehung und religiöser Bildung stilisierte Beruf der Mutter,”

Auch hierin liegt im Vergleich zur herkömmlichen dominanten Rolle des Hausvaters ein emanzipatorisches Moment, das in der grundsätzlichen Hochschätzung der religiösen Begabung der Frau begründet liegt. Dies bedeutete trotz aller Begrenzungen eine Stärkung weiblicher Individualität und Eigenverantwortung. (376)

A mother’s singular position regarding religion, or the divine, can thus be seen to grant her authority in the house, and justification to work or to act outside of it. Her religiosity further finds its greatest expression in educating her children, in bringing them into contact with the godly by preparing them for service to their community, their nation.

In summary, Pestalozzi’s mothers, creatures of nature, of instinct and biology, are entrusted with the duty of transmitting culture and of reclaiming a lost transcendental unity. They are the only beings both central enough to her babies and children’s lives and united with nature to function as their moral and civil authority. Pestalozzi’s maternal imagery and impassioned rhetoric regarding women’s contributions set a literary tone that resonated throughout the nineteenth century. Of course his claim that the experience of mother-love and maternal nursing leads to a life of charity and brotherly love is a patently absurd claim: it is nevertheless one that reappeared for decades to come.

Pestalozzi’s emphasis on women as mothers, the curative power of their “hearts,” their affinity with nature and the link with the cause of the nation clearly mark his work as a departure from literary periods and philosophical movements that preceded

Romanticism. And although his emphasis on the loving-maternal qualities of women, and the genius of nature aligns him with the Romantic theorists of the Jena years, we also see elements of his vision and his images that are specific to his own historical circumstances. Pestalozzi's public engagement, his practiced, rather than merely theorized social radicalism, and his living contact with Switzerland's rural poor and urban orphans, rather than a romanticized view of them, set him apart. Unlike other philosophers of the Romantic aesthetic, who addressed political questions in either coded form or as calls for more abstract reversals of hierarchical order, Pestalozzi's politics were informed by personal experiences improving the material situation of Zurich's most impoverished children. His republicanism, tempered by his desire to submit to an unchanging divine authority, asserts a biological, or developmental equality among individuals that is equally offended by Napoleon's violent dominance and local social inequities. Pestalozzi's real focus on the lower class, from which he extrapolates truths for all human development, sets him apart from Enlightenment abstraction, Romantic effusions, and Sentimental naiveté.

### **Pestalozzi's Ideas Interpreted Through Time**

The relation of Pestalozzi's work to Classicism and Romanticism that I have noted above has been largely obscured by his reception, since so much scholarly work on his ideas focuses on the practicality of his pedagogical methods. And despite the inroads his vision of the developing human has made, there is also much of his work that seems alien

to our era. Given our current experience of mother active in most fields of cultural and commercial engagement, for example, mothers and their children appear in *Wie Gertrude ihre Kinder lehrt* to be curiously removed from all other human interaction. Despite the fictional Gertrude's complete penetration of all social levels in her village, the maternal images of the educational methodology create mothers who appear to be curiously alone and removed from the world. The social order that is begun at the mother's breast stagnates in this work because images of older children are so much less defined and lacking in visual outlines.

In addition, as noted above, mothers as Pestalozzi imagines them seem untroubled by the demands of husbands, older or younger children, employers, neighbors or servants. Pestalozzi does not situate them within the context of either a society outside the family or even within a world peopled by other family members. Not even the *Kleinfamilie* which Gerhard has argued was the main social structure of the lower class intrudes on Pestalozzi's mother and child union, and barely any mention is made of fathers, brothers and sisters, grandparents, or servants hurrying to comfort the crying baby. From a twenty-first century perspective, then, the mother seems to lose her position within the family and within society, emerging only in relation to her young child.

Liedtke notes that even in his own time critics considered Pestalozzi's emphasis on the sanctifying powers of the maternal role to be "übertrieben, bis ins Lächerliche" (133). He argues that, even though Pestalozzi was doubtless referring to mothers of

preschool-aged children only, “das Weib, das dahin erhoben ist, ihrem Kind im vollen Sinn des Worts ganz zu leben, muß ihre Eigenrechte aufgeben.” Liedtke elaborates:

Sie ist nicht Frau, nicht Bürger, sie ist nichts als Mutter. Im Bildungskonzept Pestalozzis ist die Betonung der mütterlichen Funktion der Frau, die dadurch auf diese Funktionen beschränkt erscheint, durchaus konsequent. Die Besserung der Menschheit kann nach Pestalozzi nur von einer Erziehung ausgehen, die an häuslichen Verhältnissen, an der Wohnstube orientiert ist... In Beziehung auf das Kind ist die Rolle der Mutter vorrangig, weil die biologische Abhängigkeit des Kindes von der Mutter die Naturgemäßigkeit der Erziehung am ehesten gewährleistet und weil die ebenfalls biologische Gebundenheit der Mutter die erste erzieherische Einflußnahme im Normalfall erzwingt und sichert. (133)

It is this reduction of a mother’s responsibility and variability, and the absence of a specific social milieu or historical context in which the theorized mother can be situated which thus contributes to the ease with which numerous individuals have been able to use Pestalozzi’s vision to support their own agendas. Yet that lack of a milieu may well reflect Pestalozzi’s situation, as I have outlined it: he was in a world with considerably less than an intact political order, and in a world where male and female roles were matters of heavy theorizing as part of the emerging cult of genius. Moreover, given Napoleon’s forces traumatizing march through Switzerland, many families were disrupted, destitute and homeless, or without a male head of household, making the nuclear household an often-unfulfilled dream for mothers and their children.

Not surprisingly, then, not all of Pestalozzi’s readers agreed with Liedtke’s assessment of the possibilities open to women when they are valued primarily for their maternity. Rather, Pestalozzi’s claims that his method could best ensure the proper

development of subsequent generations were co-opted by three large groups in the nineteenth century who considered him a progressive voice at the time: feminists desiring to elevate and expand mothers' roles as Germany and Switzerland approached the modern era, nationalists hoping to create a unified, German-speaking nation and strengthened Swiss confederacy, and educators wishing to institute public schooling for all classes from a young age.

This belief in the general, rather than individual, specialness of mothers, and in natural maternal wisdom, led to a lasting belief in the German-speaking world of the nineteenth century that mothers assume a particular authority and function in their communities. The effect was not only constraining to women, since widespread acceptance of this notion later took on a more activist and empowering form than Liedtke, Gerhard, or Schütze indicate. Ann Taylor Allan demonstrates in her book, *Feminism and Motherhood in Germany, 1800 - 1914*, that this subsequent ideology, for which she coins the term "maternalism," became the central tenet of German feminism through the nineteenth century. In one reading of Pestalozzi then, German maternalism posits that the experience of motherhood gives women a particular perspective, which needs to be represented in public life to create a just and humane society. It is a philosophy that claims that the maternal voice is necessarily public, not just an "Angel of the House," as in the British ideal, to borrow Coventry Patmore's image (1854) of the religious and inspired mother figure who affects the interior space only. Pestalozzi's earlier ideology changed thinking about women, their opportunities and their

responsibilities as mothers to the family and to the state. In general, German-speaking women who accepted a maternalist ideology believed that mothers contributed to the state by preparing empathetic citizens to participate in the community life of a nation. They did not need to see themselves as Rousseau might wanted them, as forces of nature used to counter society, but rather as beings who directed and contributed to it.

Adherents of maternalist ideologies in the German regions of nineteenth-century Europe argued further that mothers' duties overlapped into the fields of public education and administration, and public health and welfare administration. This paralleled Pestalozzi's own beliefs in the matter of women's occupation, who had women both teaching in and administering his various institutions and was unashamed to acknowledge his dependence on women throughout his life.

Pestalozzi hat sich für das weibliche Bildungswesen nicht nur im Hinblick auf den Mutterberuf und denjenigen einer Art Mutterstellvertreterin, die in die Lage versetzt werden soll, überall dort qualifizierte Erziehungstätigkeit zu leisten, wo immer es an Müttern und Erziehung fehlt, eingesetzt, sondern er war auch der erste, der weibliche Erzieher und Lehrerinnen gefordert hat.<sup>78</sup>

Friedrich Fröbel, creator of the kindergarten movement, claimed to be inspired by Pestalozzi in this collective vein to become a teacher "for the culture and ennobling of man."<sup>79</sup> He worked in Pestalozzi's institute in Yverdon from 1808-1810,<sup>80</sup> and then

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<sup>78</sup> Rappard, 127. This is especially remarkable when compared to Rousseau, for whom girls' education was always to prepare her to be a pleasing companion to a man and a loving mother. "Für Rousseau," explains Rappard (128), "die Frau besaß in seiner Proklamierung der Menschenrechte nicht nur keine Rechte, sondern auch kaum Pflichten, geschweige denn irgendwelche Ansprüche auf Bildung."

<sup>79</sup> Allen, 37.

<sup>80</sup> Liedtke, 154.

incorporated many Pestalozzian ideals into his own schools. The kindergarten movement greatly expanded women's opportunities in public teaching and advocacy.

Auch Fröbel ging es um eine vergeistigte Mütterlichkeit, die in das Leben hineinwirken soll...In diesen Sinne rief Fröbel die Frauenkräfte ganz Deutschlands auf; aus diesem Werben entstand zuerst der Beruf der Kindergärtnerin, bis dann eine ganze Kette ähnlicher Bemühungen unsere sozialen Frauenschulen und Landpflegerinnen-Verbände aus der Taufe hob. Dabei ging es um ein pädagogisch mehrseitiges Wollen: dem Notstand des Volksganzen abzuhelfen durch Mobilisierung der besonderen weiblichen Kräfte, mit der sich der Versuch einer besonderen Schulung der Frauen verbindet, was wiederum dazu führte, sich um die Berufsausbildung der unverheirateten zu kümmern.<sup>81</sup>

This assessment points to the social engagement of this version of mothering, supporting that the female was not simply meant to be in opposition to culture, but to challenge it and to change it in a particular way.

Women themselves provide proof of Pestalozzi's inspirational affect in the nineteenth century, for those attempting to modernize the situation of women in the German-speaking countries. Josephine Stadlin, who voiced gratitude for the spiritual encouragement she drew from Pestalozzi, argues in the publication of the Women's Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of his birth, that women should be free to choose teaching as a career, and should even be allowed to pursue university studies in preparation for that career.<sup>82</sup> That same publication contains Gertrud Flender's call for women to be educated enough to participate fully in the world of ideas, saying that a

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<sup>81</sup> Rappard, 129.

<sup>82</sup> Josephine Stadlin, in *Vorträge und Reden, zur Frauen-Feier seines hundertjährigen geburtstages am 25. Januar 1846 in Berlin* ed. Theod. Chr. Fr. Enslin (Berlin:1846) 4. Gertrud Flender's (38-44), and Tinette Homberg's (19 - 37) essays are printed in the same edition.

woman's ability to discuss all topics intelligently should be a model for her children.<sup>83</sup>

Tinette Homburg claims further that Pestalozzi's ideas amount to an advocacy for individual freedom that includes even women and children. Thus "the maternal role," in the words of Ann Taylor Allen, "whether conceived as biological or social, provided a basis for the entrance of women themselves into public life as speakers and actors" (17). When women needed to defend their public activities, such as teaching, nursing, or advocacy, the maternalist ideology made their activities more acceptable, and helped them overturn traditional power structures.

The exaltation of motherhood that emerged during and after Pestalozzi's lifetime, especially in the context of the bourgeois housewife-marriage, was therefore not only, or always, confining. It was also used as a significant social force giving women new authority and independence in society based solely on their status as women.

The emergence of early feminist positions... defined women's individual status as inseparable from their roles as builders of families and communities... The assertion of the culture-building function of the home, and especially of the maternal role, challenged rather than affirmed conventional domestic ideology that associated motherhood with subservience, intellectual inferiority, and childlike dependence. By criticizing conventional views of the private as the mere 'shadow' of the public sphere, and making it the source of important ethical values, writers... created the foundation for a public role for women.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Laura Tate argues in "The Culture of Literary Bildung in the Bourgeois Women's Movement in Imperial Germany," *German Studies Review*, vol. XXIV, no. 2 (May 2001), the ideals of *Erziehung*, which later in the century developed into an ideal of literary *Bildung* for middle class girls and young women, contributed in some sense to both women's national identity feminist consciousness and functioned as a support for the ideal of educated, socially engaged women expanding Germany's cultural identity (276-278).

<sup>84</sup> Allen, 35. Albisetti is far less optimistic about the growing effectiveness of women in public roles or inhabiting a public voice, because he bases his conclusions on how many schools or educational facilities for girls were actually founded, as opposed to merely hope for.

As read by nineteenth-century feminists, therefore, the mystification and exaltation of mothers as unified with nature, instinctual, and emotionally connected to their children had a positive aspect. Feminists echoed this rhetoric in order to enhance opportunities and authority in public roles.

But these appropriations of his work nonetheless have obscured how he uniquely addressed his own environment. Pestalozzi's own social intentions had been somewhat different, as we have seen. He worked first and foremost to replace the typical Swiss village school system of his time with an educational system more appropriate to the modern world rather than to traditional rural values. Swiss schooling in 1800 was in the hands of male schoolmasters, and derived its authority from local authorities, religious ministers and village and canton oligarchs. In defiance of these hierarchies, Pestalozzi "short-circuited existing official channels,"<sup>85</sup> wanting to replace the village school-house with home-centered schooling that employed mothers' intuition and natural emotional authority. This was a "natural" primary schooling that would foster a broader development of individual personality than would the rote learning common to such limited local schools.

In consequence, Pestalozzi and his followers insisted that education be both egalitarian and humanistic, in the broader sense of *Bildung*. In his own lifetime, Pestalozzi was thought to have a "politisch-demokratische Einstellung," and "hohe

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<sup>85</sup> Kittler, 28.

Sensibilität in Menschenrechtsfragen,” and his method presented itself as a “Standesunterschiede übergreifende einheitliche Unterrichtsmethode.”<sup>86</sup> A proper education, therefore, seeks not to prepare shoemakers, shopkeepers or soldiers, but to educate a child so that it has more than one possible future income, and can adjust to changing economic demands.<sup>87</sup> This attitude lies behind the children’s activities in the *Wohnstube*, as the contemporary critic Karl Pestalozzi explains:

Das Rechnen löst sich somit von den ökonomischen Bedürfnissen, auch vom Anlass des Spinnens, und wird Selbstzweck, genauer gesagt Mittel der nicht einem unmittelbaren Zweck dienenden Geistesbildung. Der für Gertrud zentrale Begriff der Ordnung erweitert sich zur Rationalität... (und) ist eine künftige Existenzweise der Kinder, die den Aufgaben des Lebens gewachsen ist.<sup>88</sup>

Even more important to Pestalozzi, education helps to develop a *Mensch*, a person prepared for the challenges and changes of life (31, 130). Liedtke describes the facets of the program in Pestalozzi’s *Anstalten*:

Durch Ausbildung im Feldbau, in der häuslichen Wirtschaft und in der Industrie wollte er damals dem durch ‘die Verirrungen des Feudalgewetzes’ und durch ‘das schwankende Glückspiel des Fabrikwesens’ verarmten Volk die Chance eines sozialen Aufkommens vermitteln. Aber wie nirgendwann vorher betont er, daß ‘Bildung zu Menschlichkeit’ auch schon damals sein eigentliches Ziel gewesen sei. (149)

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<sup>86</sup> Kirn, 327-328.

<sup>87</sup> Liedtke, 53.

<sup>88</sup> Karl Pestalozzi, 106.

Just as children are not educated only pragmatically, or merely to belong to a certain vocation,<sup>89</sup> neither should they be educated differently according to sex.<sup>90</sup> The point is to raise a child to be either a “befriedigenden Weib des Mannes und... kraftvollen, ihrer Stellung genugtuenden Mutter,” or a “befriedigenden Manne des Weibes und... kraftvollen, seiner Stellung genugtuenden Vater” (130).<sup>91</sup> This image of gender roles contrasted markedly with contemporaneous opinion, as Gerhard reminds us: “...ja, man muß sagen, daß die fortschrittlichsten und führenden Pädagogen der Zeit, die als Parteigänger der Französischen Revolution für das Menschenrecht auf Bildung kämpften, in der Frage der Mädchenbildung von vornherein einen reaktionären Kurs steuerten” (127).

Pestalozzi’s approach therefore aimed to serve the nation by developing its citizens (rather than training the citizens to be what the state required); he sought to engage every child at a psychologically appropriate level and impel it to mature in anticipation of the broadest understanding of future adult roles: husband or wife, parent and worker.

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<sup>89</sup> During his Neuhof years, prior to writing *Wie Gertrude ihre Kinder lehrt*, Pestalozzi did maintain the importance of educating differently according to social class, believing the children he took in faced a lifetime of poverty. He therefore emphasized field and garden work, household service and tedious factory-type work, and an attitude of self-reliance without luxury or idleness. Later, children from all classes attended his more school-like institute in Yverdon (Liedtke, 53, 151; Schifferli, 134, 200).

<sup>90</sup> And, above all, “sollten die Mädchen nicht, wie noch üblich, vor der Zeit zum langen Stillsitzn gezwungen werden” (Kirn, 341), a recommendation with which Jean Paul heartily agrees.

<sup>91</sup> Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel also advocated the same education for boys and girls, and even co-education in 1792, “denn Erziehung war ihm dein Mittel zur Domestikation, sondern sollte den Frauen zur Verbesserung ihrer Situation gerade auch im öffentlichem Bereich dienen” (Gerhard, 133). “For Hippel as for Pestalozzi, the impulse toward community-building appeared as the central and universal condition of human cultural development. Hippel identified women, specifically mothers, as the earliest community-builders and thus as the founder of human cultural development” (Allen, 27).

His effort to educate girls and boys equally was surely a revolutionary act in 1801. Perhaps not surprisingly, by the middle of the century, German educators, especially women, were citing Pestalozzi in their claims for the institution of universal elementary education for boys and girls of all classes. His fame and ideas spread quickly, considering that

erst im Jahre 1800 (1. Okt.) ist durch einen Bericht der ‘Allgemeinen Zeitung’ der erste öffentliche Kunde von Pestalozzis Erziehungs- und Unterrichtsversuchen nach Deutschland gedrungen. Der großen Welt wurde er dann als Pädagoge durch die ‘Gertrud’ bekannt. Bis dahin hatte er bei ihr nur als Volksfreund und sozialer Reformers einen Namen gehabt.<sup>92</sup>

By the 100th anniversary of his birth, Pestalozzi was credited for the profound German successes in public education, for making Germany (this often meant Prussia) into “das Land der Erziehung.”<sup>93</sup> Adolf Diesterweg, (Direktor des Seminars für Stadtschulen in Berlin from 1832 –1850, 1858 Representative to the Prussian Congress) claimed in 1845 that the institution of public schooling in Prussia was modeled after Pestalozzi’s institute in Yverdon (Ifferten), despite Pestalozzi’s failure to gain significant

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<sup>92</sup> He was also known as a novelist through the popular *Lienhard und Gertrud*, and the much less-widely read *Christoph und Else*. Additionally, *Die Abendstunde eines Einsiedlers* and *Nachforschungen über den Gang der Natur in der Entwicklung des Menschengeschlechts* had won him an educated readership.

<sup>93</sup> Adolf Diesterweg, *Heinrich Pestalozzi: Ein Wort über ihn und seine unsterblichen Verdienste, für die Kinder und deren Eltern, zu dem ersten Säcularfeste seiner Geburt*, (A.W. Schade: Berlin, 1845) 47. Kittler wittily summarizes Pestalozzi’s influence on official German educational culture: “the German states went to the source. Saxony dispatched high officials of education to Pestalozzi’s school at Ifferten, and Prussia, more advanced, ‘in order to view all aspects of the improved method of public education and to benefit from every experience offered by the contemporary state of educational science,’ sent young people there, with the declared intention of ‘having exceptionally apt and well-prepared subjects’ (in the lexical sense of *subject*, namely, civil servants) ‘upon their return’ (54). The Prussian reformers who first called attention to Pestalozzi’s work and inspected his method included, according to Kittler, Heinrich vom Stein, Johann Fichte and Wilhelm von Humboldt (55). Kirn also notes Pestalozzi’s influence on Herbart, Herder and Ewald (esp. 326-327).

public funding during his own lifetime, and that it was part of the work of nation-building which followed the overthrow of Napoleon:

als man in der festen, unzweifelhaften Überzeugung, daß nur des Volkes Kraft das Land aus Schmach und Tyrannei zu retten vermöge, nach den Mitteln spähet, des Volks gesunkene Kraft und Energie zu stärken. (46)

Pestalozzi's passion for "die Veredelung des Volkes" ("ennobling the people," Pestalozzi, 16), that is, for educating the lowest classes, was thus transformed by Diesterweg into "die Veredelung der Nation."<sup>94</sup>

Such interpretations indicate that Pestalozzi's original goal, to improve the educational experience of Swiss children by putting it in the hands of loving and capable mothers, was easily re-interpreted as a tool by which communities and states could consciously instill a common identity and common culture in their next generation. They could educate individuals to build a fatherland, perhaps even without continuing Pestalozzi's great reverence for mothers. This version of Pestalozzian schooling could build what Benedict Anderson calls an "imagined political community," a nation premised on an understanding of citizenship emphasizing unity of feeling, emotional ties and identification with the community, as shall be described further in the next chapter. Although Pestalozzi's self-identity and loyalties were certainly Swiss, and his efforts cosmopolitan, his work was almost from the first claimed by nationalists from as far as the French Republic, which made him an honorary citizen, and from Prussia, which re-

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<sup>94</sup> Diesterweg, 47.

fashioned him as a German. The later pedagogue Richard Schornstein dubbed him a “son of the German part of Switzerland.”<sup>95</sup> Diesterweg went so far as to declare the virtues and abilities Pestalozzi sought to instill as specifically German, and required for a German nation:

Die Schweiz, die eigentliche, ächte, wahre Schweiz, die Schweiz, in welcher deutsche Sprache, deutsche Sitten und deutsche Tugenden zu Hause sind, ist Deutschland, ihre Bewohner sind Deutsche. Nirgends in der Welt werden oder wurden häusliche Tugenden höher geschätzt, als unter ihnen, und darum gelten dort und hier die Verhältnisse zwischen Mann und Frau, Eltern und Kindern, Brüdern und Schwestern, und mit ihnen Erziehung und Unterricht für hochwichtige, heilige Angelegenheiten. Diese Eigenschaften wurzeln im Gemüthsleben, wo alles Tiefe, Große, Nachhaltige, Wurzelhafte wurzelt. Pestalozzi besaß ein deutsches Gemüth, er war ein deutscher Pädagog. (46)

Relying on the exaltation of family intimacy which grounds Pestalozzi’s images of the potential within the mother-child bond, Diesterweg assures the reader that “besonders aber das Walten einer wahren Mutter in ihrem Kinderkreise, in der Stille der Wohnstube heilig zu achten und zu halten - ist deutsch” (53). Besides being a springboard for the growing feminist movement, therefore, Pestalozzi’s text also served as a stairstep for developing nationalist ideologies.

Diesterweg’s interpretation also makes clear that, by the mid-nineteenth century, in contrast to the feminists Allen presents, many of Pestalozzi’s readers did not read him as an advocate of what today would be called home-schooling by mothers, but rather as a

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<sup>95</sup> Richard Schornstein, *Pestalozzi’s Mission an die Mütter* (Elberfeld: Verlag der Bädekerschen Buch- und Kunsthandlung, 1856) 5.

curriculum guide or philosophical statement for state-run educational institutions. Girls and boys were not being taught equally: Kittler explains that “the reorganization of the system of higher education in 1800... was explicitly devoted to the induction of civil servants,” (he seems to be referring mostly to Prussia) and that “girls’ schools were created to create mothers” (61). Neither were children shown a vision of motherhood which incorporated mothers in every aspect of community life, but rather received a bourgeois domestic ideal of mother in the home, tending her own children only.

Diesterweg does demonstrate, however, the consequences of the emerging concept of nation as a social process. He recognizes the socio-cultural work of constructing, or in this case reconstructing, a nation as something which adults enact upon the next generation to ensure the continued well-being of the larger community. When one separates the cultural work of nation-building as described by Anderson from the governmental work of statecraft, as Karen Hagemann has,<sup>96</sup> it becomes evident that the broad, although unofficial, role that Pestalozzi prescribed for mothers had actually declined or became reduced as the century continued, despite its original promise as a revolutionary force. In both texts, it is apparent that women participate in the cultural program only.

Pestalozzi imagined a world in which mothers transmit both an understanding of the moral precepts of society, which is culture, and an inherent understanding of nature to their children and the children of neighbors or other community members. In his

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<sup>96</sup> This is explained again in the following chapter.

personal life, he must have experienced the contradiction between idealized motherhood and the actual possibilities for leadership activity open to most mothers, yet nonetheless asserts the important, even revolutionary potential of the maternal function for families, communities and nations. In striking contrast, Diesterweg's essay, written in the middle of the century and within the context of an imperialistic state (Prussia) and a strong bourgeois class system, hardly mentions mothers, and certainly does not convey Pestalozzi's conviction of their primary influence, or the revolutionary implications that maternal power might have had. Instead, Diesterweg's thesis presumes that educators are the main transmitters of the cultural knowledge which undergirds a nation.

Pestalozzi, who did have political goals for the redistribution of power and wealth in his homeland, was nonetheless not consciously working to build a German nation in this sense. He wished for a nation founded on more republican, and more maternal values, a nation not of a *Bildungselite*, but rather of educated individuals, living up to the potential nature instilled in them. Different nations, however, claimed him in their efforts to establish themselves, seeing in his ideas a chance to inculcate a political culture. Particularly the German nation, which was not yet spatially defined, found in the Swiss Pestalozzi an assertion of values and character which it could claim as its own, around which a national identity could be formulated in an era of political disunity. Pestalozzi's image of rural, Christian mothers, quietly re-creating society through dedication to their children, resonated with a people overcoming the effects of war, political upheaval, and incipient modernization. Women in particular found in his ideas an opportunity to assert

their rights and responsibilities as caretakers of a developing citizenry, as people with a particular function within larger society.

### Chapter Three: A New Germany in the Next Generation: Nation and Pedagogy in Jean Paul's *Levana oder Erziehlehre*

In the aftermath of the French Revolution and in the midst of the continuing Napoleonic wars, the novelist Jean Paul described his time period thus:

Die jetzige Zukunft ist bedenklich - die Erdkugel ist mit Kriegpulver gefüllt - ähnlich der Zeit der Völkerwanderungen, rüstet sich unsere zu Geister- und Staatenwanderungen, und unter allen Staatgebäuden, Lehrstühlen und Tempeln bebt die Erde. (534)

This reproach is found in his *Levana, oder Erziehlehre* (1806, second edition 1813), one of the nineteenth century's most popular and enduring child-rearing manuals.<sup>97</sup> Jean Paul considered it his most important work, the one that would guarantee his place in posterity.<sup>98</sup> He believed that the violence of contemporaneous Europe made the work of raising children all the more compelling, provoking him to write a child-guidance treatise for parents and educators. The demand for advice in childcare and education increased immeasurably in response to the pressures of political change, European upheaval, and

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<sup>97</sup> This chapter takes references from Jean Paul, *Levana oder Erziehlehre*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Norbert Miller, 2nd ed., vol. 5 (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1963) 515-874. I maintain his idiosyncratic spelling throughout this chapter. The first edition of the work is from the year 1806. Timothy J. Casey, editor of *Jean Paul: A Reader* trans. Erika Casey (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) 32, says it "appeared 1807 as a memorial to the pedagogical eighteenth century" (the year of the Titelvermerk). The web page on Jean Paul in the *Projekt Gutenberg* site ([www.gutenberg.spiegel.de/jeanpaul/levana/levana.htm](http://www.gutenberg.spiegel.de/jeanpaul/levana/levana.htm)) also uses 1807.

<sup>98</sup> Hans-Cristoph Koller, *Die Liebe zum Kind und das Begehren des Erziehers: Erziehungskonzeption und Schreibweise pädagogischer Texte von Pestalozzi und Jean Paul* (Weinheim: Deutscher Studien Verlag, 1990) 218. It is also his most anthologized work, and most popular in the nineteenth century. In the words of Ann Taylor Allen, *Feminism and Motherhood in Germany, 1800-1914*, "The most prestigious and widely quoted writer on child-rearing of the Romantic era in the German-speaking world was Jean Paul Richter" (29).

the hope for a German nation. Jean Paul demonstrates the seriousness of childrearing with a disturbing image:

Wißt ihr, ob der kleine Knabe, der neben euch Blumen zerreiet, nicht einst aus seinem Korsika-Eiland als ein Krieggott in einem strmischen Weltteil aussteigen werde... War es denn gleichgltig, ob ihr erziehend sein Fenelon, seine Cornelia oder sein Dubois gewesen seid? (534)

Jean Paul thus uses Napoleon as the most extreme example of failed pedagogy, and rejects the French educational theorists with whom his readers would have been familiar.<sup>99</sup> His reaction against French models, French politics, and, later in the work, French manners, indicates his hopes for a specifically German approach to childrearing.

As this discussion will trace, Jean Paul considers children to be individuals who must be prepared for active participation in a future most Germans could not imagine, a future characterized by egalitarian relations between the generations and sexes, and mutual respect between the social classes. His vision supplants the various German states with a "deutsche Allerwelts-Nation," a supranational, cosmopolitan ideal of a free and peaceful continent to be won through an educational approach stressing individualism and freedom.<sup>100</sup> Jean Paul hopes to inspire parents and educators to raise their children

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<sup>99</sup> Herbert Kaiser, "Jean Paul und die deutsche 'Allerwelts Nation'," *Dichter und ihre Nation* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1993) offers a brief sketch of Jean Paul's changed attitude toward Napoleon: "Auf Napoleon setzt er in der *Friedenspredigt* (1808) die grten Hoffnungen; als neuer Friedrich, als Gesetzgeber, Friedensbringer und Freiheitsfreund werde auch er 'die Pasquille leserlicher hngen' lassen. In den spteren Schriften ... ist sein Napoleon-Glaube jedoch grndlich desillusioniert" (204-205). This analysis is based on the second edition, of 1813. Note also that Cornelia is actually a classical reference. She was the mother of the Graechus brothers, Roman reformers and orators.

<sup>100</sup> See Kaiser, 201, 207. He employs Jean Paul's term 'deutsche Allerwelts-Nation' from his political writings.

with a clear vision of rescuing Germany from the social ravages of the Napoleonic conquests and renewing Europe.

From this political perspective, Jean Paul's *Levana, oder Erziehlehre* thus emerges as clearly more than a typical child-care manual or educational program. It is instead a wide-ranging, philosophic work that envisions a revitalized concept of child-care. Intended primarily for the middle and upper classes and their tutors and day schools, as internal evidence suggests, Jean Paul doesn't need to proclaim the dignity and capabilities of even the lowest classes in the same way that Pestalozzi does. Like Pestalozzi, however, he directs his educational goals toward recognizing the human worth of each pupil and developing each child's moral capacity for love and goodness.<sup>101</sup> Jean Paul the novelist sees in every birth a "neue Welt, die der Säugling mitbringt" (594). Writing about educational theory thus requires him to

beinahe über alles auf einmal schreiben, da [die Erziehung] die  
Entwickelungen einer ganzen, obwohl verkleinerten Welt im kleinen  
(eines Mikrokosmus des Mikrokosmus) zu besorgen und zu bewachen hat.  
(527)

With that in mind, Jean Paul's pedagogical treatise functions as a forum for philosophical inquiry into such vital questions as the individual's relationship to time and space, his place in the generations, the role of the state in raising children, the nature of love, and family, gender, and social hierarchies. In addition to articulating the vision of motherhood Jean Paul advances in his *Levana, oder Erziehlehre*, the present discussion

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<sup>101</sup> See also Anton Luible, *Pestalozzi und Jean Paul*, Inaugural-Diss. (Jena, Kempton: Jos. Kösel, Graphische Anstalt, 1912) 14-15.

will focus on Jean Paul's philosophy of how time, space, politics and human social roles interplay to reproduce and modify culture between generations. The result will interpret Jean Paul's pedagogical treatise as a canny social and political document, aimed at rewriting Germany's politics by depicting the free individual, woman, man or child, and his or her relationship to the political structures governing the family, model for the nation.

### **Jean Paul's Style and Structure**

Formally provocative and innovative, *Levana, oder Erziehlehre* is actually a series of essays expressing Jean Paul's concept of the individual within the community. These essays do not always sound like philosophy to today's ears, although they function according to the Romantic dictum of the fragment, which requires, according to the Schlegels, a plural voice and various approaches, an act of *Symphilosophieren*.<sup>102</sup> What also sets *Levana* into the context of Romantic writing is its tone. Despite his assertion in the preface that he will maintain a serious tone for so important a subject, his style is witty, disjointed, and seemingly unsystematic.

Like other hallmark works of the era, including Tieck and Wackenroder's *Herzensergiessungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders* (1797), and Schlegel's *Gespräch über die Poesie* (1800), the volume includes numerous digressions,

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<sup>102</sup> A term coined by Friedrich Schlegel in "Gespräch über die Poesie," 1800, to refer to a group of thinkers working and writing together in communal work on philosophy.

incongruous visual images, anecdotes, and puns. Humor, an aspect of *Levana* that resists analysis and firm conclusions, is as much a part of this text as it is in Jean Paul's fictional works. The scholar Klaus Kiefer notes that Jean Paul "folgt den Prinzipien der Kuriosität, Heterogenität und Willkür."<sup>103</sup> He experiments with genre-mixing and literary devices, including such humorous insertions as fictional letters, some to dead people or fictional characters, the confession of an aristocratic lady to her pedagogue-confessor, aphorisms, and longish excerpts from his own fiction.

This open, Romantic form has led some scholars to overlook the importance of *Levana*'s content. Timothy Casey, editor of *Jean Paul: A Reader*, however, sees through the witty, apparently haphazard style of *Levana*, which he characterizes as "no more a systematic work than the *Preschool [of Aesthetics]*" (Casey, 32), to uncover the core of Jean Paul's message. Despite the generic mixing, with which, Casey explains, Jean Paul "resolved to aim at 'much enthusiastic disorder, in order to stimulate'," logic guides the text:

For all the fragmentariness, for all the subdivisions into religious and secular, male and female, moral, intellectual, and aesthetic, the unifying principle is clear: education is a process of liberation toward a state of independence. (32)

The text's form thus forces its readers to work independently to make sense of it, engaging the readers' interpretive strategies throughout.

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<sup>103</sup> Klaus Kiefer, "Jean Paul als Erzieher," *Jahrbuch der Jean-Paul-Gesellschaft*, ed. Kurt Wölfel (Munich: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1993) 81. Kiefer's discussion is based on several of Jean Paul's works which feature a pedagogical orientation. His article provides a general overview of Jean Paul's life-long ideas on pedagogy.

Indeed, Jean Paul's contemporaneous readers, apparently legion, accepted his idiosyncratic style. From the point of view of such a reader, *Levana* speaks to the heart of the era's concerns. This text thus engages both the common reader and the German Idealist tradition by explicitly responding to Rousseau, Kant, the educational theorists Johann Bernhard Basedow and Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, the philosophers Fichte and Schelling, and, more implicitly, to Herder and the Humboldts.<sup>104</sup> Goethe praised its "große, richtige Umsicht, faßlichen Gang des Vortrags, Reichthum von Gleichnissen und Anspielungen," and labelled it "natürlich fließend, treffend und gehörig, und das alles in dem gemüthlichsten Elemente."<sup>105</sup> Goethe's is an astute evaluation of a text which was at pains to innovate, to exemplify, and to intervene in a contemporary discussion of child-raising in all its multiplicity. In fact, the wave of pedagogical tracts and literary depictions of idealized childhood which flooded late eighteenth-century literature<sup>106</sup> had readied the way for a new kind of tract incorporating neither scientific-medical rhetoric nor what the critic Herbert Kaiser calls the "fatales Gegensatzsystem von Poesie und

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<sup>104</sup> Herder's influence, especially, is noted by Beatrice Mall-Grob, *Fiktion des Anfangs: Literarische Kindheitsmodelle bei Jean Paul und Adalbert Stifter* (Stuttgart, Weimar: Metzler Verlag, 1999) 69-70ff.: "Denn in der *Levana* wird weniger der Einfluß Rousseaus als jener Herders spürbar," in "vor allem Herdersche Denkansätze."

<sup>105</sup> Goethe quoted in Josef Rattner, *Grosse Pädagogen*, 2nd ed. (Munich/Basel: Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, 1968) 109.

<sup>106</sup> This was somewhat more than a generation after Rousseau's *Emile* (1762), still the single most influential work on European notions of child-development at that time, had been translated into German by Basedow, and Basedow's *Methodenbuch* (1770) and *Elementarwerk* (1771) had appeared. Kant, Klopstock, Hegel, Goethe, Hölderlin, Fr. Schlegel, Fichte and others all took their turn at addressing questions of educational theory of notions of childhood. Besides Jean Paul, the widely read, innovative pedagogues of the day included Pestalozzi, Arndt, Schwarz and Herbart.

Politik, Geist und Macht, Kunst und Engagement oder Privatheit und Öffentlichkeit,”<sup>107</sup> that he believes characterizes later literature. In contrast, Jean Paul’s writing crosses boundaries and redefines categories.

The aesthetics of Romantic writing allowed Jean Paul to construct his essays in a manner that integrated the *fatales Gegensatzsystem* of teaching and entertaining, ideals and reality, private and political that had already developed in German literature.

*Levana*’s essays, which the narrator calls “Bruchstücke,” address expected topics such as the value of physical exercise and play, and food, drink and clothing recommendations. But they also take on what seem to be more tangential topics for childrearing, such as the function of religion, the nature of monarchy, or the value of art. The word *Bruchstücke*, then, is meant to be taken literally, as the pieces of a more encompassing theory of children and child-raising, broader but less dogmatic than those offered by his predecessors.<sup>108</sup> Because writing about child development necessarily requires one to write “beinahe über alles auf einmal,” and to trace the developments of “einer ganzen, obwohl verkleinerten Welt im kleinen,” as Jean Paul conceived it, any single chapter must remain a fragment.

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<sup>107</sup> Kaiser, 212.

<sup>108</sup> This is in contrast to scholars like Dorothea Berger, *Jean Paul Friedrich Richter* (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1972). She alludes to Jean Paul’s use of the word “pamphlet” to describe his book halves in an ironic manner, dismissing the word as the type of exaggeration and wit for which Jean Paul is known, “Jean Paul saw the great advantage of his “pamphlet” [!] in its slimness...” (145). Pamphlet is, however, a word to denote texts with political implications, which Jean Paul surely meant. It signifies that this work is not a idealistic philosophy only, but also a political document.

Jean Paul's distinctive choice of formal structure for *Levana* thus mirrors the realities of individual development and generational change as he saw it, which requires a different politics of writing, a different dialogue with his audience. He sought to educate his audience differently, with this series of *Bruchstücke*. The *Bruchstücke* are thus arranged into three "Bändchen," of which the first and third *Bändchen* especially contain essays with no apparent link to the task of rearing children.<sup>109</sup> Instead, they investigate the power structures, gender relations, concept of time, and sense of morality that children must grow into, and that adults must themselves learn to negotiate.

### **Time and Space, *Zeitgeist* and National Identity**

In formulating his pedagogy in this collection of strategic fragments, Jean Paul consciously promulgates a German identity to guide and inspire the maternal or paternal heart. He interprets his large readership as evidence that "während die kriegerischen Vesuve und Ätna ihre Feuer und Donner ineinanderspielten," that is, during the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars, "das deutsche Vater- und Mutterherz Ruhe, Sorgfalt und Liebe genug behalten, um sich mit den geistigen Angelegenheiten der Kinderwelt abzugeben" (521). He flatters his readers, challenging them to overcome the social and political limits of their tumultuous era. Throughout the disruptions of the Napoleonic Wars, German parents continue to demonstrate a distinctive love and caring which has

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<sup>109</sup> Lutz Koch, "Bemerkungen über Logik und Psychologie der 'Levana,'" *Jahrbuch der Jean-Paul-Gesellschaft* (Munich: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1993) 52-53, and footnote 4, provides a more complete outline of the thematic organization of *Levana*'s Bändchen.

transformed Germany into “diesem Lande der Pädagogopädien (der Erziehung zu kindlichen Erziehern) und der Kinderliebe” (528).

Pedagogy in Germany has a book tradition, so that besides their loving nature, Germans possess a “Reichtum an Erziehungswerken” (526) to guide them in their efforts. Despite this and their loving, attentive natures, however, the German states themselves suffer institutional weaknesses resulting in a failure to care for all their children. Their excellent libraries have not lead to the kind of social institutions that turn good will into concrete practices:

Wir Deutschen aber besonders tun teils aus Überfluß an Menschenliebe, teils aus Mangel an Geld, teils aus Mangel an zusammenhaltenden Mitgeidern für Kinder schreibend auf dem Papier eben das geistig, was körperlich in Paris das Kinderspital les enfants malades und in Madrid der Hülfs-Klub für die auf den Gassen verlaufenen Kinder versuchen... (522)

Germans therefore write in order to accomplish other nations do through institutional structures, unable to accomplish practically what more politically organized nations can. Proving that Germans are theoretically, or textually advanced, rather than practically, Jean Paul’s preface to the second edition provides a review of the German language’s foremost educational authors, a list elevating “unter den europäischen Völkern das deutsche zum erziehenden” (526). Indeed, he claims, just as Lessing had made a Jew the unexpected “Erzieher des Menschengeschlechts,” so, too, could Jean Paul hope “an den Deutschen uns vielleicht die Erzieher der Zukunft [zu] versprechen” (526).

This evidence of literary-theoretical greatness, which could reassure German parents and educators about their status vis-à-vis the French, even while noting some purported aspects of French superiority, appears in the preface to the second edition. Following the preface and dedication, at the beginning of the work itself, however, Jean Paul's first argument is tailored to the German situation, and to a new generation of argumentation. Countering the lack of a uniform institutional or nationalized education, he reassures parents that they can raise their children without advice from experts, in a *Bruchstücke* entitled the "Antrittrede im Johanneum-Paulinum," and subtitled "Erweis, daß Erziehung wenig wirke" (536). Jean Paul reminds parents that their children's social identity does not depend on professionals or institutions or even texts, since cultural reproduction is the result of generational continuity, not abstract or artificial systems.

Rather than implementing the Enlightenment era's notion of progress through reason, in this section Jean Paul employs Herder's tradition of revering historical, natural, or organic forms of culture rather than abstractly theorized societies. Jean Paul demonstrates that cultural belonging, one of the notable forces defining a generation, affects children even in illiterate cultures. Jean Paul reminds us that in prehistoric times, children got raised even without institutional programs or explicit education: "desto mehr war der Mann in den Staat verloren; desto weniger wurde das Weib, das hätte erziehen können, dazu gebildet" (537). Similarly, the narrator claims, societies as diverse as savages, Quakers, and Greenlanders all managed to raise their children without a lot of explicit instruction. Historically important societies, too, maintained their cultures

through generational change, even when their educational systems might have seemed to have worked against it. Thus, the narrator points out, ancient Romans had their children schooled by enslaved Greeks, yet without their children becoming either slaves or Greek. Education is therefore not identical with cultural reproduction or national identity. Jean Paul thus demonstrates that, with or without a literate or educated culture, the external environment forces a cultural, and in the modern era, national, identity onto the next generation.

Cultures that do not explicitly engage in systematic education through institutions nonetheless pass on their own distinctive forms. The passage of time, or our culturally specific sense of it, is a part of that external environment of culture, one that both sustains cultural continuity and creates generational difference, as a younger generation comes to experience its parents' sense of group identity: "Volk- und Zeit-Geist entscheidet und ist der Schulmeister und das Schulmeisterseminar" (539), the narrator argues. In particular, the *Volk- und Zeit-Geist* transmits a sense of cultural belonging and thus a national identity. "Die lebendige Zeit" (538), raises our children for us, in this sense. Jean Paul here employs Kantian notions of cultural inheritance, because, according to the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (1781), time and space are the primary organizing forms of all apperception and perception. In Jean Paul's words, time, "das geistige Klima des Menschen" (538), forms individual children into the next generation, for a future we can neither determine nor imagine.

A *Zeitgeist* has the power to create cultural conformity because of a duality of “unausgetzter Einheit” (539), and “lebendige Tat” (540). This concept of time unites the concept of an act, or deed, or, as Herder would envision it, an engagement with the material culture of a particular time and space, with the idea of a cognitive form that a narrow reading of Kant would imply. This duality of action and unity presents a child or pupil with an integrated and repetitious chain of experiences through social interactions and intellectual engagement, which creates the illusion of an unbroken wholeness no teacher could hope to reproduce. No single individual is as constant (“fest”) as the present, “die keine Minute aufhört und sich ewig wiederholt” (539).

Yet that experience of time and action is by no means immutable. Although a time period lasts about a century, a generation’s defining margins are not measured in calendrical time, but rather according to the noteworthy people and ideas, and in the acts that define a place and age. Time is filled with human acts, not only with measured space. Each generation is born into a historically specific *Zeitgeist* (in Jean Paul’s words) because each generation is influenced by different figures and innovations of art and convention. Moreover, each generation is particularly influenced by its own childhood and youth. Jean Paul notes that we tend to live our lives under the influence of the times of our youth, and, even as adults, still somewhat believe ourselves to be in those times. Children’s time periods thus differ significantly from their parents’.

The paradox facing parents and teachers, therefore, is their obligation to bridge their children’s time period and their own, and to transcend both. And although the

*Zeitgeist* will raise children, ensuring that they acquire the appropriate cultural or national identity, parents and teachers must nonetheless guide children to an understanding of themselves and morality that is timeless and absolute, even as historical contexts and individual time horizons shift. “Aber etwas anders wißt ihr gewiß,” he proclaims, “daß die moralische Entwicklung - welches nämlich die Erziehung ist... keine Zeit und Zukunft kennt und scheuet” (535). The power that external time constructs exercise over the developing person thus requires parents to overcome the influence of the times in which they raise their children, to deny time its limiting power over the still-developing next generation. “Zum Ziele der Erziehungskunst,” we learn,

daß uns vorher klar und groß vorstehen muß, ehe wir die bestimmten Wege dazu messen, gehört die Erhebung über den *Zeitgeist*. Nicht für die Gegenwart ist das Kind zu erziehen - denn diese tut es ohnehin unaufhörlich und gewaltsam -, sondern für die Zukunft, ja oft noch wider die Nächste. (567)

We raise and educate children then neither for success in our own time nor for their own futures, but for posterity: “Durch das Kind setzt ihr, wiewohl mit Mühe, durch den kurzen Hebelarm der Menschheit den langen in Bewegung, dessen weiten Bogen ihr in der Höhe und Tiefe einer solchen Zeit schwer bestimmen könnt” (535). Jean Paul’s argument could be summarized aphoristically: The present makes people and people make the future.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> “...die Mehrheit der Mittelgeister, welche ja die Zukunft bilden...” (534).

An accurate statement of the Enlightenment era's faith in the ability of education to change the future appears in Josef Rattner's anthology, in a summary of Jean Paul's theories that shows his affinity with his predecessors:

In den Kindern liegt die Zukunft, und wer sie beeinflusst, greift ein in die zukünftige Gestaltung des menschlichen Lebens. In diesem Sinne muß uns jedes Kind heilig sein; es wird von der Erziehung abhängen, wie die kommende Generation aussieht...<sup>111</sup>

Yet, the scholar Herbert Kaiser, provides a more precise description of Jean Paul's very idiosyncratic understanding of time when he concludes that:

der Perspektivpunkt des geschichtlichen Bewußtseins liegt weder in der Vergangenheit noch in der Zukunft, sondern in der Gegenwart...In jedem Augenblick liegt das Ganze; 'Gott' oder die 'Ewigkeit' sind potentiell immer 'in uns' (212).

This is closer to the Romantic notion of unity in multiplicity, the many appearances corresponding to a single underlying principle that unfolds itself in time, and, in Jean Paul's account, in deed.

Although awareness that eternity is within us, and a sense that time feels like an unbroken passing, our actual experiences separate us from the universal because of the divisions of our own unique time and space. Again, Jean Paul specifies that material experience differentiates the one human potential into many different forms of human experience (a statement with which Herder, too, would agree). The narrator of *Levana* refers to the "Volk- und Zeit-Geist" (539) as he moves to add formal space to measured

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<sup>111</sup> Rattner, 110.

time, because space, as politically structured into states, also works on the developing psyche to create cultural and national identity in the same ways that time does. Just as the passing of time feels to an individual like a continuous, unbroken flow, so, too, does the experience of a national culture. “Kein Volklehrer bleibt sich so gleich als das lehrende Volk” (539), which appears to the child as a unified, integrated group of like-mannered persons, the community of interests which raise it and which structures its experiences. Jean Paul recognizes that each family believes it is raising its children with its own particularity, even, perhaps, apart from its community:

Freilich könnte man sagen, auch in Familien erziehe neben der Volkmenge eine pädagogische Menge Volks, wenigstens z. B. Tanten, Großväter, Großmütter, Vater, Mutter, Gevatter, Hausfreunde, jährlich Dienerschaft, und an der Spitze winke der Informator mit Zeigefingern (540).

Nonetheless, such a community in miniature is unable to raise children completely outside of the influence of the *Zeitgeist* they are born into, because of the educating generation’s own membership in the greater community: “Wie schwindet die Menge dahin gegen die höhere, von der sie selber gefärbt wurde” (540). To a growing child, parents, relatives, and educators thus seem to reflect more than to differentiate the culture they are being raised into. They seem, in the eyes of their children, to duplicate the surrounding culture. Thus, a *Zeitgeist* always has a spatial-political as well as a temporal-moral component, so that Germany’s differs from France’s or England’s in the same time period (568), and produces citizens or subjects with specific, culturally determined

attitudes, values and norms. This is a more precise refinement of Enlightenment universalism.

Aside from its clear reference to Idealism, this argument has potentially a more contemporary aspect. Jean Paul's concept of time as an all-pervasive, unified force countered by the specific experience of space foreshadows Benedict Anderson's analysis in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (rev. 1991). In ways that resonate with Jean Paul's ideas, Anderson investigates the historical rise of the nation as the dominant modern political structure and concludes that an understanding of time as a progressive force, which makes both linear history and simultaneity conceptually possible, is a hallmark of the modern political consciousness. What Jean Paul calls "*Volk- und Zeit-Geist*" is, for Anderson, an imagined social or political unity based on shared cultural experience and historical understanding, a psychological construct drawn from the group and projected in time and space. This imagined social and political unity creates the feeling of community, or patriotism, required for maintaining the modern nation-state. In this sense, there is nothing natural about a nation, Anderson argues. It is instead a constructed political entity that arises out of the force of people's imagined communion through space and time.

The individual-psychological dimensions of this model are critical to Jean Paul's sense of education into and by a community. Anderson notes that the nation, this "imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (6), is always conceived as "a deep, horizontal comradeship" (7). He then links that

horizontal unity to the modern understanding of time by demonstrating the importance of a progressive understanding of time to the development of the modern nation:

The idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogeneous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which also is conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history. (26)

This is a more modern statement of the links that Jean Paul made between time and space, between what a child absorbs from his cultural moment and what the parents and surrounding community explicitly seek to impart. The time and experience, or history (time) and community (space), of a nation become the automatic inheritance of the individual child.

The modern age seeks to methodically inculcate a cultural identity beyond what a child absorbs through everyday experience of his or her time and moment. Moreover, the modern nation depends on a print culture -- a connection that Jean Paul made so distinctly in his introduction. Anderson links this notion of progressive time through which a large community is imagined to be moving, its own history, to the advent of print culture.<sup>112</sup> Prior to the onset of a text culture, “the mediaeval Christian mind had no conception of history as an endless chain of cause and effect or of radical separations

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<sup>112</sup> Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) disagrees with critics such as Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm that the rise of nationalism is a specifically eighteenth century phenomenon, arguing instead that Europeans’ imagined communities, and the development of nations out of that imagined community, has medieval origins. Hastings claims that the sense of a German identity, which emerged following the Napoleonic conquests, “was only possible at all because a sense of German nationhood was already very deeply present, even if apparently somnolent” (106). Since the Middle Ages, he argues, “the German nation possessed for centuries political consciousness as a single entity, even though it failed again and again to achieve a stable political structure to hold that entity together” (106). Hastings nonetheless cites the importance of a vernacular literature to the development of nations and nationalism.

between past and present”<sup>113</sup> according to Anderson, who believes that the notion of history’s passing was secured by the accelerated development of narrated literary forms such as newspapers and novels. Jean Paul’s description of time as specific for each generation, and yet chained to previous and future generations (the movement up or down) along a horizontal axis of cultural and national belonging (the horizontal comradeship), matches Anderson’s and accounts for cultural reproduction across the generations. In this way, Jean Paul’s theory of time and space and their relationship to generational cohesion, grounds the formation of a German national identity in an era that must establish a more official culture during a time of traumatic dislocation. This understanding of each generation’s particular experience of time and space thus makes way for a new educational goal: a self-identity among pupils which will be uniquely German, and which the parent or educator can shape and encourage to exert their values into a national future.

### **Overcoming Limits with Print and Play**

Benedict Anderson associates this understanding of progressive history with both national self-identity and the experience of the print medium, although he largely ignores its effects on education. For Jean Paul, the relationship between reading, history, and national self-consciousness is complex with regard to the process of education. He has already characterized Germans as text-oriented, “ungleich dem Süden ist er weniger ein

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<sup>113</sup> Anderson, 23. He explains that the modern conception of time as historical passing makes possible the literary innovations which depend so heavily on narrative, especially newspapers and novels.

redseliges als ein schreibseliges Volk, wie seine Registraturen und Bücherschränke ansagen” (546). But, as Jean Paul sees it, books can either strengthen our specific experience of time and culture, or allow us to transcend that specificity. In this sense, the Romantic text form Jean Paul creates is more than a treatise, and is thus more open and more susceptible to re-use by the individual than is the normative Enlightenment tract. Jean Paul reminds us that we are no longer locked into the ideas or sensibilities of our own time period or locality since the invention of the printing press. Following his “Antrittrede im Johanneum Paulineum,” in which he asserted the possibility of raising children to be contributing members of their societies without recourse to programmatic educational texts, he now reminds parents that the modern print culture contributes to both increased cosmopolitanism and greater nationalism. It means that “nun wird jetzo mit einiger Hoffnung gegen die Zeit erzogen” (550), that pupils may be less restricted by space to the ideals or experiences of a single time.

Through print, the nation and its people can escape their own limitations of experience and tradition. Indeed, “durch das ökumenische Konzilium der Bücherwelt [ist] kein Geist mehr der Provinzialversammlung seines Volks knechtisch angekettet” (550) is the narrator’s thoroughly optimistic assessment. Although one’s own experience of time and space limits access even to the cultural present of one’s own children, print now grants us insight into ideas from much further removed eras and places:

Die Bücher stiften eine Universalrepublik, einen Völkerverein oder eine Gesellschaft Jesu im schönern Sinne oder humane society, wodurch ein

zweites oder doppeltes Europa entsteht, das wie London, in mehren Grafschaften und Gerichtbarkeiten liegt. (550)

This possible universality of ideas has practical implications for the development of states and nations, which thus lose some of their ability to determine the lives of their subjects. A German need not only be seen as the citizen of a (largely non-existent) German nation, or as the inheritor of a German tradition. Instead, Jean Paul's thesis that print culture allows us to overcome the boundaries imposed by the forces discussed in the *Antrittrede*, especially the *Volk- und Zeit-Geist*, demonstrates that these forces are not natural or necessary, but, according to Hans-Cristoph Koller, are in fact "Machtapparate" or "gesellschaftlichen Machtinstanzen."<sup>114</sup> He interprets the printed word, as Jean Paul sees it, as an "Instrument zur Befreiung des Geistes aus den Fesseln politischer, religiöser und anderer Beschränkungen." Print is a medium for "die Befreiung des menschlichen Geistes aus den gesellschaftlichen Zwängen, denen die Subjekte unterworfen sind."<sup>115</sup> It is thus perhaps the most ideal humanistic medium.

Jean Paul himself describes the effects of the print medium in the most confident terms:

Kein voriges Alter und Volk ist seit der Erfindung der Buchdrückerei zu vergleichen mit einem jetzigen; denn seit derselben gibts keinen abgeschlossenen Staat mehr, folglich keine abgeschlossene Einwirkung eines Staats in seine Bestandteile. (549)

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<sup>114</sup> Koller, 231.

<sup>115</sup> Both quotes from Koller, 232.

“Buchdruckerei” means that now no single time period nor national boundaries can have complete influence over their younger generation, who, besides being educated under the influence of community identity, also belong to “die große Nation der Autoren” (551). As the community’s or state’s power to influence individuals or determine subjects lessens, print enhances any individual’s ability to influence his own community or world:

Der alte Zirkel, daß der Staat die Erziehung voraussetze und bilde, diese wiederum jenen, ist nun durch die Buchdruckerei sehr rektifiziert oder auch quadriert, da nämlich Menschen über alle Staaten die Staaten erziehen. (550-551)

This is not necessarily the nation-state Anderson presupposes for the Enlightenment era. Jean Paul imagines here a decentered nation-state depending on the active participation of its literate members, rather than the absolute center of power that traditional monarchs enjoyed.

With this particular description of historicity and identity, Jean Paul’s description of the status or necessity of education is thus more complex than it originally seemed. Parents grant their children access to the greater world through books, but nonetheless still have no free access to the world of their children, who function only in their own generation’s present. Because each generation has its own present manifest in the actions and ideas of its own geniuses, parents and educators cannot completely know the present in which their children and pupils develop.

This means, first and foremost, that education must be considered as occurring in a different environment than many educators had previously assumed, since children's own contemporaries play a greater role in each other's development than previously recognized. Like Pestalozzi before him, Jean Paul instructs us to "Schulet Kinder durch Kinder!" (608). For Pestalozzi, it was a matter both of expediency and of training older children in the dedication to others that is the basis of love. Jean Paul, who doubtless agreed with both tenets, reinforces this ideal. For him, however, the importance of the idea of having children influence and thus educate one another is that only playmates have true access to the present other children inhabit. In this way Jean Paul becomes more modern than his historical moment, suggesting the more recent arguments of Judith Rich Harris, author of the controversial book *The Nurture Assumption: Why Children Turn Out the Way They Do* (1998). Harris reviews numerous child-development studies to conclude, as Jean Paul hints, that "child-rearing is not something a parent does to a child. It is something the parent and child do together"(25). She hopes to convince post-Freudian readers that parents' role in their children's personality development has been overstated, and for her, too, the greatest influence on children is other children. Her studies show that children's' playmates and peers greatly affect a child's personality development and maturation.

Jean Paul, although not negating the importance of parents in the lives of children, foregrounds and to some extent even surpasses her thesis. "Sind einmal Menschen für Menschen gemacht," he explains, "so sinds folglich auch Kinder für Kinder, nur aber viel

schöner... in den späteren Jahren wird das erste Bändchen der Gesellschaft aus Blumenketten gesponnen..." (608).

Jean Paul and Rich Harris agree on the reasons for the importance of children for children. Both authors locate peers' and playmates' influence on a child's development in their relatively free social exchange. Children constantly create their own social hierarchies, and play with peers requires active participation in the political process:

Erst auf dem Spielplatz kommen sie aus dem Vokabeln- und Hörsaal in die rechte Expeditionstube und fangen die menschliche Praxis an. Denn Eltern und Lehrer sind ihnen immer jene fremden Himmelgötter, welche, nach dem Glauben vieler Völker, den neuen Menschen auf der neugebornen Erde lehren und helfend erschienen waren... Wo kann denn nun das Kind seine Herrscherkräfte, seinen Widerstand, sein Vergeben, sein Geben, seine Milde, kurz jede Blüte und Wurzel der Gesellschaft anders zeigen und zeitigen als im Freistaate unter seinesgleichen? (608)

Children are therefore important for each others' individual and community identity development because together they negotiate and re-formulate social hierarchies between themselves, rather than merely reproducing pre-scripted social roles or replicating patterns inherited from their parents.

This is very different than Rousseau's insistence on Nature, or previous pedagogical reliance on training. Children's play is, for both Jean Paul and the contemporary researcher Rich Harris, the context for acquiring the skills necessary to maintain civilization for the coming generation. Establishing social hierarchies, the use of dominance ("Herrscherkräfte"), resistance, forgiveness, giving and mercy, are important skills, indeed, "the blossoms and roots of society," which children are free to

exercise only among themselves. So only among themselves do children inhabit a free state.<sup>116</sup> This crucial advance of Enlightenment models of human development accommodates unforeseeable, interpersonal, and affective development as well as stages of cognitive change. Jean Paul intuits an integrative, Romantic vision of the human mind and total human self, yet places it within community restraints and resources, rather than autonomous space.

Parents' inability to gain complete access to their children's present moment is, therefore, part and parcel with their need to maintain the distance of authority. Their influence lies as much in resisting generational change as in furthering it. We see that parents cannot completely experience the world of their children, because they do not allow children to participate freely in their own. What appeared in Pestalozzi's text to be an almost soulful interchange between nursing mother and infant, a "nach außen abgeschlossenen dualen Einheit," is more precisely, for Jean Paul, "eine im Grunde völlig abgeschlossene, [sic] dem Erwachsenen nicht oder nicht mehr zugängliche Existenzweise des Kindes."<sup>117</sup> Despite the closeness that parents feel with their children, especially in an era of growing sentimentalization of the nuclear family, children possess an inherent

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<sup>116</sup> For more on Jean Paul's general conception of childhood and the image of childhood in *Levana*, see Beatrice Mall-Grob, *Fiktion des Anfangs: Literarische Kindheitsmodelle bei Jean Paul und Adalbert Stifter* (Stuttgart, Weimar: Metzler Verlag, 1999). She classifies portrayals of childhood into two main types: Those which emphasize its connectivity to adulthood and demonstrate how the child grows into the man, and those which highlight its difference, and portray a lost realm, to which, once departed the adult never has access. This second one is notably idealistic and obviously informs this work, although Mall-Grob traces elements of both attitudes in his work.

<sup>117</sup> Koller, 238. His emphasis here, however, is not political, but on the role of language between the sexes and between a mother and her still pre-linguistic child.

individuality, according to Jean Paul, that neither the state nor the mother or father can intrude on.

In fact, Jean Paul objects that parents demand obedience from their children the way regents demand submission from their subjects. Jean Paul draws a parallel between families, “der uneingeschränkten Monarchie der Eltern” (535), and kingdoms, which are alike in their overabundance of laws, their hierarchies and their reliance on physical force to compel compliance. A father, in particular, appears to a child to be “eine Art freier Universalmonarch” (793). The idea of the family as the nation in miniature, perhaps not an uncommon image in Jean Paul’s time, serves as a metaphor to criticize the unequal relationships governing both institutions.

Avoiding other metaphorical depictions of childhood and keeping close to the notion of childhood as a biological phase of human life, allows Jean Paul to recognize the political structures determining children’s experiences in the Germany he inhabits. Mall-Grob calls this “ein markanter Unterschied von Jean Pauls topischem Umgang mit Kindheit zu jenem der Frühromantik.”<sup>118</sup> Only the older, never the younger, generation enjoys the kind of legal representation in the German states that would ensure a freer potential for individual development within the family: “Kinder, in diesem Erbreiche ohne salisches Gesetz und in einem solchen Überfluß von Gesetzen und Gesetzgebern,”

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<sup>118</sup> Mall-Grob, 60. She argues that Jean Paul’s literary contemporaries used the notion of childhood as a metaphor for other aesthetic concerns or utopian ideals. Childhood “wird zur Chiffre, zum ästhetischen Zeichen, das in einem komplexen theoretischen oder programmatischen Kontext eine Funktion erhält.”

are not legally or institutionally protected from the over-reaching authority parents can represent. Children are

durch keine Macht geschützt, da man wohl Mißhandlungen an Sklaven (in manchen Ländern), auch am Vieh (in England), aber nirgends an Kinder bestraft - Kinder also, so ohne Oppositionspartei und Antiministerial-Zeitung - ohne Repräsentanten und so uneingeschränkt beherrscht. (536)

Relations between the generations thus mirror relations between the ruling and the subject classes, and in neither case do they lead to the “liberation toward a state of independence” or the “Erhebung über den Zeitgeist” that is at the heart of education.

This negative depiction of the family as monarchy, the “kleinsten Staate im Staate,” (536) reveals Jean Paul’s skepticism about monarchies and other reified hierarchies in general. It leads us back to the overriding questions of the nation as the stage on which the individual develops, and the different roles that mothers and fathers play in their families and their societies. Jean Paul’s educational goal will not only be for an individual, it will point toward the development of a new state.

### **A New Governance for a New Person**

The practical implications of these proposals did not escape Jean Paul. Given the circumstances of the day, however, Jean Paul had to accept the fact that a new state in the near future would more than likely be a monarchical one, despite his misgivings. He can more easily hope for a good monarch than for the abolishment of absolutist government. By moving between the state and the family context, and clearly articulating how

significant the path to personal liberation from within the family is, Jean Paul allows his readers to infer an argument about the paternalism of absolutist monarchies.

Following the terror of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, however, a benevolent monarchy remained the most workable form of government Jean Paul had yet experienced. The revised second edition, therefore, contains a *Bruchstück* aimed at the young monarch. In it, he elaborates an educational philosophy specifically intended to inculcate a sense of enlightened beneficence in a young monarch-to-be. This grants us a vision of what rule, or governance, might be in the hands of a nation's "father," one who recognized his own limitations and the autonomy of others. The ideal monarch appears to be in the mold of Friedrich "der Einzige," whom Jean Paul admiringly distinguishes from all other monarchs. Kaiser summarizes Jean Paul's ideals of monarchical rule:

Der gute Fürst hat allen dynastischen Egoismus überwunden; er ist der oberste Diener des Gemeinwohls... Die Liebe zwischen Fürst und Volk muß eine gemeinsame Liebe des Friedens, der Freiheit und der Ehre sein... Der ideale Fürst ist nicht der Monarch, sondern der Autarch, nicht der Alleinherrscher, sondern der, welcher sich selbst beherrscht. (204-205)<sup>119</sup>

Kaiser thus codifies what I, too, argue: that the primary education of individuals occurs when the equality of the other is recognized, not within the static hierarchy of the traditional father and child, ruler and subject relationship.

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<sup>119</sup> Kaiser bases his argument on an analysis of several of Jean Paul's later works, including *Levana*, *Titan* and correspondence.

What can be seen politically as a tension between Jean Paul's competing desires for republican civil liberties on the one hand, and the ideal monarch on the other, permeate the very first page of the entire work, as one can recover from another fact of its publication: the insertion of the second edition's dedication to Queen Caroline of Bavaria.<sup>120</sup> Queen Caroline of Bavaria appears here explicitly as the mother of the state rather than its ruler. The author calls on her in supplication, entreating her to turn her scepter into a "Zauberstab," dispensing motherly comfort, bringing gladness and drying tears. Addressing her with the "tiefe Ehrfurcht eines Untertans," nonetheless calls attention to the uneven hierarchies existing in Germany, which subjugate philosophers, teachers and fathers just as children are subject to the authoritarian whims of their fathers and the mercurial indulgences of their mothers.<sup>121</sup> The pressure created by Jean Paul's desire for republican civic liberties and equality among individuals within an existing political structure of subservience thus penetrates this dedication and the work as a whole. In fact, it is part and parcel of his redefinition of the community of education, and the individuals place within it.

The larger context of *Levana* thus reveals itself as more than a pedagogy for individual children. Instead, it is to function as a pedagogy for the populace of a new kind of nation, different from the traditional centrist or hierarchical monarchical or even newly parliamentary nation-state. Not surprisingly, then Jean Paul's hope that children

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<sup>120</sup> This is an unnumbered page directly following the title page of the second edition.

<sup>121</sup> This set of images serves to reify gender dichotomies, an area in which Jean Paul appears quite contradictory in this work, a point I return to in the following section.

be educated into a state of personal liberation and his negative depiction of abusive power structures in *Levana* complement his political essays and booklets from the same time period.<sup>122</sup> His active concern for politics and ideals for liberty never waned, and in the first two decades of the nineteenth century he completed, among other works, his *Freiheits Büchlein* (1805), *Friedens-Predigt an Deutschland* (1808), *Dämmerungen für Deutschland* (1809), *Mars' und Phöbus' Thronwechsel* (1814) and the *Politische Fastenpredigten während Deutschlands Marterwoche* (1817), displaying a more ambivalent attitude toward authority than the previous works and celebrating Germans' love for their princes (see also Casey, 68). The freedom to read and write without censorship and according to individual taste informs his work from the 1780s<sup>123</sup> as does his belief in freedom of religion, two topics he went out of his way to develop in the seemingly innocent context of early childhood education. Individual freedom was in *Levana* a basic principle around which to formulate a theory of pedagogy that consistently champions the free development of each child, and, by extension, of each inhabitant of a new German state.

*Erziehung* and *Bildung* must therefore be practiced, within the family and within the greater community, in such a way that they create a free environment, to allow a child room to develop the skills and attitudes necessary for renewing Germany and Europe for

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<sup>122</sup> Casey, 32, calls the convictions which motivated Jean Paul's political writings and *Levana* "basically republican and democratic sympathies." Other scholars do not give a political label to Jean Paul's convictions, but emphasize his calls for freedom, and his desire to see Germany as a sort of unbounded land of liberty.

<sup>123</sup> Kaiser, 206.

the coming generation. Jean Paul thus promotes an ideal education that is actually an unfolding, or a freeing, of an individual child's innate qualities to situate him in a new community or state. The correct education, "die Entfaltende," or the unfolding of the individual, makes the secondary sort, "die heilende," which recovers a child's individual genius from previous errors, unnecessary. He compares a child's individuality to a jewel that one must "ausfinde, schone, achte und hebe." The argument that each child is an individual in his or her own right, with a uniqueness that is (in the words of Lutz Koch), "vorhanden und dem Kind von Geburt an mitgegeben [ist] und sich von da an zu entfalten beginnt" (57), is a statement that contradicts earlier images of the child as a tabula rasa.<sup>124</sup> Jean Paul implies an inherent moral goodness, an edenic purity babies are born with. Their elders must not corrupt this purity while inculcating the knowledge and attitudes required by the future adult, but rather allow a child to mature after its own fashion in order to hold sacred the individuality that is each child's gift. This is not Rousseau, for the child is placed within the nurturing space of adult guidance, which works to unveil each child's truest self.

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<sup>124</sup> Rousseau had earlier depicted children as corruptible by decadent society, hence the need to isolate them in nature. Pestalozzi represents children not as born good, but as able to acquire moral goodness through the right kind of maternal love and moral example. Jean Paul argues that human goodness is inborn, seeming to declare that children are not born into what the Catholic Church would call a state of original sin. See also Anton Luible, 15-16.

The educator's task is therefore to allow a child freedom in discovering himself and his world,<sup>125</sup> rather than determining a curriculum or academic standards to be applied to all children. The scholar Elsbeth Dangel-Pelloquin reminds us that:

in der *Levana* Eltern - aber auch andere mit der Erziehung betraute Personen - eine untergeordnete Rolle spielen. Das neugeborene Menschenwesen ist für Jean Paul von Anfang an eine "Persönlichkeit," eine "geistige Individualität" (V, 564) die im kern alles mitbringt und deren Selbständigkeit und Freiheit nicht angetastet werden darf.<sup>126</sup>

Of course, political implications are also apparent in this formulation of the necessity of free and independent development. By extension, that is also the task for the best possible monarch for the present age. Such an argument could certainly be read as a moral fable of a state's or nation's development, told as a series of witty letters, dream sequences or essays on the perfect childhood education.

In this joint ideal of governance and education, one does not 'teach' the child ready-made truths or orthodox ideas, or mold a child into a pattern conforming to the wishes of society. Neither does one use unjust laws or physical coercion to force the citizen into ideal behavior. Rattner explains that "weder die 'bürgerliche Brauchbarkeit noch die privaten Wunschträume der Eltern" (111) guide education, and Kaiser informs us that:

Letzlich entscheidend für die Idee der Erziehung der verantwortlichen Einzelnen ist aber, daß Erziehung nicht von Theorien, Idealen, Systemen,

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<sup>125</sup> Kaiser, 211, argues that Jean Paul's conception of freedom as the integration of internal will with external requirements, or of individual and political freedom, and his unwavering belief in god and the immortal soul mark him as an Enlightenment rather than Romantic thinker.

<sup>126</sup> Elsbeth Dangel-Pelloquin, *Eigensinnige Geschöpfe. Jean Pauls poetische Geschlechter-Werstatt* (Freiburg im Br.: Rombach, 1999) 322.

sondern nur von Personen her gelingen kann. Von geschlossenen Theorien, von abstrakten Idealen geht dogmatischer Druck aus; nur das Vorbild der lebendigen freien Person kann Freiheit vermitteln. (206)

Jean Paul, however, goes beyond this summation, implying also that the “closed theories” of absolutist rule and princely authority are an equally damaging “dogmatic pressure” that will prevent even adult individuals to flourish, to unfold and develop within the context of a community of peers, both within the family and in the state.

From both a pedagogical and a philosophical point of view, Jean Paul’s renunciation of standardized teaching and rote learning shares the spirit of Pestalozzi’s innovative emphasis on observation of the natural world by the individual child as the basis for academic advancement. Both place the capability for development in an idiosyncratic manner within the internal organization of the individual learner. And both pedagogues share the philosophy that the end goal of progressive education is an empowered individual. The two writers differ, however, in their goals for replacing standard curricula with personal observation, practical and fanciful tasks, and a home-centered environment. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, Pestalozzi hoped that each child would learn through personal observation of the external environment to deduce natural and physical laws, and to acquire the skills needed to meet life’s challenges in the absence of adequate textbooks, teachers, schools or information.

In this point, as in his emphasis on literacy as a cosmopolitan force, Jean Paul addressed a different readership that Pestalozzi did. His readers’ children had more material advantages. He, too, advocated schooling children in their own powers of

observation and deduction that they might learn self-reliance, but here not only in the sense of being able to support oneself in the future, but also to contribute to the creation of a new, perhaps unimagined type of society. Not surprisingly, perhaps, the school as institution barely enters the picture in *Levana*. This at least partly due to the fact that here, the pre-school years are of great importance, for Jean Paul as for Pestalozzi.

Beatrice Mall-Grob notes this in her analysis of Jean Paul's depiction of childhood:

...der eigentlich Ort einer wirkungsvollen Erziehung ist nicht die Schule und das dort vermittelte Wissen, sondern die frühe Erziehung während der Kinderjahre, geprägt von Vater, Mutter und Geschwistern. Hier nimmt der Mensch seine 'Hauptformen' an, 'später ründet er sich nur ab. Die ersten Worte und Handlungen sind am wirksamsten. (85)

Anton Luible had already noticed this characteristic nearly one hundred years ago, remarking that "in der *Levana* kommt die Schule nicht in den Bereich der Betrachtung," a fact he attributed to class difference. "Die Person des Hofmeisters macht es möglich, daß Erziehung und Unterricht im Weichbilde der Familie sich bewegen können" (20).

Addressing the social class that used tutors to educate its children makes it possible for Jean Paul to remain focused on individualized instruction, child-lead observation and the home-atmosphere, just as addressing the class that couldn't afford tutors had made it possible for Pestalozzi to do so.

Thus Jean Paul, too, sought to empower individuals to meet their own needs. He, however, defines the needs of empowered individuals of the classes he addressed as more than solely material or moral, but as intellectual, too:

Ausdrücklich korrigiert er die Meinung, Erkennen sei bloß so etwas wie Sehen, während es in Wahrheit, um im Bilde zu bleiben, ein Malen ist. Und wenn es so ist, dann bildet sich nach Jean Paul ein tüchtiger Mann nicht, wie die meisten vor Pestalozzi vorschlugen, dadurch, daß man recht viele Kenntnisse aller Art einschüttet, sondern eben dadurch, daß die Kenntnisse als Material des eigenen Ideen-Schaffens, wie Jean Paul sich ausdrückt, benutzt und genutzt werden.<sup>127</sup>

In either case, this observation amplifies on what we have seen as the parallel education of children and citizens. The spiritual or moral goals of Jean Paul and Pestalozzi for rulers and children alike are the same: the free release of the individual from internal weakness and externally imposed structures of thought or dominance. This free development, the ideal of child development, or “der Geist der Erziehung”, is, in Jean Paul’s words, “das Bestreben den Idealmenschen, der in jedem Kinde unhüllt liegt, frei zu machen durch einen Freigewordenen” (528).

That *Idealmensch*, however, was far from common in Europe of 1806 or 1813. Napoleon had initially appeared to be such a “Geist der Erziehung” for Europe, but, because he was indeed more *Alleinherrscher* than *Autarch* or *Freigewordener*, he proved a less than adequate head-of-household out of which to grow the new nation. As early as the beginning of the twentieth century, Luible elaborated the real innovation behind Jean Paul’s and Pestalozzi’s approach to whole-person education. He analyzed the implications that their ideals of individual development held for transformed social and political relations in terms that echo my starting point above:

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<sup>127</sup> Koch, 62.

Gegenüber der Aufklärungspädagogik bedeuten die Ideen unserer zwei großen Erzieher einen Fortschritt. Die Pädagogen der Aufklärung sehen ihr Ziel im Grunde darin, den Verstand oder die Vernunft in Aktion zu setzen. Pestalozzi und Jean Paul aber gehören unter die Reihe der Denker und Dichter, welche den ganzen Menschen mit all seinen Kräften erziehen und sich ausleben lassen wollen. Nur das erscheint als des Menschen würdig, allein das befriedigt ihn voll und ganz. Jetzt erst und damit dient er der Familie, der Nation. Die Aufklärungspädagogen aber hatten die Erziehung des gemeinnützigen und als solchen erst glücklichen Menschen auf ihre Fahne geschrieben und damit trotz alles Individualismus das Individuum zurückgedrängt. Dazu eignete ihnen der Zug zum Kosmopolitismus, während wir bei Pestalozzi, Jean Paul und ihren Gesinnungsgenossen die Wendung zum Heimatlichen und Nationalen beobachten können.<sup>128</sup>

Luible, has, however, underplayed the difference in what kinds of nation they were furthering, and to what extent these new nations would be exemplary for all of Europe.

Kaiser gives us a more abbreviated, but still pointed, summary of the connection between Jean Paul's individualism and its ideological connotations: "die innere Freiheit der Person ist die sittliche Bedingung der politischen äußeren Einheit und Gleichheit. Vaterlandsliebe ist Freiheitsliebe."<sup>129</sup> The cultural continuity of the German-speaking states thus depends on the next generation witnessing the older generation engaged in social exchange unencumbered by old hierarchies and divisions within the context of a renewed awareness of shared nationality. Parents who achieve an "Erhebung über den Zeitgeist," must therefore surmount the social order that much of nineteenth-century society was based on.

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<sup>128</sup> Anton Luible, *Pestalozzi und Jean Paul*. Inaugural-Diss. (Jena, Kempten: Jos. Kösel, Graphische Anstalt, 1912) 55.

<sup>129</sup> Kaiser, 201.

Earlier we saw that reconceptualizing a generation's relationship to time and space contributed to the formation of specific national identities (here either German or Swiss, respectively, in relation to the work of Jean Paul and Pestalozzi). To this we have added Jean Paul's glorification of the individual, of each person's "idealen Preismenschen in sich, den er heimlich von Jugend auf frei oder ruhig zu machen strebt" (560), which is at the heart of Jean Paul's educational philosophy. What will unveil that unique individual into the space of national identity, however, must be relationships to the external world, an engagement with the community (as a set of interpersonal relationships) and contact with the material world (that conditions the nation's identity in time and space), each of which promotes renewed political and national objectives. Like individual liberation, national identity emerges from the individuation of a class of liberated, unified selves, emerging from civil and intellectual freedom. Both Jean Paul's and Pestalozzi's educational treatises agree that political egalitarianism and a national identity lie at the heart of the educational endeavor, but differ as to the class and social organisms who will end up educated in the cause of the new nation. Each favors his own paradigm of the empowered pupil, respectively, either a middle- or upper- class son or daughter intellectually educated to contribute to family and society economically and relationally, or a hard-working rural mother and her child taught to be gainfully employed, self-supporting, and careful of the needs of those around them.

If the power and importance of a new pedagogy lies in its ability to avoid another Napoleon through the free development of each child's individual self, then that

development will require a context of time and space in which adults, too, negotiate free and equal social relations, among the classes and the sexes. The two scholars quoted above who indeed recognized Jean Paul's political message, nonetheless still ignore the implications of this thesis for the role of women in the politics and practice of education as Jean Paul imagines it. Women are, after all, the daily educational guides in children's lives, and are to be the *Freigewordenen* through whom the unveiling of the more complete self occurs. Jean Paul's desire to create women, families and a nation which could provide such a context, which could release children from the limitations of political systems, strict family relations and the fashions and changes of time, situates him as a modern thinker who celebrates the liberated individual. *Levana, oder Erziehlehre* employs a rhetoric of pedagogy to clothe a vision of a democratic German nation, of educated individuals (part of the bourgeois, educated-intellectual class) leading Europe in peace and equality through the specific strengths of the German *Mutter-* and *Vaterherz* he described at the outset.

### **Individual Mothers and Ideal Maternity: The Maternal Character and Demands on Mothers in the Modern Nation**

Jean Paul's rhetoric of pedagogy and child-development expertise retains, throughout the work, an overall tone of paternal expertise, of advice-giving from an experienced *pater familias*. With this rhetorical stance, the narrator articulates a philosophy of the liberated and autonomous individual within a liberating family and

autonomous state, and also includes multi-faceted images of mothers within the family and society. His contradictory declarations paint mothers as both necessary and superfluous, loving, patient and dedicated or spoiling, distracted and confusing in their demands, deserving of loving admiration or of critical reproach. Because the narrator's dual versions of motherhood are never really reconciled in this work, a final analysis of mothers' place in the nation or duties in the household remains unclear and unspoken throughout the book. Readers of this book might doubtless find in it any version of motherhood they themselves hold dear, which surely contributed to its contemporaneous popularity. Nonetheless, a philosophy of mothers, the non-autonomous humans left out of much Enlightenment thought, is embedded in the philosophy of the child emerging into a progressive, post-war nation.

How Jean Paul incorporates the female-as-mother, the favored Romantic image of women in general,<sup>130</sup> is more complex than it at first seems. Despite his emphasis on a mother's practical duties and social role, *Levana's* narrator never completely rejects the notion or significance of a feminine or maternal essence, such as articulated by Rousseau or depicted by Friedrich Schlegel's *Lucinde*. The text provides many examples of essential female differences, such as the mundane generalization that women are the "geborenes Stubengeschlecht" who love warmth "wie den Kaffee" (650) or the biological arguments that baby care is "durch den Körper in Mutterhand gelegt," (679) and "die

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<sup>130</sup> See, for example Albisetti, 5-6, who also finds that, "the most enthusiastic celebration of motherhood came from Jean Paul Friedrich Richter.

Natur hat das Weib unmittelbar zur Mutter bestimmt” (688). There are plenty of maternal topoi that had already become clichéd by 1800, such as the idea that nature grants women “Geduld, Reiz, Milde, Rede und Liebe für die Wesen” (681), or that “die Mutter gibt fort; ja ihre Liebe wird nur größer...” (690). Indeed, the entire fourth *Bruchstück*, dedicated to female education, both that given by and that given to girls and women, is infused with the language and sensibility of Rousseau’s *Emile*. It includes topics such as *Bestimmung des weiblichen Geschlechts für Gatten weniger als für Kinder* and *Natur der Mädchen; Erweis ihrer überwiegenden Herzens-Reinheit*. Arguments concerning the importance of girls’ chastity, the need for mothers to be mild and avoid emotion and passion, women’s natural love for children and their predisposition to be in the home echo those of previous authors. The goal of *Levana*’s fourth *Bruchstück* is thus to define the feminine essence as characterized primarily by an inherent maternal love that greatly determines women’s personalities, concerns, decisions, and desires.

To argue, therefore, as Dangel-Pelloquin seems to, that Jean Paul promotes the ideal of mother as housewife more because it’s a convenient division of labor than because of any natural and inherent qualities women possess, is promote a partial understanding of the text. Like other scholars, she emphasizes the text’s repeated assertions that women are mothers naturally, but wives more or less conventionally. Therefore, she concentrates on textual assertions that nature determines women to be mothers directly, but wives only indirectly, that nature confers women’s capacity for love not on men’s behalf, but for their children, and that the determination that women be

wives is an invention of male egotism.<sup>131</sup> Emphasizing these quotes to the exclusion of others, however, simplifies the contradictory content of many of the works' declarations and explanations.

Jean Paul recognizes that women's social role in the emerging German nation is likely to be as housewives, or, in his ironic phrasing, men's "Waffen- und Geschäftsträgerin, Marktenderin und Proviantbäckerin," since "der Ehemann das Eheweib als sein Wirtschaftgebäude und Beiwerk ansieht" (688), and "an seiner Frau gern eine Sklavin und Göttin zugleich hätte" (703). Jean Paul nonetheless imagines women as not meant merely for the pleasure and convenience of men, as in Rousseau's ideal. His emphasis is on women's "natural" educational and child-rearing function, on their status as mothers rather than wives. Their roles in the family and the larger, national context, as Jean Paul sees it, arise directly from their experience or future as mothers, from "die tausend Nachtwachen und Opfer, um welche eine Mutter dem Staate einen Helden oder Dichter erkaufte..." (681). Not wives, but mothers, especially those who educate their children themselves in their first five years, surely found cities and states: "wahrlich die Mütter, welche der Zukunft die ersten fünf Jahre der Kinder erziehen, gründen Länder und Städte" (680).

The narrator couches what he supposes to be the activity of creating new states, however, in the language of maternal dedication and generation. Further, he feels the

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<sup>131</sup> This is Dangel-Pelloquin's argument, 332 of her book. Jean Paul's arguments quoted above and in *Viertes Bruchstück, Kap. II and III*.

need to convince women of their natural predisposition to engage in this apparently private, but actually public and political work, in a way that does not allow one to confuse “mother” with “angel of the house.” Apparently, many women take on their “natural” duties, raising and educating their children to be active participants in a new Germany, all too reluctantly, despite nature’s law that women are primarily mothers. The narrator admits that being with children on a daily basis can be hard on a mother, “die sich tagelang mit ihnen ermüdet” (677), and that “dieses längere Zusammenleben entschuldigt auch manches mütterliche Überwallen in Liebe und in Zorn” (678). Like Pestalozzi, Jean Paul recognizes that the physical care of children, which “im Mittelstande bloß der Mutter auflastet,” dampens (“abstumpfen und abmatten”) rather than uplifts the maternal soul (678), and that a mother can feel “ans Kind festgeknüpft durch tägliche und nächtliche Bande” (680), especially when bound to the house. And although middle-class mothers bear the greatest child-raising burdens in physical care, it is especially women of the upper classes who are tempted to leave their young children in the care of other women, enjoy the distractions of social pleasure and fashionable dress and toiletries, and discipline children inconsistently or impulsively.

These are the primary pedagogical “sins against Rousseau and Campe” confessed by Jean Paul’s fictional character Jacqueline at the outset of *Bruchstück* four. The figure of Madame Jacqueline demonstrates the artifice in Jean Paul’s maternal imagery, despite his assertions that women are “naturally” as he depicts them. “Die Frauenfiguren Jean Pauls sind ‘Kunst’ wie die Statue [Pygmalions], und zwar in dem ganz direkten Sinn, daß

die Texte selbst unentwegt Hinweise auf ihr Gemachtsein, ihre Künstlichkeit geben,” Dangel-Pelloquin asserts. Even superficially, Jacqueline’s love of artifice, especially “die Veritas (freilich mir eine sinnbildliche Figur aus Bertuchs Industrieomtoir)” that her son had thrown out the window (677), and her vanity, (“ich mag mit meiner Toilette zugleich noch so viele Predigten dagegen machen, ich werde von ihnen weniger angehört als angeschauet” [677]), reveal the artificiality of her character.

The competing tendencies regarding the roles and essence of mothers informing *Levana* thus coalesce around this single fictional figure. The narrator forgives mothers in the figure of this “arme pädagogische Sünderin”(673) easily, declaiming throughout the text that women’s shortcomings or failures as mothers do not mitigate their substantially maternal essence. However “artificial” or imperfect a mother may be, the very fact that she is a mother subsumes her individuality into a rhetoric of natural femininity that incorporates her work of cultural reproduction into the project of restructuring the nuclear family and using it to mirror the social structure of the nation, not merely reproducing normative family ties in private but actually modeling interpersonal relations for the public.

The defining element of the maternal femininity that sets mothers, and all women, apart is their capacity for love: “Liebe ist der Lebengeist ihres Geistes... Mit diesem Brautschatz der Liebe schickte die Natur die Frauen ins Leben” (685). Like Pestalozzi, who discovered in mother-love and maternal sacrifice the seat of all human morality, Jean Paul asserts the real existence of an inherent, and particularly womanly, capacity to

love one's own children, "unendlich, und recht" (685), above even one's self. Yet, in contrast with Rousseau, who was sure that a woman's function was to please and love a man, Jean Paul states that women's purpose is aimed at the future, not the present,

nicht etwa, wie Männer oft glauben, damit sie selber von jenen so recht durch and durch, von der Sohle bis zur Glatze, liebgehabt würden, sondern darum, damit sie – was ihre Bestimmung ist – Mütter wären und die Kinder, denen Opfer nur zu bringen, nicht abzugewinnen sind, lieben könnten. (685)

An element of inequality therefore determines women's loving practices, but not in the male-female manner normally expected in the hierarchical household or state. Jean Paul denies the typically assumed inequality between a man and a woman, which supposes that she might adore him in an idolatrous or servile way. He argues, instead, that the (perhaps temporary) inequality and dependence of children on their parents grounds the attitude of love that is the basis of femininity. As we saw earlier in the discussion of the good monarch, an apparently superior position with implications for the future demands greater attention to others than the contemporary practice of authority actually witnessed. Female is not so much the complement of male, in Jean Paul's paradigm, as it is a differently oriented element in the atmosphere that prepares the next generation for a new future.

The quality of mother-love that constitutes the essence of femininity leads, seemingly inevitable, to a host of other womanly characteristics, some already discussed above. The fact that nature determines women, through the quality of their love, to be mothers above all else, means that they are created not for service to the present, but to

the future, not for the people with whom she has daily interactions, but for those with whom her children will. When it comes to a marriage, then, “Er ist weit mehr für sie als sie für ihn geschaffen; sie ist für die körperliche Nachwelt, wie er für die geistige” (688).

This view to the future, in the most basic biological sense, but also in a civic or public sense, determines, in turn, the many other differences that constitute the female person:

Daher deren Sorge und Achtung für ihren Körper... daher ihre Furcht vor Wunden... Damit steht ihre Nüchternheit, ihre Liebe für Häuslichkeit und Ruhe in Bund... Man könnte die bisherige Behauptung in die kleinern Züge ausmalen; z. B. den weiblichen Geiz, der nicht selbstisch, sondern für Kinder sparet – die Liebe für Kleinigkeiten – die Sprechseligkeit – die sanfte Stimme und vieles, was wir tadeln. (689)

Women’s supposed greater sense for the physical in life, and their supposed greater artifice and sensuality, thus comes from their greater awareness of their own bodies as the site of motherhood, the organ which reproduces humanity and transmits our understanding of morality and love to the future: “so sei eure Schönheit nicht nur die Einkleidung, sondern auch das Organ der Lehre und Bildung” (680).<sup>132</sup> We see then, that far from putting aside older biases about women’s sensuality and physicality, Jean Paul instead wishes to examine, articulate and explain them. He affirms many as ordained by nature, and necessary for the proper development of succeeding generations.

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<sup>132</sup>Koller, too, understands the maternal body as the site of important human achievement. He explains that Jean Paul “nimmt... die Frauen in Schutz, indem er diese Eigenschaft aus der Notwendigkeit herleitet, dem eigenen Körper als Organ der Mütterlichkeit mehr Aufmerksamkeit schenken zu müssen...” (248-249). Jean Paul thus defends women against accusations of vanity, pettiness, or moral degradation through concern with temporal beauty, because of women’s need to be concerned with bodily concerns that could implicate their maternal essence.

Women's talk, and even baby-talk, is also defended against male censure and the voice of rationality. Maternal voices, words, and gestures are endowed with specifically maternal value as are their bodies. Mothers are not only members of the "freundlichen lobenden nachsichtigen Weiber-Zirkeln" (645), but also people whose actions embody "die Muttersprache der Liebe, durch liebkosende Worte und Mienen" (806).

Two impulses thus animate *Levana's* depiction of women, the impulse to essentialize and eternalize maternity in the service of the state and the desire to release women from social restrictions that inhibited their full development and seemed to constrain them to the private. The national need for individuation and eventual liberation includes women and their newborns, even in a time period whose leading thinkers were often willing to question whether a woman was a "Mensch." At different points in the text, it is clear that mothers are indeed Jean Paul's "Freigewordenen" through whom the maturing of the ideal self occurs. And, in perhaps a progressive departure from the norm of having fathers educate their children through a *Hauslehrer*, we see that Jean Paul imagines mothers to be their children's best teachers, for they are the closest to being humans with no other social layers imposed on them. Jean Paul makes clear that mothers have no other role than as mothers in the state as he knows and imagines it. Without mothers, each estate within the nation would teach differently:

der Soldat wird kriegerisch, der Dichter dichterisch, der Gottesgelehrte fromm erziehen - und nur die Mutter wird menschlich bilden. Denn nur

das Weib bedarf an sich nichts zu entwickeln als den reinen Menschen.  
(680)

Despite its idealistic tone, therefore, this statement is not an entirely positive assessment of women, since relegates them to a kind of state of nature. It typifies the dual nature of Jean Paul's vision of mothers, who both deserve the freedom to be themselves, in looks, speech and actions, and who appear emptied of individuality to embody the "purely human."

This description of women, however, also requires that they be moved into the space and time of a nation's culture. Jean Paul's women are completely maternal but not only domestic. Putting education in the hands of mothers implies that they, too, must be prepared for the moral autonomy and free social exchange that constitute goals of Jean Paul's educational program.<sup>133</sup> Despite Jean Paul's mythologizing, he clearly states that a woman's individuality must be developed before she takes on the roles of wife and mother, for "Allein bevor und nachdem man Mutter ist, ist man ein Mensch; die mütterliche Bestimmung oder gar die eheliche kann nicht die menschliche überwiegen oder ersetzen..." (694).<sup>134</sup> For women of the time, according to Dangel-Pelloquin, this meant that:

die Ermunterung für die Frauen, aus ihren engen weiblichen  
Beschränkungen herauszutreten und sich die größere Freiheit des Vaters  
anzueignen. Das geschieht aber nicht in Form eines an die Frauen

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<sup>133</sup> See also Dangel-Pelloquin, 330-331.

<sup>134</sup> Despite Jean Paul's conviction that each woman's individual humanity must be recognized and developed, he, too, engages in some of the essentializing and mythologizing of women so common since at least Rousseau's *Emile*.

gerichteten Befreiungsdiskurses...Das Heraustreten aus den weiblichen Beschränkungen ist höchstens indirekt abzuleiten, als Folge aus den Prämissen jeder, auch der weiblichen Erziehung. (330 – 331)

She concludes that Jean Paul's definition of education, the endeavor to release the "idealen Preismenschen in sich" (560), and "den Idealmenschen, der in jedem Kinde unhüllt liegt, frei zu machen durch einen Freigewordenen" (528), is in fact a program to liberate girls and women from the restrictions of his time, clothed in a rhetoric which idealizes mother-love and the housewife role. Already we have seen that Jean Paul's education tract contains a political component that seeks to liberate all subjects into citizens, and help all dependent children grow into autonomous adults. A more specific investigation of this educational treatise's implications for women's public and private roles uncovers an equally devoted impulse to enlarge the world for women. Specific pedagogical imperatives direct the freeing of women

aus einer unfreien Enge: aus der Enge der Kleidung durch die griechische Mode, aus der Stube..., aus der Enge der Furcht..., schließlich aus der körperlichen und geistigen Enge, wie sie die "sogenannte Frauenzimmerarbeit" nach sich zieht, mit einer "Sklaven-Haltung des Leibes," in der der "müßiggelassene Geist... dumpf verrostet. (Dangel-Pelloquin 333-334)

No wonder then, that both as a novelist and as the author of *Levana*, Jean Paul was especially popular among women readers, perhaps because he recognized that a woman can be as emancipated, creative and infinite as her husband or father.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Kiefer, 65, mentions Jean Paul's popularity among women in passing, basing his remark on Uwe Schweikert's and Wulf Köpke's, "... Von den Weibern geliebt. Jean Paul und seine Leserinnen," *Die*

The liberation that is at stake here appears absolute for every individual. The *Idealmenschen* inherent in each individual places limits even on mothers, whose infants, too, are their own individuals. In his “Abschweifung über den Anfang des Menschen und der Erziehung,” (587-588),<sup>136</sup> Jean Paul postulates the complete personal separation of a newborn, and even a fetus, from its mother. Before birth, Jean Paul maintains, a fetus possesses individual characteristics over which the mother has no power, and *Erziehung* thus begins with the first intake of breath, but not before. Neither a mother’s dreams, nor her hopes, nor her fluctuating emotions while pregnant, have the power to determine her future child, an idea much debated at the time. A mother’s power to spoil her unborn baby with strong emotions or bad dreams, or after birth, with sour milk, was the subject of intense debate during this time period.<sup>137</sup> This idea is succinctly summarized with Koller’s formulation that “auf rein körperlichen Bahnen könne nichts Geistiges vermittelt werden,”<sup>138</sup> an idea distinctly contrasting Pestalozzi’s contention that breastfeeding is our introduction to human morality. Jean Paul’s argument strengthens the notion of the singularity of each new baby by denying even its mother control over any innate personal

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*Frau von der Reformation zur Romantik: Die Situation der Frau vor dem Hintergrund der Literatur- und Sozialgeschichte*, ed. Barbara Becker-Cantarino (Bonn, 1980): 217-242.

<sup>136</sup> Although Jean Paul calls this section on the mother’s inability to influence her child’s character pre-natally an *Abschweifung*, I argue that it is an intrinsic part of his argument that babies, too, are unique individuals.

<sup>137</sup> Dangel-Pelloquin, 338-339: She argues that Jean Paul devalues any instance in which a mother is biologically superior to a father, such as in breastfeeding. Fathers are supposed to insert themselves into the realm of physical care even for very young babies, making the mother’s relationship with the baby neither exclusive nor character-determining. On the other hand, Jean Paul does recognize that normally, “die Erziehung der ersten Hälfte des ersten Leben-Jahrzehends ist - schon durch den Körper - in Mutterhand gelegt” (678).

<sup>138</sup> Koller, 243.

qualities. His argument also subverts the pliant tone of the dedication to Queen Caroline, mother of the nation. Not even the mother can trespass the sanctity of individuation that is a human birthright, and which leads to the free person held as an ideal since the Enlightenment, an idea with its own political implications.

In this sense, Jean Paul's images of the mother in her family and in her nation are both consistent with and in contrast to common images of mothers in his historical context, and perhaps more consciously class-bound than Dangel-Pelloquin and other scholars have argued. As I have argued in previous chapters, images and discourse that fixed women in the role of bourgeois housewife, or of mother overseeing her children's upbringing and educations, increased tremendously in the period between the French Revolution and the Wars of Liberation. As I demonstrated at the beginning of this chapter, pacifism and a reaction against the wars of Napoleon were among Jean Paul's greatest motivations for writing this book. One must therefore distinguish between his images and rhetoric about women and the ideas about femininity and those images and discourse about it that became increasingly popular as the German-speaking lands united in opposition to the French. His work must again be understood against that material background he encountered.

The political historian Karen Hagemann has demonstrated that the increased rhetoric and debate regarding men's and women's roles in the modern German states around 1800 was intimately linked to the need to unify people as citizens for the military

endeavor of defending against Napoleon.<sup>139</sup> She argues that a new model of man as citizen ready to bear arms for the state emerged in the journalism, poetry, sermons and songs of the period from 1792 to 1815. Parallel to that image arose a popular image of the German woman or mother:

...women's place in the 'German nation' was also more precisely defined and an image of 'German femininity' elaborated discursively as part of the intense efforts at redefining gender differences that had been underway since the late eighteenth century...which established the hierarchy of political power relations between the sexes and defined at once universal and complementary national 'sex-specific characters' from which allegedly 'natural' gender-specific spheres of activity were derived was embedded in the process of shaping Prussia and Germany into a 'valorous' nation.<sup>140</sup>

This process of establishing a new feminine character was, according to Hagemann, specifically linked to the need for a militarized notion of men as defenders of the fatherland in the wake of Napoleon. German femininity, increasingly polarized in the new nineteenth century, therefore patriotically supported the new nation by making the home-school into a "nursery of the nation," an incubator for a new public sphere, teaching German language, German morals, and German discipline to a new generation of citizens ready to serve their country against the rising military threats of other nation-

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<sup>139</sup> Karen Hagemann, "A Valorous *Volk* Family: the Nation, the Military, and the Gender Order in Prussia in the Time of the Anti-Napoleonic Wars, 1806-15," *Gendered Nations* (Oxford: Berg, 2000) 179-205.

<sup>140</sup> Hagemann, 191. See also 195, regarding the period from 1806 and 1815, the time, therefore, spanning *Levana's* first and second editions, when "two historical processes became inextricably linked: the construction of the basic pattern of the modern myth of the German 'nation,' and the basic structures of a new hierarchal and complementary gender order that corresponded to the altered political and military requirements of the emerging system of nation states and, for the first time, claimed validity across estate lines."

sates.<sup>141</sup> As manly valor and the willingness to bear arms in defense of the fatherland became important gender markers for good German fathers, morality and willingness to fulfill the duties of the housewife role became the traits of the exemplary German woman.

If this was indeed the national norm (which, given regional differences, may not have been the case without further modification), Jean Paul clearly wanted the next generation of Germans to acquire such strengths, but without the militarized rhetoric or defense purposes Hagemann describes. Whereas she finds that, in the main, “women’s patriotic engagement was not permitted to challenge the model of the hierarchical and complementary gender order,”<sup>142</sup> Jean Paul’s belief in the sanctity of the individual allowed, even demanded, that women challenge that order even within the marriage relationship, and found that that challenge served the developing nation. The polarity of the sexes that Jean Paul envisions thus leads not to an uneven but fixed hierarchy, but rather to a state of necessary and constantly re-negotiated assertions of position between men and women. Scholars such as Ann Taylor Allen, who claim that *Levana* affirmed a static man/woman, public/private dichotomy and thus a value-laden hierarchy,<sup>143</sup> thus emphasize only one aspect, and perhaps the lesser one, of Jean Paul’s dual argument. They do not recognize the development, both personal and public, that is to grow out of the conflicts that opposition produces. Dangel-Pelloquin’s elaborates in this context that,

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<sup>141</sup> Hagemann, 192.

<sup>142</sup> Hagemann, 193.

<sup>143</sup> Allen, 29.

“mit der Elternschaft als einer literarisch noch wenig thematisierten möglichen Fortsetzung von Liebe und Ehe gerät das Geschlechterverhältnis im pädagogischen Text der “Erziehlehre” in eine neue Konstellation. Sie profiliert das dialogische Moment,” that is, exchange of values and roles that spousal argumentativeness should negotiate:

Jean Paul kehrt den aufklärerischen Pädagogiken mit ihren streng festgelegten Rollenzuschreibungen den Rücken und operiert mit einer Geschlechtermischung in der Erziehung und mit einem prinzipiell möglichen Geschlechterwechsel der Eltern, einer Art *gender-crossing* in der Erziehung. (325)

What both scholars overlook, perhaps, is that Jean Paul’s own metaphors explain that children become adults and citizens as they experience both masculine and feminine influences, for only between the two, “ruht und schiffet das Kind, wie am Zusammenflusse zweier Ströme” (679). Just as children remake their social strata on the playground in an ongoing manner, so too must husbands and wives in the household – roles which will necessarily change in each generation, and must be allowed to do so.

### **Women as Partners and Provocation: Modern Marriage and Child Rearing**

As I have argued here, *Levana* is a child-raising treatise that conceives of male-female relationships as ongoing projects needing constant preservation, in contrast to Pestalozzi’s depiction of the mother-child dyad relatively isolated from other intervening relationships. In Jean Paul’s depiction of marriages after children, the presence of children and the responsibility (especially) women feel towards them re-structures the

spousal relationship. Many points in the text also emphasize the oppositional nature of the sexes, especially as it relates to attitudes toward children.<sup>144</sup> This is why, for example, Jean Paul warns newlywed husbands to establish an authority over their wives within the first year of marriage, before the first baby is born, for “jetzo ist sie nämlich noch gläubig, künftig aber so ungehorsam als möglich.” The narrator recalls instances in which, often even before the birth of a second baby, and certainly by the fourth, “hob das diätische Küchen-Latein und medizinische Patois der Weiber die Regierung an” (both 643). Motherhood somehow lends women a confidence and authority that their status as wives did not. The evolution of the family thus means that, regardless of the “Uminterpretation der Vaterrolle von der Wahrnehmung väterlicher Gewalt zur zärtlichen Liebe, die sich bereits in aufklärerischen Schriften ankündigt” (Dangel-Pelloquin, 324), mothers no longer submissively accept the interference of husbands, either arbitrary or well-reasoned.

But did wives, in fact, ever submissively accept the interference of husbands, or do newlyweds merely put on a better show? These instructions occur during the *Anhang zum dritten Bruchstücke*, a humorous letter to a young friend giving advice with what Koller calls “ans Komische grenzenden Detailfreude” (248). The humor undercuts the serious and righteous tone one would expect from a statement of authority, allowing it to

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<sup>144</sup> Koller, 243ff., relates the differences between men and women in their approach to children’s education that the narrator describes to their fundamentally different relationships to language, noting that women’s language is, according to the narrator, both exaggerated and immoderate, capable of killing any natural feeling the listener could have toward the object discussed, and peculiarly able to connect to both the pre-linguistic and pre-school child, bestowing love and affection as well as self-expression.

be read ironically. The fact that the advice husbands give wives extends “selbst noch auf Gebieten wie die Ernährung und Körperpflege des Kleinkindes,” exaggerates the advice-giving capacity of men, and leads to the point “wo man sich zu fragen beginnt, wo eigentlich fundierte Kenntnis aufhört und männliche Besserwisserei beginnt,” according to Koller (248). Such description fits the complaints of the fictional character Madame Jacqueline, referred to above, who recalls her husband’s “männliche Besserwisserei,” as “lächerliche Pedanterei,” and describes “mit welchen Grillen oft die Eheväter nach 9 oder 10 Flittermonaten auftrete” (676). She mocks her husband’s diction, “ich spreche als gute Ehefrau ihm seine eigentümliche Sprache nach” (675),<sup>145</sup> demonstrating that wives don’t necessarily receive the authoritative guidance husbands give in the way that critics who read without an humorous or ironic understanding of husbandly authority or spousal polarity overlook. The image of Madame Jacqueline therefore demonstrates that while perhaps appearing to conform to the wishes of their husbands or educators, women in fact actively resist intimate domination by self-righteous male authority.

*Levana*’s formal idiosyncrasies mirror the message the image of a pedantic, know-it-all husband convey: “Der besserwisserische Ton des Vaters oder Verfassers erfährt ebensooft eine komische Brechung, die den belehrenden Eifer alsbald wieder zunichte macht...” asserts Dangel-Pelloquin, who finds in the discursive structure of the work a mirror of its dialogic content. She explains that a number of narrative techniques,

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<sup>145</sup> Koller provides a comprehensive analysis of the particularities of men’s and mothers’ speech, their linguistic differences, and their related contributions to children’s development, in his book.

such as direct address, readers' responses, and letters, some perhaps experienced by the modern reader as digressive, as explained above, are compositional methods for keeping the reader, above all a mother, engaged and in dialogue.<sup>146</sup> The form of the work, as discussed earlier, thus strengthens and affirms the philosophy that is its content.

Jean Paul's humor works to recognize a situation that was, perhaps, already an unspoken social norm. Since the Enlightenment, the father's role in the family had evolved from being merely the commanding, or "gesetzgebende Gewalt" (679), as his image softened into one of loving or patient benefactor.<sup>147</sup> The father shifts his space of operation and inserts himself into the domestic arena alongside the mother, whose authority had previously been merely "die ausübende" (679), but who might have enjoyed a more or less exclusive relationship with her infant. Even if, in the nuclear family developing at the outset of the nineteenth century, the father still ordains and the mother implements, as the executive branch of a family legislated by the male head, what is historically new in *Levana* is that the father's power is no longer simply magisterial. Rather, he must now use reason to legitimate his requests against the mother's wishes, in an open recognition of two, often-competing interests. And according to Madame Jacqueline, neither does he really check after the completion of his requests or punish transgression. In fact, the primary responsibility a father has in a family with very young

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<sup>146</sup> Dangel-Pelloquin, 343.

<sup>147</sup> Of course, this image is not pre-eminent in the *Sturm und Drang* works of the previous generation. Rather, one should look to the depiction of fathers in works such as *Nathan der Weise*. Notably, however, effective mothers do not figure prominently in Lessing's works.

children is, according to Jean Paul, “zu allererst: seine Frau mehr lieben und belohnen... der Mann bleibe nur der Liebhaber seiner Gattin” (679).

The elevation of status the mother has experienced in the popular imagery of the German housewife Karin Hagemann described thus brings with it a different kind of role-equity in Jean Paul, especially in his assertion that a mother is first and foremost a *Mensch*, a citizen of a family and a society, or nation-state. Jean Paul does not follow the later norm of attributing public action to the male, and the private domestic sphere to the female, but rather describes a more confusing world in which mothers and fathers share the demands of establishing and practicing authority. As the scholar Elsbeth Dangel-Pelloquin explains, this leads to conflict in the household:

herrscht dagegen eine scharfe Differenz der Geschlechter vor, die sich im Ehealltag zum Geschlechterkampf ausweitet. Dieser Kampf beruht vordergründig auf konträren Konzepten der Ehe... aber in der Entgegensetzung treibt eine dialogische Dynamik hervor, die in einer bis dahin unerreichten und vielleicht bis heute unübertroffenen Radikalität die Frage nach der gegenseitigen Anerkennung und der Gleichheit der Geschlechter stellt.<sup>148</sup>

The concerns of the present study go beyond those of Dangel-Pelloquin, however, who does not link the household dynamic to an understanding of time and space between the generations required for the development of the republican nation-state. The present study argues that intra-household conflict mirrors the relationships between persons that the developing nation-state requires, just as children’s play among peers does.

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<sup>148</sup> Dangel Pelloquin, 24.

It is crucial to note that Jean Paul treats marriage and family both as a social form and a moral ideal. Marriage as an institution for raising children, or parenthood as the (at that time nearly unavoidable) result of the love relationship, pushes gender relations to a new social instability, a “dialogische Dynamik” marked both by an intensified need to work together towards moral and educational goals within the social fabric of the nation, and polarized sex-characteristics and role obligations to the family and the state.

It is precisely with the birth of children, and the constant flexibility and responsiveness that their care demands, that this dynamic arises, according to Dangel-Pelloquin:

Am Kind erprobt sich die Gleichheitssemantik zwischen den Geschlechtern in einer Auseinandersetzung, wie sie bereits im *Siebenkäs* angelegt ist... gewinnt der Geschlechterkampf in der *Levana* eine neue partnerschaftliche Qualität, die ihn zwar nicht harmonischer werden läßt, die aber im Kampf um den Einsatz - das Kind - die rein destruktive Ebene des Romans verläßt und eine gegengeschlechtliche Zusammenarbeit sucht. Dabei werden insgeheim auch die Geschlechterrollen neu verteilt. Spannend wird die Auseinandersetzung vor allem durch die doppelte Ebene, auf der sie ausgetragen wird: argumentativ innerhalb des Textes und appellativ zwischen dem Verfasser und allen Müttern, an die er sich richtet.

For either the husband or the educator-expert to simply demand obedience is no longer tenable, therefore, once women are the family’s educators and the “Patois der Weiber,” or “Redekünsten der Weiber” (594), acquires authority, once more lending women’s work a public function. Once again, the metaphor of family as the nursery to the nation applies,

and can be refined to show that the marriage is a nation-state in miniature, requiring freely developing individuals within its boundaries if the whole is to prosper.

Jean Paul's image of the instability of male-female relationships foreshadows the "imagology of the sexes" Karin Hagl-Catling develops in her analysis of Grillparzer. She, too, emphasizes the determining role that opposition or contradiction (*Gegensatz*), especially as experienced by women, plays in refining relationships. In regards to Grillparzer's female characters, she claims that:

Der erlebte/erlittene Gegensatz zwischen gesellschaftlichem Rollenangebot und weiblicher Persönlichkeit, zwischen patriarchalischem Machtanspruch und emotionaler Bindung führt zu Krisen, die sich - je nach Lebensumständen und Situation variierend - in Identitätsproblemen und charakterlichen Widersprüchlichkeiten bis zu hysterischen Ausbrüchen der Protagonistinnen offenbaren.<sup>149</sup>

Jean Paul presents no hysterical female characters in *Levana*, and doesn't refer to any anecdotally, either. He does, however, seem to recognize the discrepancies and inconsistencies characterizing many women's real lives, however. Hagl-Catling locates these discrepancies in the difference between "imaginierte Weiblichkeitsbilder," (23) which are often "von der Authentizität weit entferntes Bild eines Geschlechtscharakters," (51) and most women's lived experiences, which she characterizes as "durch die Individuation immer mit einer Tendenz zur Unüberschaubarkeit und Desorientierung sowie Vielheit und Polyvalenz verbunden" (51). This disorientation, like the disorientation Jean Paul locates in the marriage relationship after the birth of the first

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<sup>149</sup> Hagl-Catling, Karin, *Für eine Imagologie der Geschlechter: Franz Grillparzers Frauenbild im Wierspruch*, (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1997) 22.

child, is the space for new insight, for finetuning a pre-existing image: “Denn die mit der männlichen Krise notwendigerweise verbundene Desorientierung bietet Frauen die Chance für eine persönliche Subjektivität und läßt Spielraum für beide Geschlechter, ihre Positionen im Gespräch neu zu bestimmen” (64). The emphasis here is on the notion of *Spielraum*, of an inherently destabilized space of open possibility and undetermined meaning which both sexes seek to determine in dialogue. It is out of this process of determining meaning that growth, for the spouses, their children, and the state they are building, arises. Recall, too, that disorientation is a compositional theme guiding the structure of *Levana*, and that the humor and digression characterizing its formal qualities create the *Spielraum* the reader (often a mother) uses to construe her own meaning.

### **Equality and Conflict, at Home and Away**

The inviolable value of each individual, and ongoing power struggle between equally ranked spouses within the private space, presupposes a radical equality between persons that implicates both the state and the household, again in a distinctive fashion, and different than either Rousseau or Pestalozzi. The equality Jean Paul idealizes culminates in an impossible slogan, one that “mit einem Schlag eine hierarchische Ordnung der Geschlechter revoziert,” splitting what theorists today speak of as a mother-child dyad into an unworkable triadic structure of potentiall dueling interests:<sup>150</sup> “Mütter, seid Väter! möchte man zurufen, und: Väter, seid Mütter! - Denn nur beide Geschlechter

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<sup>150</sup> Dangel-Pelloquin, 325, 338.

vollenden das Menschengeschlecht” (679), Jean Paul admonishes. With this maxim he proclaims the kind of revolutionary equality that must govern even the most personal of relationships if the next generation is to establish a model nation or renew Europe.

This “Umkehrformel” is, however, more radical than the fictional androgyny or gender transcendence of Romantic novels and novellas, in which usually the female characters are supposed to take on masculine characteristics of self-sufficiency and intellectual engagement.<sup>151</sup> Jean Paul, in contrast to his Romantic colleagues who propose a complementary yet separate vision of male and female, wants men to become socially, not physically, more feminine, especially in their ability to show love. Fathers are to make a “zärtlichen Anwendung zu den Kindern, die dann sogar eindeutig weiblich-mütterliches Gepräge einnimmt,” according to Dangel-Pelloquin. Dangel-Pelloquin has shown the difficult, seemingly inevitable consequence, the continuing spousal conflict, of role reversal in her analysis. Jean Paul nonetheless argues the necessity of a new attitude mothers, and especially fathers, must have toward child-raising, claiming that only it insures that “das heimliche häusliche Wort, das der Vater seinen Kindern sagt, wird nicht vernommen von der Zeit; aber wie in Schallgewölben wird es an dem fernen Ende laut und von der Nachwelt gehört” (532). The presence of a succeeding generation, therefore, and not the male-female hierarchy, pushes the father to influence the future,

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<sup>151</sup> This tendency of Romantic literature to seek androgyny mostly in the ideal of women becoming more like men than in men acquiring a new femininity has been noted by many scholars. This reference to the problematic is taken from Dangel-Pelloquin, 325. In calling on fathers to be more like mothers, Jean Paul is specifically asking men to be more feminine in a social, not biological sense.

just as caring for that next generation allows women the opportunity to shape and build the future of their nation.

The reshaping of a marriage through dialogue and competing priorities thus mirrors and foreshadows the dialogue between the generations and between the estates that will occur to re-shape the nation and, paradoxically, lead to peace in Europe. It is a microcosm of the public dialogue, or strategic negotiations, that children engage in among themselves, and that adults later practice as citizens. Jean Paul's depiction of mothers is therefore not only an essentialist image, but also a social-political redefinition of women's estate as an active principle in the public sphere needed in a new nation, and exemplary for all modern, European nations. This thesis is in marked contrast to Rousseau's essentializing tendencies, and his insistence that women were to please, but not challenge, men – a model that granted women no role in the creation of nations, and no real chance to create the future. Instead, Jean Paul celebrates the conflict between the sexes he sees around it, locating within it room for growth, both for the young child and for the spouses involved. He does not shy away from the contradictions and inconsistencies informing images of mothers as they were represented in art, society and the family, because they, too, envelope space for re-writing and re-forming an ideology of mothers and of women. Jean Paul's concept of marriage and the family is thus an evolving nation in miniature, "the smallest state in the state" (536), rather than the corrupting society Rousseau imagined or the more ossified village Pestalozzi depicted. A new awareness of the sanctity of the individual and the value of dissimilar speakers in

creating and reproducing a culture, especially with the unparalleled possibilities of the print medium, grants mothers and their children the space to participate in the social and political exchange that perhaps strains families, but builds nations.

## Chapter Four: Caroline and Dorothea Schlegel as Romantic Mothers

This chapter reexamines the idealistic images of mothers, and the power of their love, Pestalozzi and Jean Paul made, placing these representations in the context of the words and lives of two famous mothers of the Romantic era: Caroline and Dorothea Schlegel, wives of Friedrich and August Wilhelm Schlegel.<sup>152</sup> These two women negotiated and redefined the ideology of motherhood they encountered as they participated in reinventing German society. In the introduction I reminded readers that mothers contribute to a maternal culture as well as respond to cultural imperatives, and that history is comprised of the decisions of many individuals confronted with complex situations and imperfect alternatives. The two mothers under investigation here also not only inherited, but also refined the ideologies and norms of the Romantic era. As we shall see, then, their words and acts not only document knowledge of the developing ideology of motherhood, but also awareness of how that ideology could be used or

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<sup>152</sup> I cite quotes from the letters of these two women according to the dates they were written, so that they can be found in any of the sources listed in the bibliography. I took quotes from Dorothea Veit Schlegel's letters from the Kraus reprint of the collected correspondence with the Paulus family. I refer to her here by both names, or use whichever she used during the time under discussion.

Caroline Schlegel (1763 – 1809), whose quotes come mostly from Waitz's edition, unless otherwise noted, has a more complicated set of names, reflecting her more complicated personal history. Again, I try to refer to her by whichever name, Bodmer, Schlegel, or Schelling, she used during the period being discussed. I have copied the spelling used by both women.

refuted, to argue for various identity positions, some very traditional and others appropriate to a more progressive image of woman in the public sphere.

Dorothea Schlegel (1764 – 1839) was born Brendel Mendelssohn, the daughter of the celebrated philosopher Moses Mendelssohn. She became Brendel Veit when she married in 1783, but began calling herself Dorothea before meeting Friedrich Schlegel in 1797. Her divorce from Veit was declared in 1799, but she did not become Dorothea Schlegel until 1804, when she converted to Christianity and married Friedrich Schlegel. She later followed him to Cologne, but joined her grown sons, painters in the Nazarene school, in Rome while he worked in Vienna. She worked alongside him throughout their union and survived him after his death.

Caroline Schlegel Schelling was born Michaelis, daughter of a renowned professor. She married a family friend, Franz Böhmer in 1784 and bore two daughters, one who died as a toddler, and a son, born shortly after her husband's death in 1788, who died in infancy. As Caroline Böhmer she made the acquaintance of both Schlegel brothers before moving to Mainz, before the city was proclaimed a republic, and Prussia and France both marched to "defend" the city. During the siege of Mainz she became pregnant by a French army officer (who later offered either to marry her or to adopt the baby when he learned of it), and was imprisoned by the Prussians as a hostage. She secured poison from August Wilhelm Schlegel to commit suicide before her pregnancy became known, to protect her daughter from the scandal, but was ransomed by her brother in time. The Schlegels secured her secrecy, safety, and Baptism for her fourth

baby, who was entrusted to the care of foster parents in infancy, until she could re-emerge as a widow and claim him publicly. He died in their care, however, and she then married Schlegel as a refuge for herself and her remaining daughter, intending to be his helpmate in his literary work. As Caroline Schlegel, she later fell in love with the philosopher Schelling, and agreed to a divorce from Schlegel after the death of her daughter, who had apparently been a central figure in the household and circle of friends, treated like a true daughter and niece by her famous stepfather and uncle, and included in discussions and outings by the entire circle of friends. After the divorce, she married the illustrious philosopher Schelling in 1803, and lived with him as a professor's wife and editor until her death six years later.

As we have seen, Pestalozzi and Jean Paul argued that mothers determined the future and created new states through their love for their children. Yet could these forward-looking, even radical and sometimes feminist, theories actually represent, or resonate with, mothers of their day? More specifically, can the abstract doctrines of two pedagogues be compared in any productive way to the work done by Caroline and Dorothea Schlegel, and to the images they painted of themselves? As central members of the Jena circle of Romantic writers and philosophers, these women and their families and friends were intimately engaged in rethinking social and familial hierarchies as Pestalozzi and Jean Paul. The contributions that Caroline (Schlegel, later Schelling) and Dorothea (Veit, later Schlegel) made to the formulation of a Romantic ideology in their roles as helpmates and muses has been well documented:

Die Aufklärung hatte das Individuum entdeckt. Und nun, in der beginnenden Romantik, entdeckten Individuen, die sich gegen die Alleinherrschaft der Vernunft auflehnten, die Ambivalenz ihres Geschlechts, menschliche Vielschichtigkeit und Weite, den Reichtum des Gefühls. Friedrichs Frauen- und Menschenbild wurde von seinen Freunden mitbestimmt und wirkte wiederu zurück au diese. Den stärksten Einfluß darauf hatten Dorothea Veit und Caroline Schlegel; in ihrem Fühlen und Denken, so sah es Friedrich, lebten Ideen der Antike wieder auf.<sup>153</sup>

What has received much less attention, however, is the understanding that Caroline and Dorothea contributed to an emerging Romantic world-view as mothers, inhabiting to greater or lesser degrees, the roles and functions in society about which Jean Paul and Pestalozzi theorized. That is, even the most cursory look at their own writings demonstrates their active negotiation of the space between traditional, external forces that prescribed roles for them and the more progressive ones they claimed for themselves.

Despite growing interest in their literary production, these women's work as mothers, raising and educating the next generation, has not been studied as an active contribution to the Romantic agenda, unlike their programmatically formulated friendships, their assistance as editors and copyists, and their warmth and sociability in communal exchange of ideas. Scholars have elaborated on their contributions to the Romantic school in the form of "geistige Kultur, frauliche Entschiedenheit, Attraktivität und menschliche Wärme Carolines," qualities that do their part to make "ihr Haus das Zentrum frühromantischer Gemeinsamkeit," and the "ersten Gruppenbildung in der

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<sup>153</sup> Carola Stern, *"Ich möchte mir Flügel wünschen": Das Leben der Dorothea Schlegel*, (Reinbek bei Hamberg: Rowohlt, 2000) 130-131.

deutschen romantischen Literatur.”<sup>154</sup> They have not, however, appreciated that her maternal needs, desires, and decisions also contributed to this “center of early Romantic communiality” and helped configure this “first group constellation.”

Although such personal qualities have been enumerated and commented on as indirectly facilitating the emergence of the Romantic agenda, then, a specific style of mothering has not yet been seen as important documentation of the newly ordered consciousness and system of equalities the Schlegel circle sought to realize. A style or approach to mothering within the Romantic program has not been investigated, despite widespread scholarly acceptance that romantic poets and writers emphasized images of women as mothers. James Albisetti explains that “members of the romantic movement tended to devote more attention to, and put a higher value on, woman’s role as mother,”<sup>155</sup> than earlier or idealist philosophers did. Scholars generally agree with Carola Stern, Dorothea’s biographer, that “im Unterschied zu den Aufklärern, die nichts von gelehrten Frauenzimmern wissen wollten, riet Friedrich Schlegel den Frauen, ihre Scheu vor Kunst und Wissenschaft, vor jeglicher Gelehrsamkeit zu überwinden und sich geistig auszubilden.”<sup>156</sup> They do not emphasize strongly enough, however, that these educated women participated in the movement not only as muses and lovers, but as the next generation’s mothers and as authoritative household leaders.

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<sup>154</sup> Sigrid Damm *Caroline Schlegel-Schelling: Die Kunst zu Leben* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1997) 56.

<sup>155</sup> James Albisetti, *Schooling German Girls and Women: Secondary and Higher Education in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988) 4-5.

<sup>156</sup> Stern, 109.

Yet clearly, the Romantic program of reordering conventional hierarchies included reordering the gender hierarchy, reformulating the nuclear family and inspiring a national consciousness -- all work that Pestalozzi and Jean Paul specifically entrusted to mothers. In consequence, we may posit these two women as living at the intersection of two streams of early Romantic ideology (one pedagogical, one aesthetic-national), ideologies that made, for the most part, unachievable demands on mothers. The Romantic portrayal of mothers that both Pestalozzi and Jean Paul espoused is surely as illusory in its way as the Romantic portrayal of women Friedrich Schlegel authored.

Scholars have generally preferred to concentrate on the aesthetic side of these depictions. For example, Karin Hagl-Catling's analysis concedes that the inherent contradictions in the idealized Romantic image of women demanded an unusually strong personality. Who, after all, could embody "das romantische Bild einer Frau, die träumend das Universum begreifen und die Grenzen zwischen Bewußtem und Unbewußtem überschreiten möchte und darüber hinaus auch noch die humanistischen Ideale von Güte und Demut darstellt,"<sup>157</sup> that Friedrich Schlegel postulated. Such assessments parallel Pestalozzi's imperative that mothers personify fraternal love and the divine presence, and Jean Paul's claim that mothers are inherently able to educate humanely, since women have nothing more to develop than the purely human. As lovely as these ideas are, they are surely impossible tasks, even when one doesn't have to diaper or feed squalling infants. The attempts to embody transcendental ideals, to harmonize

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<sup>157</sup> Hagl-Catling, 128.

oppositions and expand margins would lead to never-ending psychological crises requiring continual transformative thinking.<sup>158</sup> Only women who consciously appropriated the language of both ideologies could mold those arguments in their constructions of both a private/maternal and a public/intellectual self-identity.

Caroline and Dorothea Schlegel are thus two figures particularly appropriate for investigating the intersection of early Romantic maternal imagery and ideology with daily practices that hope to express a new type of Romantic mother for a renewed Germany. When investigated alongside the two texts of the previous chapters, we see that these women both personified and contradicted the images of the mother presented by our two progressive and popular theorists, and that they represented their own labors in terms that sometimes echo these theoretical texts without undue piety to either traditional or innovative ideologies.

In what follows, I will first summarize the challenge of symbolic authority that the pedagogic texts I have addressed may have meant for the women involved, and then I will move on to examples from their own biographies and correspondence to take their own words as evidence of their indirect negotiations with the ideologies of their day. Reading the previous theoretical images against actual practice and representations will show how theory and practice work together to inform and animate literary production. This comparison will, in addition, allow me some conclusions about the relation between

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<sup>158</sup> See also Hagl-Catling, who claims that this process was most difficult for middle class women, who were more subject to maternal prescriptions than other women, 90ff.

individual women's subject positions and the real social structures and "imagined community" they place themselves in. The re-ordered social hierarchies of the pedagogical texts appear, when compared to women's own descriptions of their opportunities, constrictions, or activities, utopian and one dimensional.

This presentation will, by necessity, be fragmentary, but by juxtaposing these women's practices with the theories purportedly framing their lives, we can recover tensions in the social field that Romanticism both responded to and caused. Additionally, this discussion will open out the field of social practice for scholarly investigation.

### **Old Tropes for Modern Mothers: Empowerment but not Power**

As we have seen, neither pedagogue refuted the essential, or mythologized vision of mothers, or their fundamentally domestic status, that marks the social philosophy of the era, from the Enlightenment on. Rather, they employed just such clichéd views of women as moral, domestic, and maternal, even as they put such commonly accepted notions to radical new purposes. Pestalozzi and Jean Paul agreed with, and even furthered, the essentially conservative notion that women are defined almost solely by their maternity, that the qualities of womanliness, or femininity, as defined by a previous generation, coalesced into a way of being that made childbearing and childcare women's almost exclusive purpose. On one level, their use of tropes and topoi of maternity echoed the ways the terms "nature" and "virtue" functioned in the French theory of Republican motherhood, according to Joan Landes. She claims that these topoi express "an

ambivalent quality in republican discourse. They functioned to preserve difference and hence guarantee sexual inequality, even as they were yoked to a universalist, egalitarian protest.”<sup>159</sup> This, too, is the dual nature of emerging maternal imagery as already discussed in the previous chapter.

Jean Paul and Pestalozzi made maternal difference, or exclusivity, the basis for progressive, perhaps radical, arguments that women have a special or political role to play in the creation of a new state and new interpersonal dynamics among national subjects. Adherence to conventionally articulated notions of women's essence could in this way allow a theorist to support claims for an unconventional argument on what women were to achieve in public and private life. Thus Jean Paul and Pestalozzi agreed that virtuous mothering practices contribute to a new kind of state. They employed stereotypical images, for example of the near-saintly village spinner or the frenchified upper-middle class coquette, to show that in public life, traditionally imagined child-centered mothers necessarily foster peaceful and egalitarian relations between nations and between the estates. Being a mother of the new, dedicated-housewife sort, would thus help reform oppressive monarchies, and increase peace in Europe. In this sense, ideal German or European mothers were not to be domestic or housebound only, but philosophically and actively connected to the community around them.

These assumptions had an established history. Since at least Rousseau or the Enlightenment, women were thought to contribute to the nation-state through their

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<sup>159</sup> Landes,123.

influence on the next generation, who could be taught civic consciousness and moral rectitude along with their letters, numbers, and domestic or commercial arts. Women's work for the nation was thus fundamentally linked to their function as mothers as Europe's nations made the transition between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, from more limited communities into more modern societies. Prior to Jean Paul and Pestalozzi, women lent their efforts to building a new nation not so much through their own civic activity and discourse or republican philosophy, but through the attitudes and virtues their children would eventually acquire. With the two treatises examined in this work, however, we see that Pestalozzi and Jean Paul employ this already conventional rhetoric to much more radical ends: to advocate a modern society that *educates* and eventually *employs* girls and women, grants wives power in the spousal relationship, elevates the status of children in the household, and allows women access to civic discourse. Their theories and methods rationalize "womanly essence" into the productive categories of the bourgeois state.

In their creation of a vaguely non-threatening, but nonetheless pointedly political mother out of the earlier European "good mother," Jean Paul and Pestalozzi are implying a particular relationship between mothers and the public sphere. The maternal images in question are in one sense very traditional. Pestalozzi and Jean Paul shared a view, for example, that women's maternal essence was characterized first and foremost by great love, round-the-clock dedication, and the ability for self-sacrifice for one's children. Indeed, women's identity as mothers is so absolute that any other relationships external to

the mother-child dyad were thought to pale in comparison. For Pestalozzi, this love was so great as to constitute the seat of all human morality and our intuition of the divine.

Yet at the same time, this "seat of human morality" was not static. Both writers described mother-love as the true source of women's strength and ability to effect radical change.

When practiced in an educated and dedicated manner, a modern manner, the strength of a mother's love alone could have a revolutionary impact on society, overturning previously proscribed hierarchies in the name of ethics, morality and a new social justice.

This picture is, however, not as clear as later examples of the dedicated housewife-mother cliché would lead us to assume, particularly not for the post-Biedermeier/Jung-Deutschland era. Pestalozzi's fictional Gertrude, of course, participates in village issues and conflicts at all levels and in many places in her village, and his educational method requires mothers to work with their children in all parts of their external environment. Jean Paul wrote for upper- and middle-class women, who sometimes had the means to escape the domestic interior. Jean Paul, of course, mentions the difference between mothers and fathers, and much of his advice is aimed at instructing fathers on how to surreptitiously regain authority in such areas as how the children are to dress, play, eat and drink, and overcome illness. Madame Jacqueline's complaints about her pedantic husband indicate that Jean Paul was well aware that women needed to work around husbands in their mothering practices. Nonetheless, his and Pestalozzi's emphasis remains centered on mothers and their children, declaring

women maternal before all else and instructing them in how to educate without interference from outside the relationship.

In the images drawn by Pestalozzi and Jean Paul, neighbors, in-laws, or even husbands diminish into a sort of support accessory to elevate the status of the mother in her own family and community. In their representations, nothing may interfere with a mother at work raising and educating her children. Jean Paul particularly seems to realize how idealized or fantastical this image is, despite his unwillingness to surrender it.

Not surprisingly, this image of mothers is not borne out by the correspondences of well-known mothers from the era, women who were familiar with advancing literary, aesthetic and philosophical discourse and who participated in formulating much of the new theories on the human person and the relationships between persons that would create a new society. The women under question here knew they were not the elevated, solitary centers of child-rearing Pestalozzi portrays. Rather, these mothers are at pains to imagine and portray themselves within the context of a larger web of relationships, to their husbands, their in-laws, their women friends and members of their social circles. Yet, depending on the estate, location, and personal inclination of the writers, their children don't necessarily dominate their psyches, the content of their letters or the hours of their days. The time required to educate their children often must be scheduled around other, greater demands, not only the idle distractions Jean Paul cites, or the tedious tasks Pestalozzi enumerates. Moreover, the women's correspondence frequently depicts wives

working in concert with their husbands, in a communal endeavor towards shared goals, an image that appears in neither text under discussion in the two previous chapters.

The comparison of such letters with the images fostered within dominant social or ideological discourse gives us a new appreciation for mothers and the work that they do with respect to community building. Not only do they make a distinctive contribution to the nation and to culture, necessary for fostering peace and egalitarian relations between persons, as our two earlier writers claim. A deeper engagement with the correspondence of two mothers engaged in rewriting the rules governing relations between persons, Caroline and Dorothea Schlegel, reveals that if mothers did, indeed, accept the assignment to school children and improve the nation through the force of maternal love, it was only in a moderated and context-dependent way. Their conscious recasting of fairly rigid social scripts into new areas of social practice happened both in the women's mothering practices and in the work they took on at the sides of their husbands, as they sought to realize their husbands' literary and cultural ideals. Their lives and letters further demonstrate that, although mothers can act out of great love, it is not always the child-focused love that either educational theory describes, but rather directed toward their husbands or extramarital attachments and their work-related pursuits. That is, they were well aware of what Jean Paul and Pestalozzi were at pains to cover up: that women were much more than educators of their children and the bedrock of the nation.

Women's documents of the era, then, show a more active, and perhaps at times better theorized, engagement in refashioning women's space in the nation than these

theories about child-rearing and families would have predicted. If anything, as we shall see in the sections that follow, intellectual women saw that rigid scripts for female behavior were indeed being rewritten in texts such as those by Jean Paul and Pestalozzi -- that these new theories did indeed create new spaces for their personalities and social goals. Despite their repeated assertions of motherly self-sacrifice, then, these mothers' self-images and maternal practices did not completely conform to the ideals of either philosopher, not only because daily practice is never ideal, but also because their fundamental notions about mothers' duties differed from those of Jean Paul and Pestalozzi. Their actions and claims therefore focused on the new spaces in between traditions to which Jean Paul and Pestalozzi unavoidably pointed.

In this sense, they upheld a new logic of female agency, even while employing older rhetoric or maternal images. Thus Caroline could claim that moving, unchaperoned, to the political upheaval and social freedom of Mainz could benefit her daughter: "um ihrentwillen allein könnte mich der Entschuß hierher zu gehn schon nicht gereun," she claims, making an old argument, that mothers' decisions are mostly for the sake of their children, support a radically new act. Closer readings of their texts reveal some of the representative negotiations that allowed Caroline and Dorothea to contest the world that cast them as solely mothers.

### **Brendel Veit and Caroline Böhmer: Dependent Wives but Independent Mothers**

Above all, these two women's texts reveal that Jean Paul and Pestalozzi underestimated women's need for, if not the legal or religious realization of, individual autonomy of the sort theorized by Enlightenment philosophers on behalf of men. Only after making a break from the confines of parental rules and reasonable marriages to men who could in no way be considered, according to the standards of the time, unjust or tyrannical with their wives, could intellectually elite (although neither rich nor powerful) mothers like Caroline or Dorothea declare themselves happy. "Göttern und Menschen zum Trotz will ich glücklich seyn"(11. July 1791),<sup>160</sup> proclaimed Caroline, as she sought a way out of her parents' house following her husband's death. Such statements reveal her awareness of both what the world expected, and what she herself had learned to want from her environment.

Nonetheless, the emotional or psychological price women paid for their own emancipation was high. Carola Stern, Dorothea Schlegel's biographer, explains that:

Mendelssohns Tochter emanzipiert sich von den strengen Gesetzen ihrer Religion, dem Urteil der Familie, erhebt sich über alles, was nach den Normen der Mehrheit Moral und Sittlichkeit gebieten, und folgt ihrem Gefühl und ihrem Willen. Das erfordert am Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts eine Kraftanstrengung, von der sich Dorothea nie erholen wird.<sup>161</sup>

Neither Jean Paul nor Pestalozzi foresaw the need for mothers to experience what Caroline characterized as "die Unabhängigkeit, welche ein Bedürfnis für mich geworden

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<sup>160</sup> Waitz, 72.

<sup>161</sup> Stern, 95-96.

ist – nicht als Meubel des Luxus, sondern des Gebrauchs” (6 December 1791).<sup>162</sup> The letters the two women composed indicate the shape that need took and the actions it impelled them to.

Dorothea left us a description of her hard-won independence, for which she risked, as Caroline did, custody of her child, social standing, the love of her family and material security.

...und ich wohne allein, aus diesen Schiffbruch, der mich von einer langen Sklaverei befreit, habe ich nichts gerettet, als eine sehr kleine revenue, von der ich nur äußerst sparsam leben kann, vielen guten, frohen Mut, meinen Philipp, einige Menschen, mein Klavier, und das schöne bureau... recht tief im Herzen das Bedürfnis fühle, alles was mir lieb, was mir wert ist, recht eng um mich zu versammeln und mich meines erworbenen, meines kostbaren Eigentums zu erfreuen, wie ein Freigelassene, die nun erst etwas ihr eigen nennen darf...<sup>163</sup>

For both women, the determination of independence and freedom came from an internal motivation; in the words of Dorothea, “die innere Notwendigkeit hat mich bestimmt, einen Schritt zu tun, der, wie Sie längst denken werden, die öffentlichen Meinung gegen sich hat... ich habe nach meiner Überzeugung gehandelt.”<sup>164</sup> This is both Pestalozzi’s vocabulary, who claimed that the child’s development follows the course of an inner necessity, and the vocabulary of the *Bildungsideal*. Dorothea applies the idea that an individual has to unfold her personality freely to her own, female psyche, as later it

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<sup>162</sup> Waitz, 162. Sigrid Damm provides a chronology of Caroline Böhmer’s desire for personal liberty, and her final abandonment of her goals in order to gain a measure of social acceptability and a stepfather for her two remaining children, 24-25.

<sup>163</sup> Letter to Brinckmann, 2 Feb. 1791, found in Behrens, 335 - 336.

<sup>164</sup> From the same letter.

would be applied to Wilhelm Meister or the narrator of Eichendorff's novel *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts*.

Both women later took on more conventional female roles, as they gave up their sense of hard-won independence and united with men who eventually determined their literary contributions and dominated their schedules. Nonetheless, these women emphasize their need to have once attained a spiritual and personal freedom before they could be satisfied with their situation as wives or as mothers. This need, central to these two women's experience of womanhood and perhaps motherhood, plays no role in Pestalozzi's or Jean Paul's child-centered vision of mothers.

In one sense, women's lives seem to affirm the biological imperative Pestalozzi and Jean Paul declare to be women's primary quality, powerful love and the ability to give of themselves. They use the maternal rhetoric that characterizes Pestalozzi and Jean Paul to defend their social roles, for example, when Caroline Böhmer (Schlegel) employs exemplary terms of traditional maternal self-sacrifice to explain difficult, and unconventional, decisions: "Meine Mutterpflicht war mein Leitfaden, seit meine Kinder keinen Vater mehr hatten – wenn dies Band risse, so würd ich einen ganz andern Weg gehn... Gott gebe, daß es nicht reißt" (29 July 1792).<sup>165</sup> One year early she had confessed to adventurous disposition, but did not yet follow an adventurous path at that time because of concern for the consequences for her daughter: "Die späteren Folgen und

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<sup>165</sup> Waitz, 96.

Rücksichten für andre, für mein Kind, halten mich zurück.”<sup>166</sup> Many of her and Dorothea Schlegel’s choices, however, have consequences that contradict this expressed concern for the children first, demonstrating that a rhetoric of maternal dedication works as a veil to make acceptable decisions otherwise open to social approbation.

Comparing Pestalozzi’s and Jean Paul’s ideals to the lives and words of two real mothers shows then, as Blaffer-Hrdy’s more biological and demographic arguments did, that women don’t always act on their love for their children, or allow that to motivate many of their larger decisions. She demonstrated that, indeed, mothers often risk their children’s well-being or secure futures for emotional security or erotic liaisons. In Dorothea’s case, for instance, we must realize that her divorce meant the possible loss of custody of her two sons:

im 18. Jahrhundert gab es nirgendwo ein Recht, das Müttern bei Scheidungen die Söhne ließ. Nach dem Preußischen Landrecht von 1794 hatte der Vater selbst dann ein Anrecht auf die Söhne, wenn er schuldig geschieden worden war. Auch das Rabbinatsgericht sprach Jonas und Philipp ihrem Vater zu.<sup>167</sup>

In Caroline’s case, her decision to move to Mainz as a widow, to witness the historical founding of a Republic alongside her friends Georg and Therese Forster (later Huber), and to enjoy a love-affair with a French officer, meant that she and her daughter were

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<sup>166</sup> Waitz, 74.

<sup>167</sup> Stern, 99. See also Becker-Cantarino, *Der lange Weg zur Mündigkeit: Frau und Literatur (1500 – 1800)* (Stuttgart: Metzlar Verlag, 1987) 60. Veit retained custody of their older son, Jonas, and granted Brendel (Dorothea) custody of their younger one, Philipp, until his tenth year. The divorce stipulated that she was to send Philipp back to his father if she either remarried or changed religion, making remarriage with Friedrich Schlegel very difficult. They hoped to keep her eventual conversion, and their marriage in Paris, secret from Veit for as long as possible, or at least to stay far enough away that fetching Philipp back to Berlin was practically impossible.

imprisoned, ostracized, banned from her birth-town, and barred from her husband's pension.<sup>168</sup> Whatever educational benefit she claimed to have found for her daughter in Mainz, living there actually put her in danger.

Although both women eventually retained custody of at least one child, their actions expressed desires other than merely maternal ones, and priorities and situations pedagogues such as Jean Paul and Pestalozzi did not recognize. Such sociologically documented behaviors discussed by Blaffer-Hrdy and others, the antithesis of the self-sacrificing love Jean Paul and Pestalozzi depicted, ought now to be brought into a more psychologically nuanced picture of these women, who justify their actions with needs and ideals meant to expand and integrate their own visions of human potential. They, too, felt the need and vision for individual autonomy, even in their already-defined roles as mothers.

A more nuanced picture of Caroline Schlegel (then Böhmer) for example, demonstrates that she did, indeed, choose her own needs first, such as when she compromised her own and her daughter's safety several times during her life, especially by staying in Mainz to care for her friend Georg Forster during its short-lived Republic and the French occupation, by having a relationship with a French officer, and by wanting to keep the baby born of that relationship. Clearly, none of these actions correspond to the vision of a mother focused only on already-living children that

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<sup>168</sup> Although Waitz hoped to veil this period of her life discretely, it is retold in every other text that deals with her. A recommended retelling can be found in "Begegnung mit Caroline," the introduction to Sigrud Damm, ed. *Caroline Schlegel-Schelling: Die Kunst zu leben*, 30-42.

Pestalozzi and Jean Paul articulate. She, however, nonetheless characterized her decisions as expressions of her child-rearing ideals, using vocabulary of civic education to justify her choices. In Mainz she wrote, regarding her only surviving child:

Sie wird unter so viel beßern Eindrücken auferzogen, als es bisher in meiner Gewalt stand ihr zu geben... und dort (bei Forsters) ist sie im Schooß einer Familie, und lernt Achtung gegen Menschen... und um ihrentwillen allein könnte mich der Entschluß hierher zu gehn schon nicht gereun.<sup>169</sup> (29 Juli 1792)

Indeed, Caroline's biographer, Sigrid Damm, claims that, above all, the fear of endangering her children's development provoked her to move out of her mother's house.<sup>170</sup> In this respect then, motivations that our two pedagogues, and others in history, attributed to mothers often played out in when ways those writers couldn't have foreseen, and with unanticipated results. The women clearly knew values very like those of these pedagogues, and understood how to represent themselves using them.

Such choices of vocabulary were anything but naïve. Caroline was well aware, too, of the consequences children face when their mothers bear children outside of legal marriage. She thus prepared to give her own life for her child's safety, if she could not keep her last pregnancy hidden "...so hätte ich zu leben aufgehört, denn meinem armen Kinde war es ja besser ganz Waise zu sein, als eine entehrte Mutter zu haben" (30 July 1793).<sup>171</sup> On the other hand, she was determined to keep her son as her own rather than

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<sup>169</sup> Waitz, 96.

<sup>170</sup> Damm, 24.

<sup>171</sup> Waitz omits this statement from his first edition. See however, Damm 215. In fact, August Wilhelm Schlegel had secured her poison shortly before she was released from prison, which she was prepaed to use should she not be rescued early enough for the pregnancy to remain hidden.

place him for adoption among his father's relatives. She declined his father's offer of marriage or of adoption, hoping to build a family comprised only of herself and her two children. She enjoyed her new baby, seemingly without shame or regret:

Mir ist sehr wohl. Mein Leben ist mir wieder so lieb. Die glückliche ehrenvolle Mutter kann kein reineres Entzücken fühlen, wenn sie sich ihrer Familie gerettet und sie nun vermehrt sieht als ich, da mein Kind geboren war und ich mich gleich wohl genug befand, um doch die Erhaltung meiner Kräfte wahren zu dürfen...Ist das nicht wunderbar und Gnade des Himmels... wie gut ists, daß ich den Ausgang abgewartet habe, und wenn ich die Folge vor mir sehe – kann ich den Ursprung bereun?<sup>172</sup>  
(9 December 1793)

Yet that a mother alone with her two children could feel her family was complete, without seeking the anchoring presence of a husband as head of household, would have expanded social possibilities for the German nation, as it would have created the type of child-centered space of maternal affect Pestalozzi seemed to describe. In this respect, she could have served as a model for the new type of mother he envisioned: a woman alone with her children, mediating the external world for them while schooling them and imparting a specifically feminine morality.

Social pressures were, however, against the exclusivity of the mother-child dyad that Caroline referred her actions to (in this case with two children), and against a mother's right to love and care for her baby born outside of a legal marriage. Practically speaking, she could make claims to her own son only if she had a husband, and was

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<sup>172</sup> Damm, 222. This, too, does not appear in Waitz's first edition, in which he still hid the existence of an out-of-wedlock baby from the reading public. On the fifth of December she had written Friedrich Schlegel that the baby "had his eyes wide open – is pretty and quiet" (my translation), a letter Waitz also deletes (Damm, 220).

forced to sacrifice either her hard-won independence or any hope for a normal motherhood with her new baby. From her prison outside of Mainz she laments

Meine Existenz in Deutschland ist hin. Es gibt keinen Mann, von dem ich noch abhängig wär, oder ihn genug liebte, um ihn schonen zu wollen...  
Meine sehr entschiedene instinktmäßige Neigung zur Unabhängigkeit ließ mirs nie zu, meine Gewalt über irgend einen andern nutzen zu wollen...  
Ich bin nun isoliert in der Welt...<sup>173</sup> (15 June 1793).

Nonetheless she is, “aber noch Mutter, und als solche will ich mich zu erhalten und zu retten suchen”(from the same letter), a feat that would require her to surrender the cherished “instinctive tendency toward independence.” Such a crushing sacrifice would foreshadow the more domestic, self-sacrificing and all-encompassing love that Pestalozzi and Jean Paul envisioned as the basis for a renewed and peaceful Europe.

As it happened, the baby died before Caroline was able to establish an independent household, and, perhaps exhausted, she married August Wilhelm Schlegel and found security for herself and her one remaining child. Her life demonstrates clearly, therefore, that an initially liberating theory of individual effectiveness and biologically-based differentiation, such as the idea that mother-love made women both extraordinary and powerful, fails to predict how individuals might proceed in the face of unpredictable circumstances. Yet at the same time, Caroline's own words document how images of maternal dedication seemed to her at times compatible with more forward-looking self-representations and socially radical decisions.

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<sup>173</sup>Waitz, 127.

Caroline was not alone in choosing this type of social face, or employing a dual rhetoric of maternal concern and personal liberation. Dorothea Schlegel, then Brendel Veit, fell in love with Friedrich Schlegel and filed for divorce, knowing full well that she would have no legal rights to custody of her sons. Her great love not for her sons, but for her second husband, is apparent enough that Rudolf Enger, the editor of her and Friedrich's collected letters to the Paulus family, claimed her correspondence, "stellt...ein schönes Denkmal dar der Aufopferungsfreudigkeit einer starken, bedeutenden und lauterer weiblichen Seele für den geliebten Mann."<sup>174</sup> Although she risked custody of her sons, then, she was enlarging for herself the practical possibilities to live according to ideals of love, autonomy, and truth promulgated by leading Romantic era thinkers and writers, such as in her *Tugendbund*.<sup>175</sup> She was, in a real sense, "doing the right thing" for herself as an individual to be realized. Her choice exemplifies Pestalozzi's depiction of individual unfolding according to a truthful expression of a natural interior logic, one which might even, in the long term, have illustrated to her sons an ideal of honesty -- an unthinkable assertion at the time.

Decisions such as these prove neither that mothers instill great morality through their love for their children nor that they contribute to the renewal of nations by instilling civic consciousness, as the pedagogy and rhetoric of the era claimed. Rather, these mothers confronted personal and practical demands that clichés and stereotypes did not

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<sup>174</sup> Unger, intro. XVIII.

<sup>175</sup> The *Tugendbund* was a friendship circle she and her friends Henriette Herz, Rahel Levin and Wilhelm von Humboldt, among others, founded in 1787 as a sort of intimate support system, and experiment with new forms of relationships, especially between the sexes. See Stern, 58-66.

acknowledge, and thus often disengaged from the rhetoric and ideology by ordering their actions differently when their own needs superseded the claims of tradition. Alternately, they used, perhaps, the space allowed them by the indeterminate portions of open places in this rhetoric to move forward, even if when they took more socially difficult paths. In the previous chapters it became evident that the rhetoric and ideology describing mother's roles or maternal essence often functions as encoded political or utopian visions. As we see here in the Schlegel biographies and correspondence, the rhetoric and ideology surrounding motherhood thus often serves socio-economic or political needs other than the mothers' own; they must bend it to serve their purposes.

I would like to examine the letters of Dorothea Veit Schlegel and Caroline Böhmer Schlegel more closely, comparing them to the images and prescriptions offered by Pestalozzi and Jean Paul. Their reports act as public or private justification and explanation for differing approaches to maternal duty, and they offer insight into how the era's pedagogical rhetoric corresponded to the needs and ideals held by individual mothers. Their letters need to be projected into the historical and ideological contexts the women faced to gain clear understanding of how maternal practice was brought under new ideological pressure by well-meaning theorists like Jean Paul and Pestalozzi.

### **Marriage, Motherhood, and Loss**

After leaving her first husband, Dorothea Veit Schlegel was often dismissed as a scandalous woman and bad mother. She was seen as a woman who left her longstanding

marriage and practically abandoned her sons for a young lover with no orderly profession.<sup>176</sup> Jean Paul expressed a typical sentiment when he rebukingly referred to her as a “concubine,” in a letter from 1799.<sup>177</sup>

In the early years of motherhood, Brendel Veit had earned a reputation among her friends as a dedicated mother. As Brendel Veit she bore four sons, two of whom survived infancy and eventually became well-known painters in the Nazarene school. When her boys were still babies, she was reported to be a devoted, even over-protective mother, especially following the deaths of her eldest and middle sons soon after they were born. “Der frühe Tod zweier Söhne, die Furcht, auch Jonas und Philipp zu verlieren, machte Brendel zu einer übervorsichtigen, ängstlichen Mutter. Zwar gab es eine Kinderfrau, dennoch traute Brendel sich oft nicht aus dem Haus,”<sup>178</sup> explains her biographer, Carola Stern. Reports paint her as the type of mother Jean Paul described in his section on mothers’ overdependence on physicians and need to keep children bundled against the cold or indoors. According to this account, neither pedagogue would have found much to criticize in Dorothea Schlegel’s early devotion to her maternal duties, or her willingness to give up her own social and intellectual needs in favor of the needs of her babies.

Her maternal work was not, however, merely intuitive, a “natural” implementing of maternal drive, or an essence Pestalozzi and Jean Paul hypothesized. Rather, her

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<sup>176</sup> Babara Becker-Cantarino, *Schriftstellerinnen...*, 120.

<sup>177</sup> As passed on by her biographer, Carola Stern, 109.

<sup>178</sup> Stern, 47.

maternal practices were culturally mediated and expressed her intellectual bent -- she *decided* to become an ever-vigilant mother, rather than to give the care of her sons' over to the care of a *Kindermädchen*, as many women did. As an educated mother determined to guarantee the survival of her remaining sons, it seems she surely must have read and compared the leading advice-givers of the day, as Stern asserts: "Gewiß hatte sie für alle nur denkbaren Fälle Arzneien und andere Heilmittel im Haus, auch Ratgeber für Kinderpflege und andere medizinische Hausbücher, die seit einiger Zeit erschienen."<sup>179</sup> Pestalozzi wrote about a class of mothers without the material means to such a body of knowledge, and Jean Paul mostly derided mothers' dependence on expert advice rather than mothers' intuition. They argued that mothers can access an inborn, essential facility for maternal wisdom or knowledge. Dorothea's mothering, on the other hand, shows that intellectual, text-oriented mothers choose to educate themselves in daily maternal practices. Her early behavior as a mother, when compared with her later "abandonment" of the children, suggests that she was practical and goal-driven, focused on her sons' physical needs as such, and willing to use her capacity for learning to her sons' advantage in ways Pestalozzi does not address and Jean Paul fails to appreciate. Rather than passively relying on uneducated intuition or considering herself a perhaps impersonal conduit for their humane spiritual or moral development, mothers such as Brendel, who consulted the best possible science were connecting to their own current cultural context for their mothering practice.

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<sup>179</sup> Stern, 48.

Taking these facts as evidence for a clearly negotiated gap between ideologies from outside and her own self-image allows us to see Dorothea as a more willing participant in public life. As her sons grew, she became an active participant in Rahel Levin's (later Varnhagen) and Henriette Herz's literary salons.<sup>180</sup> Most importantly, this evidence of Dorothea's "maternal" education is evidence of her social position and willingness to confront the simplest stereotypes. Most particularly, her choices were enabled by her relatively elevated position within the German-Jewish Enlightenment and in the Humboldt circle. Although the Jewish community didn't allow daughters to choose their marriage partners freely, it nonetheless educated girls, to some extent, granted them access to books and "new knowledge," and allowed the development of a secularized sense of individuality, even for girls. Beyond furthering family goals and allowing girls and boys a sense of an individually developing self-identity, the German-Jewish Enlightenment made women such as Brendel relatively free to pursue their own interests, once their household responsibilities were met.

By all appearances, then, Brendel Veit at the outset conformed to Pestalozzi's ideals of a self-sacrificing mother, always available to care for her infant, despite her dependence on cultural and textual to keep her sons physically well. One of her closest friends, Rahel Levin, reported during the infancy of Philipp, the youngest, "Mad. Veit geht fast gar nicht aus und stillt beständig."<sup>181</sup> Although Levin's report of Brendel Veit's

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<sup>180</sup> Stern, 68ff.

<sup>181</sup> Stern, 48.

child-centered productivity conforms to images in Pestalozzi's maternalist philosophy, no evidence suggests that she hoped to instill in her babies a moral awareness or social sensibility through maternal breastfeeding, as Pestalozzi assumed. Veit's dedication to physical and all-encompassing mothering was not necessarily a part of her core identity, or because she sought to embody the goals or aims later proposed by Jean Paul and Pestalozzi. Rather, she seems more likely to have been the "new" type of mother described in the introduction of this study, a woman experiencing the historical change to a more intensive maternity within a nuclear family, at the receiving end of the science and propaganda instructing women in breastfeeding and other measures to reduce the infant mortality rate, as described at the outset of this study.

Later, with older sons, she employed the Romantic rhetoric for defending modern, unconventional choices that took her out of the sphere of intensive, housewife style mothering. The rhetorical space between Enlightenment-era demographic science and the emerging Romantic language envisioning changed public and familial relations for mothers leads us back to historical overview of the introduction, to see what lies behind women's use of maternalist images in the context of socially proscribed behaviors.

During Brendel's early years of motherhood, for example, this well-known member of the Jewish upper-class and participant in the Berlin salon-culture, once Brendel Mendelssohn and future Dorothea Schlegel, seems to have had a family that mirrored, to a remarkable degree, Habermas's description of the nuclear family under advanced bourgeois liberalism and late-nineteenth century life: "there arose the illusion

of an intensified privacy in an interior domain whose scope had shrunk to comprise the conjugal family only insofar as it constituted a community of consumers.”<sup>182</sup> Although her husband, from an affluent family in banking and trade, was by no means merely a consumer, Brendel and her two young sons did constitute a “community of consumers,” in the sense that their household, which she almost never left, was no longer the site of economic productivity. If, as Levin reported, she barely went out and nursed continually, her experience of *babycarand* was doubtless of an “intensified privacy in an interior domain.”

Without the mutual social and intellectual support and inspiration found in her salon, Brendel’s maternal role was, indeed, as the leading member of a very small group, based not around the conjugal relationship but the maternal one. Her dedication to securing her sons’ survival seemed gauged at furthering an internally oriented domesticity at the cost of her salon culture visibility, a form of sociability achieving its high point in the German context at the same historical moment. The salon provided one alternative sphere of feminine influence besides the maternal one. In contrast to the power Pestalozzi and Jean Paul grant women based on the claimed superiority of their maternal love, some women found their chance to practice self-expression and cultural influence in salon society:

A novel pattern of interchange existed between educated men and literate, informed women who functioned not just as consumers but as purveyors of culture. This culture remained an elite affair, but it represented a potent

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<sup>182</sup> Habermas, 156.

alternative... The salon was associated in the public mind with a new shape of life which integrated alternative sources of status into the culture of the traditional social elite.<sup>183</sup>

It obviously caused her friend Rahel Levin some concern or astonishment when she noted that the new mother “never goes out.” Even before the arrival of Friedrich Schlegel, then, Brendel Veit is negotiating a clear border, between a culture of operating in the public sphere, in which nursing mothers received visitors or made visits themselves, or engaged wet-nurses, and a newer, nuclear family which kept the physical care of its members private and in the hands of the mother alone.

Just as her dedication to her nursing son and her three-year-old appeared superficially to match the Pestalozzian ideal, so, too, did her family appear to personify the evolving bourgeois ideal prior to her love for Friedrich Schlegel. Habermas described the new family’s conception of itself as a series of illusions:

It seemed to be established voluntarily and by free individuals and to be maintained without coercion; it seemed to rest on the lasting community of love on the part of the two spouses; it seemed to permit that non-instrumental development of all faculties that marks the cultivated personality.<sup>184</sup>

It is worth noting, though, that Brendel Veit’s dedication to her sons was not the result of a historical turn toward supporting the nuclear family because of greater familial intimacy resting on the “lasting community of love on the part of the two spouses.” If the Veit

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<sup>183</sup> Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 22.

<sup>184</sup> Habermas, 46-47.

marriage seemed to embody these qualities, then appearances were deceiving. Neither was her family established completely voluntarily by free individuals, since fathers still arranged marriages for their daughters, whose acquiescence was always more or less compelled. Perhaps most importantly of all for Brendel, it did not “permit that non-instrumental development of all faculties that marks the cultivated personality,” Habermas describes.

Within the context of her conventional marriage, Brendel Veit founded a *Tugendbund* among like-minded friends, held reading evenings like her father’s, and attended Berlin’s most recognized salons. Nonetheless, she seemed to imply that the non-instrumental development of her faculties could only occur outside her marriage and after it dissolved. Only after leaving her husband did she write, translate and edit for publication, and become completely engaged in literary-aesthetic debates. In contrast to images of domestic fulfillment and maternal joy in children’s growth presented in Pestalozzi’s and Jean Paul’s work, breastfeeding and remaining housebound for the physical care of children in this case to be desperate, or at least pragmatic, measures designed to rescue her remaining children from the ever-present threat of childhood mortality.

The question of spousal relations and authority structures emerges here, as well. She might further have turned the nursery into a husband-free sphere of womanly authority, as Jean Paul accuses women of doing, to escape the presence of a man she didn’t love. If she did not, this suggests that, for her, the intimate sphere of familial care

did not necessarily signify an opportunity to achieve the highest quality of human love, or to fulfill Jean Paul's call to "bilde höher." Rather, complete dedication to childcare in the domestic domain confined her, of necessity, and once her sons' survival was more guaranteed, she again actively participated in Berlin's salon-life of the intellectual avant-garde. She did not treat a pragmatic necessity, or goal-driven conduct, as an essential female virtue or eternal, maternal state of being. Her need as a woman was for self-realization; the ideology through which she negotiated her self-image was only partially, conditionally or situationally, that of the Romantic theorists of maternity.

Caroline Böhmer (later Schlegel and then Schelling), too, experienced the beginning of motherhood as a time marked by anxiety, loss, and necessary domestic confinement rather than as a moment when her female destiny was fulfilled. The greatest loss she experienced as a young mother was the death of her husband. She was widowed with a three-year-old, a toddler, and pregnant with her third baby, circumstances addressed by neither pedagogue, but which she nonetheless had to frame in some sort of self-authorizing discourse in order to negotiate a successful future for herself and her children. Before the death of her husband, however, her first sense of loss was not the loss of loved ones. Rather, letters remaining from her newlywed period, in her early twenties, convey a distinct sense of loss of identity, of a sense of self. On the one hand, becoming domestic in the nineteenth-century sense, she willingly acquiesced to the demands of her husband's work, relinquishing her hometown, with its nearby friendships and intellectual engagement. The former professor's daughter who lived in

the middle of a circle of intellectually stimulating students and visitors, when faced with an isolated existence as the wife of a small-town doctor, felt “das große Interesse des Lebens” evaporate.

In her early letters, she is not yet a Romantic, and has only a vague desire for a more socially and intellectually engaged womanhood. Her desire to fulfill the traditional obligations of a good wife lead her to twist Jean Paul’s dictum that a woman’s purpose is first of all to be a *Mensch*. Bowing to another ideology, she attempts to find purpose in her marriage by reversing his thesis, and expresses the wish to make the “Zweck des Weibs,” raising children and fulfilling household obligations, into her “Hauptzweck des Menschen.”<sup>185</sup> Yet as a woman fulfilling both Pestalozzi’s imperative to love her children from birth on, in the service of their further development, and Jean Paul’s image of a well-educated middle-class woman fulfilling her duties with love, Caroline described herself at times in much sadder language than either writer had predicted:

Ich bin nicht mehr Mädchen, die Liebe giebt mir nichts zu thun als in leichten häuslichen Pflichten...mein Loos ist geworfen. Auch bin ich keine mystische Religions Enthousiastin – das sind doch die beyden Sphären, in denen sich der Weiber Leidenschaften drehn. Da ich also nichts nahes fand, was mich beschäftigte, so blieb die weite Welt mir offen – und die – machte mich weinen.<sup>186</sup>

She wrote this knowing that she was “doch fähig, eine größere Rolle zu spielen, zu höheren Hoffnungen berechtigt” (from the same letter), but condemning such feelings in herself as mere vanity. Her protestations of vanity fail to cover an underlying sense of

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<sup>185</sup> Her own words, 28 May 1786. Not in Waitz’s first edition; see Damm, 131 – 132.

<sup>186</sup> Damm, 21.

purposelessness Pestalozzi and Jean Paul don't recognize as an important interior reality for a woman attempting to function in precisely the manner they describe: her children's primary educator, their example of upstanding moral values and the maternal giving of self that strengthens families, communities, and nations. She seems to express a "type of maternal ambivalence and self-division," she wished to hide, a "self-alienation that marks any women writers' accounts of the experience of motherhood during the Romantic period."<sup>187</sup> In the years of her first marriage, she wishes to define herself only in relation to her husband and child, as opposed to acknowledging other social or historical forces "helping to generate an atmosphere in which the type of maternal ambivalence and self-division"<sup>188</sup> she encountered remained unacknowledged. Jean Paul and Pestalozzi overlook this woman's isolation or the inability she senses to connect with the external environment, a disconnect that contradicted in a crucial way their theories about mothers as mediators between children and the natural and cultural worlds.

In this sense, Caroline's early experience as a mother appears to mirror the nuclear family turned in on itself, as Habermas would describe, than the role of mediator of the natural environment Pestalozzi described. Her declarations that she could make her own happiness, refusing to despair, however, are the only apparent attempts at a non-instrumental development of personality that he thinks the bourgeois nuclear family has as its reason for existence. In places, Caroline appears to be a mother fighting to develop

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<sup>187</sup> Julie Kipp, *Romanticism, Maternity, and the Body Politic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 7.

<sup>188</sup> Kipp, 7.

herself in spite of her family situation, in which caring for one small child and a husband are simply not enough to transport her into the literate public sphere she so craves. The chance to reposition herself to participate in the public debate, and to allow that debate to influence and be influenced by her work and status as a mother, came only after the death of her husband, when she was able to leave the village he served and set up a household of her own choosing. Like Dorothea admitted some years later, Caroline found no consolation in a supposedly “eternal” essence of maternity that she found dehumanizing and without importance to the greater world.

### **Impermanent Maternal Desire and Civic Identity**

The examples above from these mothers’ correspondence demonstrate that these mothers, central to the developing Romantic school of aesthetic and social outlook, operated both in response to a growing, and ideologically formulated discourse of maternity, and as creators of their own vision of the intimate and political potential inherent in theorized motherhood. They knew of the social framework for the mother-child dyad explained by Jean Paul and Pestalozzi, and were aware of the ideology of self-actualization that could be found within that representation of mothers and their children. That ideology represented mothers as capable of “natural” development and individuation, and maternal liberation as important for the formation of a new social, even national, order. Yet their needs as mothers and as individuals put them in situations beyond the idylls Jean Paul and Pestalozzi imagined. They became, by accident or

choice, women who *could not* or *would not* be defined in terms of the social/maternal dyad.

Knowing that a certain style of mothering, of dedicating oneself to the care of infants and young children, was for neither woman an eternal essence, but instead a manner of coping with the demands placed upon them, we note that Dorothea Schlegel never experienced a period of such intensive mothering again in her life. She had no children with Friedrich Schlegel, and although she confesses to wishing for one, she remained an active and hardworking woman with multi-faceted experiences as her sons grew beyond the need for her intensive care. Not surprisingly, then, she did not cultivate more “mothering” situations or an unlimited maternal presence.

The temporary nature of much maternal work is more apparent in any woman’s biography than it is in pedagogical treatises such as those by Pestalozzi and Jean Paul, who were eager to emphasize the lasting, even eternal, rewards of mothering. This was perhaps even truer in eras of lesser fertility and higher child mortality than it is today. Later in life, after divorcing her husband and becoming Dorothea, she continued to care for her youngest son, but with much less emotional intensity, and with Friedrich Schlegel’s active participation. That is, she engaged in various public identities, such as translator, hostess and editor, rather than accepting a reduction of her own identity to that of mother alone.

Indeed, her son Philipp barely figures in her correspondence with her closest friends from the Jena years, Professor and Karoline Paulus, so that a casual reader might

not even know for a large portion of the collected correspondence that she had custody of a son. On the other hand, during their stays in Paris and Cologne, when the couple's social contacts were limited and Schlegel often traveled, Dorothea and Philipp were often each other's only companions. Nonetheless, Dorothea mentions him only briefly in her letters to her Jena friends or in the letters of other members of the Schlegel circle, in marked contrast to the attention given Caroline's daughter, Auguste, by all the Schlegels and their many guests. Two orientations towards motherhood and generational interaction are evident in the children's appearance in, or their absence from, their mothers' letters. We thus see here two different responses to the ideological climate, revealing how two different personalities adapted the prevailing liberal currents of theory into their own lives and pragmatic constraints.

Both women's identities are clearly drawn with reference to these liberal ideologies (which were dominant within Romantic circles, if not in society at large), but with clear acknowledgments of where those ideologies cease to describe their own lives. Dorothea's letter of 13 July 1805, for example, conveys more information about Philipp's care than any other: "Gruß den Vater und den Hammel; auch von Philipp, der arme Schelm ist kränklich und braucht eine sehr angreifende Kur, die auch mir viel Zeit und Anstrengung kostet."<sup>189</sup> The image in this text, written by a mother actively educating her son in the atmosphere Pestalozzi and Jean Paul wished for, a love-filled home overseen by a dedicated mother, fails to present the kind of single-minded maternal

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<sup>189</sup> Unger, 64.

intensity they advocated. In fact, a sort of irritability towards the unavoidable demands of caring for a sick child can be heard in this, her longest description of how her child is doing. Further, she is not gauging his physical needs against his potential for embodying moral values or the needs of the future nation, but rather against her own opportunities and needs.

We may not, of course, assume that Dorothea had lost interest in child-care or had de-valued its work -- to dismiss her as "unwomanly" falls into the trap of stereotyping. Indeed, she wished for more children, as she admitted in a letter to Karoline Paulus from 3 June 1805, in which she reacted to the news that several women acquaintances had recently delivered new babies: "wie ich die Weiber beneide! könnte ich doch auch dem Friedrich eins geben, oder vielmehr hätte ich ihm doch eins gegeben! denn nun ist es wohl zu spät." In August, too, she asks in jest, "kannst du mir nicht eine Tochter verschaffen?"<sup>190</sup> Upon finding herself in a loving relationship with a man of her choosing, therefore, and able to pursue work more attuned to her individual talents, Dorothea voices the desire to add more mothering to her duties. In such jests, one can differentiate between the universal, essential quality of maternal desire that Jean Paul and Pestalozzi postulate as characteristic of all women, and the more context-specific desire Dorothea expresses. She seems to wish for the chance to mother a daughter, to experience the more feminine ties that a girl represents, or to mother a baby born, this time, of a love relationship. Maternal desire, at least in this case, therefore appears

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<sup>190</sup> Unger, 60, 67.

limited and context-dependent, and more expressive of a desire to enjoy a renewed family situation than to influence the state or cultural reproduction.

This letter, dated 5 August 1805, is also the only time she mentions her older son in the correspondence to her friends. The obvious pleasure she takes in her son's imminent visit enlivens her writing, and imparts an enthusiastic style missing in most of the rest of the correspondence. The ensuing six-month interruption in the correspondence could indicate that he helped fill the nearly constant need for companionship that motivated her frequent letters. The passage also demonstrates more clearly than any other how much plans for her younger son's future occupy her, despite the fact that no other letters paint her as the kind of ever-present mother Pestalozzi and Jean Paul would prefer:

In diesen Tagen erwarte ich eine große Freude; mein ältester Sohn aus Berlin wird mich besuchen. Er macht mit einer Familie aus Berlin, eine Reise durch die Schweiz und den Rhein, und wird nach Köln kommen um mich zu sehen. Wenn es sich indessen entscheidet daß wir zum Herbste nach Würzburg ziehen, so gebe ich den Philipp mit nach Berlin; denn zwischen hier und einem Jahre muß der Philipp doch auf eine Zeitlang hin; auch würde Friedrich sogleich viel zu viel in Würzburg beschäftigt seyn um sich mit ihm abgeben zu können; und meiner Aussicht ist er entwachsen; zudem würde ihn das Leben auf einer Universität jetzt nicht nützen, ich bin also entschlossen, auf diesen Fall, ihn nach Berlin zu senden... Neugierig genug bin ich auf meinen ältesten Jungen; das soll eine Art von Elegant geworden seyn; wie wird da mein einfältiger Philipp dagegen abstechen? er selber ist ganz bange vor seinen Bruder, und freut sich mit thränenden Augen ihn wiederzusehen; es ist mir also doppelt und dreifach lieb, daß sie nicht länger getrennt bleiben, damit sie sich nicht völlig voneinander entfremden.<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Unger, 67.

Her concerns also correspond to the theories of Pestalozzi, Jean Paul, and our contemporary: Members of the younger generation must find their own way to a social hierarchy and mutual responsibility through unmediated interaction. As all three observe, children need children.

Critically, then, her presentation of her sons' concerns reflects the very modern ideas of generational change and continuity addressed in both Pestalozzi's and Jean Paul's work. The necessary difficulty each succeeding generation's experiences in this task is expressed in Philipp's, the younger, subordinate brother's, paradoxical feelings of being "bange vor seinen Bruder" at the same time that he "freut sich mit thränenden Augen." Both Jean Paul and Pestalozzi postulated the next generation's task as balancing a hierarchy or social equality with a sense of responsibility between older and younger siblings, such as is depicted here as a foundational moment in a renewed sibling relationship. That, they demonstrated, is a primary experience for settling later social stratification. The mother of this fraternal bond, Dorothea, expresses joy and curiosity in its emergence and eventual outcome. She will, therefore, function as a mother observing the modern sort of social re-structuring that Judith Rich Harris and Jean Paul describe, as much as enjoying the feeling of a proud mother in the company of her two sons.

Despite her expressed desire to mother again, however, Dorothea's writing does not indicate a personal philosophy about the long-term or societal value of raising the coming generation. Other than through the doctrine of her chosen religion, Catholicism, we have no access to the philosophy of love she would employ, the nature of family

relationships she would govern, or the morality she would teach. The only specific reference to imparting a national consciousness or to a possible equation of her work with a national purpose in the Paulus family correspondence is in the same letter of August 5, 1805, a remark that takes on a negative connotation, an intolerance for unwanted influence. She grants that her son may return to Berlin, since “für den Berlinismus, besonders für den jüdischen bin ich nicht mehr für ihn bange, dagegen ist er gepanzert.”<sup>192</sup> The consciousness she wishes to impart is above all a doctrinaire Catholic one. Her comments, this and others, don’t appear positively inclined to nurture a German self-identity, but are frequently merely anti-French, and in this instance anti-Semitic.

Textual evidence of her maternal ambition thus indicates that a “national” self-identity, if a part of maternal practice after the French Revolution and the conquests of Napoleon at all, was at the very least differently contoured for women than for the men who advised or described them. Many scholars have documented the Romantic movement’s desire to formulate and advance a German national consciousness, and Dorothea’s letter provides insight into their hopes of transforming theory and desire into daily practice. For many readers, then, her comments offer disappointing evidence of the difficulty of overcoming old prejudice, even among convinced members of the inner circle of Romantic philosophers. The cultural animosities against which mothers instilled a consciousness of self and other in their children are clear, and local. Dorothea’s letters give a clear understanding of the difficulties she faced integrating into “society” in

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<sup>192</sup> Unger, 67.

Berlin, Jena, Paris and Cologne, and demonstrate the gap between a broad German identity and the smaller scale biases so many people of the era lived, and passed on to the next generation.

Like Dorothea, Caroline, too, faced tremendous difficulties becoming socially acceptable after her contact with sociopolitical radicalism became publicly known, and seen as injurious to her maternal identity. In her case, rumored active participation in the political upheavals of Mainz, and contact with intellectuals and civic leaders who founded the Mainz Republic<sup>193</sup> led to social condemnation and exclusion. When the Republic failed, she found herself more intensely vilified than many of the actual *agents provocateurs*, primarily because she had trespassed the limits of activity allowed women and mothers. Her failure to integrate local social mores with those of the larger German community was thus nearly opposite Dorothea's. In thinking that her actions in Mainz were not only local and private, but also appropriate to a mother contributing a citizen to the future state, she failed to recognize the degree to which the various German principalities and cities were culturally and ideologically connected, to each other and to a position considerably less progressive than her friends'. For her, the emergence of Germany as a nation meant not only that her actions might have real consequences for the political power structures of Mainz, but personal consequences for her reputation and social stigma that were widespread in nearly all the German-speaking states.

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<sup>193</sup> No actual historical evidence shows that she participated in fomenting political change, only that she associated with those who did, and probably shared their opinions. Further, she was mistakenly identified as the wife, rather than sister-in-law, of her deceased husband's brother, who was politically active.

Such individual mothers, therefore, have different pictures of what the state is, what the community is, and what group identity is, than the pedagogues prescribe. They turn Romantic imperatives into singular identity positions, according to how an individual construed the group, the nation, and the proper image of a mother. Each inhabits the role Jean Paul describes, as mother to a community-oriented self-identity, as educator guiding a child into a mature understanding of his place in the larger community. In this case, however, we see that even the most conscientious of national patriots seek to protect or advance their own, local vision of the community they are raising their children into. When transcending the local in seeking community engagement for herself and her child, therefore, Dorothea focused on the ages-old, international identity provided by the Catholic church, while Caroline eventually turned to her third husband's, Schelling's, philosophy as a source of human connectedness. As far as mothers are concerned, then, the nation as a larger political and social entity does not appear to be the ideal unit that the previous two writers describe. Yet they do accept those philosophers', Pestalozzi's and Jean Paul's, images of the new individual who will occupy that nation, finding in their images an opportunity for both women and men to assert their individual identities against known patterns.

### **Maternal Love and Love for Others: An Unspoken Tension**

As we have seen, maternal love was for both Pestalozzi and Jean Paul the single greatest phenomenon inherent in motherhood, and in womanhood itself. For them, it was

the source of our human understanding of morality and interconnectedness, the elementary force that made unity between persons and peace among the nations possible on the adult level. Both men, and especially Pestalozzi, who raised countless children in a spirit of seemingly boundless love, had personal experiences that gave them reason to believe in the power of love on the next generation. In their desire to gain for children an environment of attentive respect and even indulgent affection, however, they ignored the sometimes even greater love that women could have for their husbands, or others in their lives. Jean Paul especially championed the cause of love between spouses, and the rights of girls and women to express preference and desire in their choice of a husband. Both writers, however, took the position that the love between adults was secondary to maternal love, and supported rather than conflicted with raising and educating children, which remained a mother's primary task, and greatest joy.

Although Dorothea Veit's early history as a mother in Berlin, closely bound to her sons in an effort to provide every means for ensuring the wellness, appears a model of maternal love to the exclusion of every other, her eventual willingness to sacrifice custody of her sons in order to be with Friedrich Schlegel calls the truth of that exclusive dedication into question. Indeed, one could argue that a spousal relationship devoid of love, such as she had with Simon Veit guaranteed the healthy development of the next generation by making babies, rather than men, the focus of women's devotional energies. With the dissolution of her first marriage, Dorothea Veit relinquished care for her older son, and made her relationship to her younger son secondary in importance and intensity

to her relationship with Friedrich Schlegel, a development neither pedagogue had imagined. She allowed love to be, at least for a time, the defining quality of her personality, as the pedagogues proclaimed, but reserved the right to choose the object of her affections individually. Here, feminine love and the potential power of individualism, two of Jean Paul's greatest motifs, play out in ways contrary to the cult of the maternal. In one of her first reports from Paris, Dorothea even claims priority for her own interests, shown as she lists her advantages, stating first "... daß ich von meinen angebeteten Friedrich aufs zärtliche geliebt, ja verehrt werde ," and placing Philipp's development second: "daß mein Philipp brav, und geschickt, und liebenswürdig wird..."<sup>194</sup> After all she had renounced in Friedrich's name and in the name of the freedom and ideals that comprised the Romantic agenda, it was important to her to present the appearance that her love for the man of her choosing was still a defining attribute of her life.

She elaborates on her pride to demonstrate the happy results of her choice, explaining that she enjoyed not only the arts and sciences available in Paris, but also her pride that:

ich Zeuge sein darf wie Friedrich Neue Schätze der Wissenschaften erwirbe, wie er von allen die ihn kennen lernen hochgeschätzt wird – rechnest Du dies zusammen, so kannst Du wohl wissen, daß ich für die glücklichste Frau in der Welt gelten darf.<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> Unger, 8.

<sup>195</sup> Unger, 8.

In this letter, at least, it is clear that a woman's love for and pride in her partner can count for more to her than her maternal love and pride. Further, it is clear that her (future) husband's contribution to the larger community and the future can, in her imagination, be greater than the contribution she makes through her work as a mother. For this reason, perhaps, "Dorothea stellte ihre ganze Arbeitskraft in den Dienst von Friedrichs literarischen Plänen..." once she joined him for life, according to Barbara Becker-Cantarino<sup>196</sup>. "So wurde sie zumeist nur als Friedrichs Anhang, als die nur für ihn und durch ihn lebende Frau wahrgenommen." Even while realizing her potential for both intellectual and maternal agency while living in Paris, she recognizes Friedrich's importance in her life, as when she admits her loneliness to Karoline Paulus: "aber wir leben hier in einer so abgeschiedenen Einsamkeit, daß ich schwerlich ohne Friedrich hier würde existieren können" (12 October 1805). Her child may be an integral part of her community, but he's neither the most important element in it, nor the realization of a female principle.

This set of usages, these asserted identities, contradicts some scholarly analysis of Friedrich Schlegel's ideals regarding the emancipation of women and the cultivation of a freer self for women and men alike. In her *Imagologie der Geschlechter*, for example,

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<sup>196</sup> Barbara Becker-Cantarino, *Schriftstellerinnen der Romantik: Epoche-Werke-Wirkung* (Munich: C.H. Beck Verlag, 2000) 120.

Karin Hagl-Catling cites him as an exception to the then-accepted notion of women existing exclusively as men's helpmates:<sup>197</sup> "Als Ausnahme," claims Hagl-Catling,

kann Friedrich Schlegel gelesen werden. Er unternimmt den weitesten Schritt zur Überwindung des Dualismus von Geist (=Seele) und Natur (= Sinnlichkeit) und protestiert immer wieder gegen die selbst von Hippel vertretene popularphilosophische Meinung, daß die Frauen dazu da seien, "das Leben der Männer fröhlicher und herrlicher zu machen." Ganz richtig erkennt Schlegel, daß mit Tugenden wie Hingabe und Anschmiegsamkeit von der Frau die absolute Charakterlosigkeit gefordert wird.<sup>198</sup>

Perhaps Friedrich Schlegel failed to communicate to his own wife his recognition of the "absolute characterlessness" required of women in the role of helpmate. For Dorothea's part, she might well have felt that by dividing her energies between her son and her husband, she was neither putting her whole "Arbeitskraft in den Dienst von Friedrichs literarischen Plänen," nor in danger of living purely as "Friedrichs Anhang, als die nur für ihn und durch ihn lebende Frau," Becker-Cantarino supposes to discover. Just as Pestalozzi and Jean Paul failed to see that mothers necessarily divided their energies and their love, then, so too, might modern scholars overlook the multi-faceted identity that famous wives and authors enjoyed as less-than-famous mothers, friends, or housewives. In their desire to bring historical women out from their husbands' shadows, modern scholars perhaps underestimate the real power and identity women found in their work as mothers.

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<sup>197</sup> I remind the reader of Pestalozzi's depiction of Gertrude as a powerful force in her community, and that Jean Paul, too, was opposed to the idea that men view their wives as either goddess of beauty or market slave

<sup>198</sup> Karen Hagl-Catling, 89.

How these new images of individual identity were crafted respecting both historical situation and personal choice of ideology is critical to see. For example, falling in love with an unacceptable man caused great difficulty for both Dorothea and her future sister-in-law Caroline Schlegel, and her daughter, Auguste, difficulties she depicts in her correspondence. While married to August Schlegel, Caroline fell in love with the much-younger, already-famous philosopher, Schelling, actually a more appropriate suitor for her daughter than for her. Although she apparently worked to remain faithful to her marital obligations, her love for Schelling was obvious and created difficult working conditions and home atmosphere for the entire household, her daughter included. During Auguste's final illness, Caroline even allowed Schelling to treat her as her pediatrician and employ a new, untested method, despite his lack of a medical background. When her daughter died (August, 1800), then, many contemporary critics interpreted Caroline's trust as bad mothering: Here was a mother who put blind faith in the unproven abilities and vanity of a man she loved illicitly, risking her own daughter's life before questioning the competency of the man she loved. Although, in fact, Schelling had successfully used the same new method before, Caroline Schlegel's permission for him to treat her daughter was widely decried as an act of infidelity and unnatural mothering at the time.<sup>199</sup> Other interpretations of her willingness to trust Schelling with her daughter's life are also

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<sup>199</sup> Waitz includes A.W. Schlegel's letters in response to condolences sent to Caroline. They are testaments of his love for Auguste, too. Her death apparently saddened the entire extended household and friendship circle, that was, to some extent, constellated around her. Sigrid Damm, 79, narrates Caroline's traumatized reaction to this sad loss. In fact, most scholars agree, she never really recovered her former energy or self-confidence after her last remaining child died.

possible: In this case, "love for the child" meant, perhaps, optimism about the progress of science, or desperation to try any method at all to restore her only remaining child. Her great love for her daughter, which she had expressed only ten months previous to her death, "Glaub nur, Du bist Deiner Mutter das theuerste was sie hat,"<sup>200</sup> was never doubted among members and friends of the household in Jena. The strength of this maternal love was diminished neither by her union with Schlegel nor her love for Schelling. She did not leave a written record trying to justify her reliance on Schelling, and so her decision complicates the notion of love Pestalozzi and Jean Paul theorize, and the love much of the Romantic school envisions as a defining quality among women.

Earlier in her life, Caroline, had condemned Bürger's wife, who left him for another man, forgetting the principles and duties Pestalozzi and Jean Paul valued so highly, and proclaimed so natural. Notably, Caroline does not criticize Bürger's wife merely for loving another man, but for the consequences that love has for her children: "darum müssen Weiber keine Liebhaber haben, weil sie so leicht Kind und Wirthschaft darüber vernachlässigen... mein innerster Unwille wird reg, wenn ein Weib so wenig Weib ist, das Kind vergeßen zu können" (Caroline, 6 Dec. 1791).<sup>201</sup> She rejected her role as mother, and hence her duty as seat of human morality and interconnectedness, rather than integrating that role with her love for others as Caroline apparently tried to do.

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<sup>200</sup> Waitz, 271-272.

<sup>201</sup> Waitz, 86.

These examples have another set of implications, as well. For real women negotiating life and death decisions, and balancing their dedication to husbands, children, other loves and themselves, maternal love no longer appears to be either a woman's singular quality, nor the medium through which she is linked to her community, nation, or all of humanity, as Pestalozzi and Jean Paul would have it. In these two cases, we see that the type and quality of love that these two women experienced as fundamental to their understanding of self also ultimately isolated them from their community, even from their own families -- these progressive norms were not shared by the larger community. Only the appearance of the nuclear family as Habermas describes it, and not the actual feelings that might animate it, became the link with the outer community that Pestalozzi and Jean Paul hoped could provide peace in Europe.

### **Conclusion: Constructing A Romantic Maternal Identity**

The gap between the self-identities these two mothers were seeking to realize, and the public identity formed in part by the prejudices of the world they lived in is a we have seen, partly explained by a willful public misreading of the motivations behind many of their maternal decisions. On the other hand, the impossibility of the Romantic agenda surely contributed to the need for continually re-asserting a lovingly feminine or maternal identity. The attempts to embody transcendental ideals, to harmonize oppositions and expand margins would lead to never-ending psychological crises requiring continual transformative thinking and deconstruction of a self-identity.<sup>202</sup>

What these letters share with the tracts of philosophy, therefore, is the compulsion to re-center an ideological discourse, to develop a language of dedicated maternity out of the existing vocabulary. The vocabulary inherited from the Enlightenment sought to determine who women were and curtail their potential sphere of engagement. In fact, absorbing and re-configuring this vocabulary in fact allowed mothers greater affect in their historical and spatial environment. Both mothers, and both philosophers, confront the stereotypes and censored (or censored) modes of self-expression ordering the political and social hierarchies in place. They create a language that encodes subversive desires, such as for personal liberty, republicanism, or free religious expression, in the acceptable gestures of maternal dedication and traditional feminine subordination to the needs of

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<sup>202</sup> See also Hagl-Catling, 109.

growing children. Caroline and Jean Paul especially knew that women's roles as "Romantic subjects" could only be realized if they also defined themselves as loving mothers. Each of our authors writes in clear acknowledgment of the prevailing ideologies, and in a clear desire to redirect the images underlying those ideologies. This redirection could alter ideology to encompass the preference for a liberal, social-constructivist interpretation of effective mother-love, educating and expanding the possibilities for future subjects of the state.

Taking Jean Paul and Pestalozzi as norms against which to read these correspondence collections points us to a new way to evaluate the position of "Romantic women" as both liberal and national, yet neither essentialist nor adhering to a philosophy of stable subject identities. Even these comparatively brief statements by Dorothea and Carolina Schlegel reveal two very different women working from identity constructs informed by the current environment of pedagogical and gender debates, yet reacting to different facets of their personal experiences. Further, we shall see in the following, concluding section of this study, analysis of a period-specific aesthetic ideology can facilitate more general literary scholarship about the Romantic era and the evolution of the literary arts. Discussions of mothers, their children, and the family more generally, can become a forum for discussing developments in German literature and society.

## **Mothers, Authors, and Eras**

We began this study with a critical assessment of the Enlightenment age, obsessed with defining and codifying things, which defined women as in fundamental opposition to men. The definition of women that finally won out was one that contradicted essential Enlightenment values such as autonomy, freethinking, and individual equality within the literate public sphere in many ways, and therefore excluded women, and especially mothers, from the Enlightenment project. Thus paradigmatic Enlightenment theorists defined mothers as absolutely required for their babies' healthful development, and as exercising influence over the future by instilling a political self-identity in the next generation. This definition of a maternal principle was based both on their newly defined characteristics and their un-autonomous links to the physical demands and bonds of childbirth. As the era discussed female identity, its writers and thinkers segregated that identity from the question of the liberation of the individual *man* into an autonomous subject. The subject marked by rationality and self-determination, and able to contribute to the foundation of nation-states that reflected his autonomous and rational self, was strictly a male subject.

Post-Enlightenment writers like Pestalozzi, Jean Paul, and the Schlegels, many of whom revolted against the Enlightenment desire for strict definitions and rationality, often used these emerging definitions of women and mothers to new ends, rather than

countering them explicitly. Agreeing, perhaps, that mothers were the antithesis of the rational, self-contained man, yet still absolutely required for children's correct development into peace-loving (therefore *empfindsame*) adults, post-Enlightenment writers like those under consideration here employed this foundation, this image of women, to theorize a different definition of the individual person. They constructed a new individual out of an old image, and justified re-imagined interpersonal relationships as the basis for the community ties that would mirror and support these individuals. These new community ties, it was hoped, would acquire national forms and give birth to citizens capable of interacting in a sophisticated state that included even mothers in the national project.

Such writers of Romantic theory, including those who used unexpected genres such as early education treatises and personal letters, therefore represented their task perhaps not as the dismantling of cherished but limiting Enlightenment notions of femininity, but as the re-evaluation, of those notions for new political situations, ones that required the re-positioning of stereotypes and traditions within society. In this sense, the work of Jean Paul and Pestalozzi on education and on the mother's role within the nation constitutes a kind of rationalization of the social process, creating a separate, but purportedly equal, state (or role within the state) for women. Their "new woman" or loving, German mother had a public role in the nation. She was to be more than just "nature" to man's "culture," but was instead to be responsible for cultural reproduction through her potential for biological reproduction. Her centrality to the separate, domestic

space of the home was to reflect the centrality of her role in the nation, as uniquely positioned to create new hierarchies for the the public *space* of the nation.

By identifying the chief contribution of women to the state as mothering, then, these theorists created a two-edged sword for those women defining themselves within the new nation-states of Europe: they now were essentially defined as acting in relation to issues of national identity as the female principles paralleling or countering male one. But while they defined mothers as part of the nation's structure (not just as "nature's" principle countering male "culture"), they created identities and potential fields of endeavor that were not entirely compatible with what progressive women might say or understand about themselves.

As we have seen, those who re-evaluated the position and role of mothers in society in order to create a new social order often used child-development theories as the forum for proposing these new identity positions for women and new hierarchies to anchor the nation. Child-development treatises were a safe form in which to elaborate otherwise unsafe theories. They have an inherent interest in depicting people as evolving, undetermined, and still open to becoming whatever their new circumstances might require, and make room for rhetorical modes that express the potential and the hypothetical. Yet fictional representations of these same people also imagine these persons enacting new possibilities, even when they need not argue as persuasively as do child-guidance tracts that these changes must occur, quickly, if society is to be remade and peaceful continuity between generations is to occur. Letters, moments of textual

interpersonal exchange, written by women like Caroline and Dorothea counter these two modes of imaginatively persuading the reader to envision what does not exist. Personal letters can appropriate utopian or practical elements from images from many sources to engage in practical and less censored identity politics from everyday life, and to justify the letter writer's choices to herself and to others, sympathetic or not.

The negotiation of women's identity positions that I have briefly outlined in this last chapter thus has taken up the more practical discourses available to an era, showing how the representations of mothers in them presented partial and illusionary identities for women . The ideologies of motherhood that appeared in very popular non-fiction texts provided less than full guidance for women, whether they wanted to be in the public *space* or contributing to the public *sphere*, or whether they confronted the practical exigencies of child-rearing without wanting to dedicate their entire lives to that single purpose or were never able to give it the time and attention they wished. By situating two very popular educational texts within a distinct ideological locus, the Romantic world-view in questions regarding femininity, and analyzing their images and rhetoric, especially those representations most clearly aimed at mothers and children's caregivers, I have been able to interpret similar images and rhetoric taken from Caroline's and Dorothea's texts as evidence of how two "Romantic subjects" problematized the transition from post-Enlightenment to early Romantic definitions of women.

My second goal in this entire project, therefore, has been to suggest how non-fictional texts participate not only in nation-building, as Jean Paul and Pestalozzi hoped

their texts would do, but also in the identity constructions of individuals living in the eras to which the texts hoped to speak. What seem today to be settled ideological positions of the vanguard were in fact at play in the era for individuals who were testing theory against practice, their cherished ideals against the choices that they needed to make to guarantee their sanity. While this idea has already emerged in scholarly analysis of the fiction of the era, I hope to broaden our understanding of the way in which non-fiction texts, especially that were widely read in their times, enact the same creative enlarging of possibilities for their readers.

These comparisons reveal that scholars' images of the Romantic era have not always recognized the impacts of the evolving "Romantic ideologies" within practical political spheres. Many feminist scholars, for example, blame essentialist representations of women on Rousseau, overlooking the fact that even the generation immediately following him was already reacting against him. This reaction was, moreover, occurring even among Romantic theorists who nonetheless borrowed the techniques of essentializing, mythologizing, or valorizing abstract notions of mother-love. They appropriated these images of women in the service of their new political projects of nation-building, restructuring the educational systems of Europe, dissolving social hierarchies and mitigating the capricious effects of absolutist politics. Clearly, writers like Jean Paul and Pestalozzi saw a traditionally formulated depiction of women as the safe departure for more radical discussions of positions not held by the general public. These traditional images of mothers and mother-love, while, as many scholars have

noted, oppressive to many women, also rendered new roles for women at least thinkable, as shown by the women, educators and writers, who justified their vocational status by appealing to Pestalozzi, and by women, like Dorothea and Caroline, who claimed new applications of maternal necessity to justify their unconventional choices and identities.

Therefore, although the content of Rousseau's images of femininity seems to pass through literary history unaltered, in fact a break appears when we see authors putting those tropes to new uses, especially in the early Romantic era, as we have seen in Pestalozzi's and Jean Paul's work. These theorists approve of his valorization of the mother as a social force, but want an educated, capable and completely human person to fill the role of mother. She will nurture her children, not from conditions that take her and her child back to nature, but oriented to the social structures and national context she will integrate her children into. Yet too many scholars argue that literary, legal, and educative representation of women such as appear in these texts, and even in the women's own discourse, followed a seemingly uninterrupted path, from Rousseau to the Victorian angel of the house.

Instead, the examples of Caroline and Dorothea show how even conservative-leaning images from the most well-loved theorists of the family and early childhood development in the early nineteenth century could be used to *reject* Rousseau's notions of the role of women, and the education of girls to be merely chaste and pleasurable to their husbands, rather than of service to the nation. These later writers avoided censorship and scandal by valorizing images of women, mythologizing and even essentializing them as

they made a case for a profound, national function for mothers, instilling a new civic consciousness in the next generation, and creating nations out of monarchies and peace out of post-war devastation.

These mothers and women were thus separate but equal *for the nation*, not in a different, purportedly more natural sphere of being, as it is too easy to read into these post-Rousseau texts. Instead, all these texts share representations of mothers' work as basis for new nation and national identity, of mothers' position in newly re-configured family unit, and of specific relationship to the time and space of the nation. The representations of interpersonal relationships are always sensitive to how personal positions mirror political ones, and with a continued insistence on the importance of education in determining the quality of citizens of next generation.

Both theorists and self-representing mothers, therefore, rejected the notion that women's function was merely domestic and centered around her husband that lay at the basis of Rousseau's thought, in no small part because they rejected positions that would consign them to what would become a kind of female ghetto in society. Most crucially, they attributed to women an important function in the state, with intensive mothering as one element in a new identity position for women. In this sense, these texts document much less the evolution of an essentialist notion of the female principle than an open acknowledgement that such images must be negotiated within frameworks of individual identity, social mores, and political possibilities.

That the images these authors paint are literary, and that the uses of these images evolves over time, opens these pedagogy texts to the same kind of investigations normally done on fiction. The representations of mothers in these treatises, for example, demonstrate the differences between two kinds of Romantic genius: the Romantic genius known from aesthetic theory in the era, an individual manifestation of fully realized artistic expression, and a Romantic notion of the *genius of the people*, an ideological innovation found in Romantic linguistic and anthropological studies. It is, in the letters and texts discussed here, the job of mothers to nurture and elicit that spirit in the community or nation. Thus the female became aligned not only with nurturance and natural growth, but also with education, as explained in previous chapters.

My arguments also have sought to demonstrate that nonfiction texts, that is, expository writing from a non-literature field, can be considered as part of period evidence usually researched only in aesthetic literature. One can expand the question of literary investigation of recurring images and tropes to examine also the methods of literary study. Approaching questions of aesthetics, rhetoric, genre and topical concern between eras has led me to conclude that educational treatises indeed can be used in the investigation of questions of periodization, for example. One sees even in educational methodologies (in tracts concerning human childhood development and the role of the family in the state and the mother in the family) the break between early nineteenth century social philosophy later and depictions of the family or of child development the

same break that is described in aesthetic literature as the development from the Enlightenment to Romanticism, and Romanticism into Biedermeier.

In the two works discussed here, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (usually classified as an excellent example of sensibility) and Jean Paul (usually classified as a bridge or between-periods author) employ the topoi, rhetoric, and forms that typify the Romantic period in which they worked, albeit from somewhat different political perspectives. That their usages find echoes, if not exact counterparts, in Caroline's and Dorothea's personal writings shows that the work of the theoretical vanguard found correspondences and echoes among individuals recognized as central to the movement, who were looking to claim the dignity of the Romantic subject in their own lives.

In this context, it is not insignificant that authors of aesthetic works and those of practical resource materials or texts that maintain social bonds adopt the same formal features. Most authors, including those of the early Romantic period, write in more than one genre, and those of Romanticism in particular adopted mixed genres as part of their program of artistic and social innovation. Like the Schlegel women's letters, Pestalozzi's work is an epistolary tract, and Jean Paul's incorporates epistolary segments in a work that demonstrates generic and imagistic scramble that is a hallmark of Romantic formal innovation. At the same time, their work was closely associated with favored Romantic themes, taking up issues such as the position of the individual genius in society, and instilling a national identity in an otherwise disengaged populace. These authors also expanded these stereotypical Romantic discussions to address more extensively women's

roles in the family, their position vis-à-vis texts and education, early childhood development and the improvement of education in the village and the bourgeois home.

These topics were dear to heart of philosophers and social reformers from the Enlightenment on. It would be worth pursuing how the discourses, the rhetorical strategies and literary methods, employed to depict such themes continued to prescribe identity positions for individuals, and what forms they would take into the middle of the nineteenth century. Examining an ideology and the representative samples of its identity positions in various expository texts also opens up further methodological questions for intellectual historians. An examination of work by authors ranging from the Enlightenment, such as Kant, to Pestalozzi, usually described as exemplary of *Empfindsamkeit*, to Jean Paul, the men and women of the Schlegel household and their friends (including Goethe, Schelling, Fichte and the Norwegian philosopher Steffens) to the Jungdeutschen, to Bettina von Arnim and Adalbert Stifter shows that all addressed questions pertaining to education and guiding human development in their nonfiction. Comparing and contrasting their works would lend new insights into questions of situating texts in specific historical moments and delineating literary-aesthetic development.

The two texts this study has taken as its focus show a clear engagement with both the literary aims and the social consciousness of the Romantic movement of the Jena years, just as they document how what have been considered *literary* questions actually have considerably more practical reflections in texts from multiple fields. The present

study thus has sought to demonstrate the value of investigating texts from fields not usually treated as literary-historical evidence, even in matters such as period description and historical continuity. An investigation wishing to discover a literary history either paralleling or contrasting with the history of *belles lettres* would throw light on a question much debated today.

The perspective I have been outlining here leads to a set of questions that feminist critics and critics of nineteenth century domesticity need to consider in more nuanced fashion. Dorothea, for example, fought the accepted norms of feminine identity in the most demanding possible way, only to end up in a position modern feminist critics interpret as “Friedrich’s appendage.” Caroline Schlegel Schelling, on the other hand, seems to have accepted published notions of femininity and maternal ideals most of her life. Rather than allowing them to oppress her in the years after her first marriage, however, she sought to reinvent those ideals to support unconventional, even radical, ideals for family structure, love of others, and political hierarchies as she worked to realize both the demands of her social roles and her own identities. When these women’s work, choices, and dilemmas are examined in the context of the changing implications these traditional assertions of qualities womanhood and motherhood, however, we see that the type of image they portray is perhaps completely opaque, and less indicative of their actual ideals and attitudes than the purposes they hide.

The mothers investigated in this study, Gertrude and Madame Jacqueline as fictional characters, and Caroline and Dorothea authoring their own identities for friends

and family, inhabit images of mothers who understand their roles as mothers to be not the complete expression of an inherent maternal essence, nor the reduction of a multi-faceted self to a single quality, but a series of actions that expand the arena of potential for their children and all the children of their local or national community. They see their authority and their ability to contribute to the future as not limited by their status as mothers, but in fact empowered by it. The idea that this status should limit their effectiveness for the public sphere was an external one that they rejected, insisting that the Romantic mother was, indeed, a woman who integrated many facets of a woman's experiences and transformed those experiences into opportunities for an expanded field of influence. This endpoint of Romanticism, therefore, has the potential to open our vision of the Biedermeier and Victorian eras, as well, to say nothing of offering a different vision of what the Schlegel women's own writings might actually have been suggesting in dialogue with their husbands.

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