

CHARACTER RESPONSE TO CONFLICT BETWEEN THE INDIVIDUAL AND
SOCIETY IN A SELECTION OF NOVELS BY THEODOR FONTANE

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this dissertation is to examine how Theodor Fontane (1819-1898) portrays character response to conflict between the individual and society in a selection of five novels set in Berlin during the 1870's and 1880's - namely, L'Adultera (1882); Cécile (1887); Irrungen, Wirrungen (1888); Stine (1890); and Effi Briest (1895). It is hypothesized that character response to the fundamental conflict is depicted as a function of personality. Moreover, three distinct personality types may be observed, each of which is associated with a different manner of response to specific instances of conflict between personal inclination and social expectation. The Conformist type is authoritarian in outlook, conservative, traditional, principled, intolerant of unconventional behaviour, fearful of ridicule, proud, competitive, disciplined, inhibited in emotional and instinctual expression. In specific instances of the basic conflict, the Conformist adheres to social norms in the belief that they represent the "right" values. The Compromiser type

is distinguished by melancholy, cynicism, fatalism, passivity, idealism, self-effacing tendencies, emotionalism, imagination, restlessness, expediency and fondness for unconventional activities. In situations of conflict, the Compromiser - whose values are at odds with social prescripts - responds either with resentful defiance of social norms, or with resigned submissiveness to them. The Courageous type is characterized by honesty, integrity, tolerance, co-operativeness, self-reliance, confidence, creativity and optimism. In instances of the basic conflict, this type displays the courage to express personal values and to pursue individual goals in a responsible manner despite opposition from society. While Fontane did not consciously create his characters according to this typology, there is considerable textual evidence that it does exist. Awareness of it contributes to our understanding of how the author depicts his characters' response to conflict between self and society.

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Introduction

In this thesis, I am concerned with examining the relationship between the individual and society as it is exhibited by characters in a selection of Theodor Fontane's novels. This relationship is one of inherent conflict, for the desires of the individual are not always congruous with the goals of society. It is my contention that character response to conflict between self and society is a function of personality structure, rather than of such factors as social class or gender. Further, I believe that three specific personality types - each of which is associated with a particular manner of response to the conflict - may be observed. An explanation of how I came to this conclusion and of how I arrived at the typology follows.

The prose works by Fontane (1819-1898) with which I first became acquainted were the author's two most widely acclaimed novels, Effi Briest and Irrungen, Wirrungen. I subsequently read the remaining novels which are set in contemporary Berlin and are known as the "Berlin-cycle." After reading these works, I could see that the novelist's principal concern revolved around conflict between the

individual and society. Moreover, I was struck by the number of similarities shared by so many of Fontane's character portraits. On the one hand, there were several figures which were distinguished by conservative behaviour and traditional views. By contrast, there were numerous other characters who could be designated as rebels. They also revealed a profound sense of resignation toward the fundamental conflict. A few characters - whom I initially thought of simply as misfits - did not belong to either of the two previous groups for although they were clearly unconventional, they did not display the resignation so prominent among the rebellious characters.

With a view to bringing my initial observations into sharper focus, I compiled as much information on each character as it was possible to glean from the texts. Aspects concerning the instance of conflict, the character's response to the conflict, the personality traits of the character, and other facets such as age, marital status, occupation, social class, religion and physical features were recorded. Some characters were clearly not involved in any specific instance of the conflict in question and they were, therefore, excluded from the enquiry. Analysis of the remaining characters revealed that there were - as my original impressions suggested - three distinct personality types into which the figures could be grouped. Moreover,

each type exemplified a similar response to instances of the fundamental conflict.

Personality profiles of each of these three types are presented at the outset of the chapter which deals with that type. They are too lengthy to be included in the introduction. Each profile is immediately followed with a list identifying the characters who belong to the type. A brief statement concerning the nature of each character's conflict is also included before embarking upon the detailed documentation and actual argumentation of the hypothesis. At this point, however, as part of my account of how I arrived at the typology, I would like to explain how the three terms which I use to designate the types were decided upon.

The first character type which will be examined I have termed conformist. The conformist is so-named because characters belonging to this group adopt the values of their society and consistently act in accordance with its expectations. In specific instances of conflict between personal inclination and the demands of society, the conformist adheres to social norms in the belief that they represent the "right" values. The second character type to be discussed I have termed compromiser. It is so-named because the characters which belong to this group feel that since their values are at odds with social prescripts, they must make concessions to society, must reluctantly sacrifice

their own desires and must surrender hope of realizing their personal goals. In situations of conflict, the compromiser responds either with resentful defiance of social norms, or with resigned submissiveness to them. Both responses place characters of this type in a position in which their best interests are jeopardized and are thus instances of compromise in that sense, too. For if the compromiser responds with defiance, he or she provokes punishment by society. Unnecessary surrender to the will of others is, of course, equally self-destructive. The third group of characters I have designated as the courageous type because its members display the courage to express their personal values and to pursue their goals as individuals in a responsible manner despite opposition from society. In episodes of the basic conflict, this type decides upon a course of action which is compatible with their personal values and desires, yet does not unduly infringe upon the legitimate rights of others in society. The courage of the courageous type is, essentially, the courage to be one's true self.

The purpose of conducting this investigation is to reveal that character response to the conflict between the individual and society may be understood as a function of a particular personality type. By contrast, the tendency of previous Fontane scholarship has been to explain character

response to such conflict in terms of the characters' social class.¹ It will be demonstrated, however, that characters of different social classes share significant personality traits, as well as a similar attitude toward conflict between self and society. Alternatively, gender has been posited as the determining factor in character response to the basic conflict.² This point of view has been associated with an assumption - which the current study also seeks to refute - that the problems of the male characters cannot be regarded and treated in the same ways as those of the female characters.³ In this analysis, the characters under discussion belong in the main to the lower aristocracy and the affluent upper-middle classes, since Fontane depicted the majority of his characters as belonging to these classes. A special effort has been made, however, to include as many working class characters as possible, along with approximately the same number of males and females to provide evidence in support of the hypothesis that the characters' responses to the basic conflict are not a function of social class or gender.

Five novels which belong to Fontane's Berlin-cycle were eventually selected for this study. They consist of the following: L'Adultera (1882); Cécile (1887); Irrungen, Wirrungen (1888); Stine (1890); and Effi Briest (1895). These choices were based upon a number of reasons. Firstly,

I decided that works in which the author set his narrative in a place and/or time other than that of Berlin during the 1870's and 1880's should be excluded. This was done in order to maintain the same social milieu in which the different responses of the characters to the basic conflict could not merely be attributed to their different social setting - as could be the case, for example, with Fontane's historical novels. Thus such novels as Schach von Wuthenow (1882) set in the year 1806, Graf Petöfy (1884) with its Austro-Hungarian setting, or Unwiederbringlich (1891) which concerns itself with the Danish aristocracy, are - given the need to retain unity of social milieu - not suitable for this particular enquiry.

Secondly, after studying those novels by Fontane which do retain unity of milieu insofar as they are all set in contemporary Berlin, it became apparent that a few of them would also be inappropriate choices. One unsuitable work which has been excluded is Der Stechlin (1898), described by Garland as dealing "with the reactions of individuals to ideas."⁴ This novel does not exemplify conflict between the individual and society. In fact, the author admitted that he was not concerned with conflict of any kind in Der Stechlin: "Von Verwicklungen und Lösungen, von Herzenskonflikten oder Konflikten überhaupt, von Spannungen und Überraschungen findet sich nichts."⁵ Similarly, Die Poggenpuhls (1896) is another

work in which there are no instances of the type of conflict between self and society which is under consideration in this thesis. As Fontane himself assessed Die Poggenpuhls: "Das Buch ist kein Roman und hat keinen Inhalt....das 'Wie' muss für das 'Was' eintreten."⁶ The third and final work belonging to the Berlin-cycle which was excluded from this enquiry is Frau Jenny Treibel (1892), which Fontane termed "eine humoristische Verhöhnung unserer Bourgeoisie."⁷ In this novel, we do see one character (Corinna) who experiences an instance of the basic conflict which takes the form of a desire to marry a man of a higher socio-economic standing than her own. This situation of conflict is commonly encountered in Fontane's novels and a number of equally good, if not actually superior, examples of it are found in the other five novels selected for this study. Since Frau Jenny Treibel offers only one character for discussion the nature of whose conflict is not of any special interest, the novel does not warrant inclusion in this study. Moreover, Fontane's own statement of his aim in the novel makes it clear that his principal concern was not conflict between the individual and society, but satire: "Zweck der Geschichte: das Hohle, Phrasenhafte, Lügnerische, Hochmütige, Hartherzige des Bourgeoisstandpunkts zu zeigen, der von Schiller spricht und Gerson meint."⁸

Lest the reader conclude that the five novels were

chosen simply by a process of elimination, it should be pointed out that they offer more than the necessary unity of milieu and characters who encounter instances of the basic conflict. They are particularly suitable because they present in combination a good variety of conflict situations for analysis. Likewise, the range of character response to the fundamental conflict is broadened by including works frequently neglected by critics such as Stine and Cécile, in which both male and female characters adopt a lifestyle of invalidism and eventually commit suicide in response to the conflict. Another work, L'Adultera, contributes two of the four characters who illustrate the relatively rare courageous mode of response. In total, the five novels selected furnish a sufficient number of appropriate characters to illustrate the hypothesis without spreading the analysis too thinly. Concentration upon the characters in these novels provides an optimum treatment of the topic. Naturally, the observations and conclusions which this investigation yields are not necessarily applicable to characters in Fontane's other novels.

The method which I have employed to present my argumentation of the hypothesis warrants some explanation at this point. The body of the enquiry is organized into three chapters with each of these chapters focussing in turn upon one of the character types. Having already in this

introduction defined the sense in which I use the terms conformist, compromiser and courageous, each chapter is organized according to the following scheme: composite personality profile of the given type; selection of the characters; elucidation of their instances of the basic conflict; main body of discussion; summary of the most pertinent points.

In the main body of the discussion, the reader is presented with the argumentation of the hypothesis which is essentially twofold - namely, that several characters reveal a number of significant features described in the type profile, and that these same characters also display a tendency to respond to instances of the basic conflict in the same manner. I have chosen to devote the bulk of the argumentation to the former aspect of the hypothesis for two reasons. Firstly, since I maintain that a character's response to the conflict is a function of his or her personality, it is of chief importance that the existence of the personality type be well established if any further conclusions are to be drawn. Secondly, since the assertion that individual characters share numerous features with the basic type requires a good deal of documentation with internal evidence from the texts, it was virtually inevitable that this aspect of the enquiry would dominate.

By contrast, the actual episodes of conflict are

easily established as are the characters' responses to them. Any reader, for example, who is acquainted with so much as a plot summary of Effi Briest knows that the heroine's conflict concerns the temptation to commit adultery, and that her response to this situation is defiance of society's expectations. Rather than discuss the characters' responses to the episodes of conflict in isolation after having delineated the personality types, however, I decided that since the two aspects of the hypothesis are so intimately linked, it would be more appropriate to embed the relatively briefer discussions of conflict within the larger matrix of the discourse on personality. In Chapters One and Two, I commence the main discussion of the character types with an overview of the physical features which emerged from my investigation as being associated with them. I then proceed to discuss the various aspects of personality. In Chapter Three, I depart from this format since only a few points can be made regarding the physical features of the courageous type and they do not warrant devoting a separate section to them.

With respect to the actual analysis of characters as types, it is true that any attempt to establish a typology of character entails a risk of oversimplification through reducing individualized figures to types. This danger has been minimized by discussing a considerable number of

features shared by each type, which - even in the absence of those attributes peculiar to a specific character - present a fairly complex portrait. Admittedly, major characters are drawn in more detail and naturally reveal more dimensions of a given response type than do secondary characters. The latter are, however, no less worthy of consideration than the former and, in fact, often provide important parallels to the conflicts of the main figures. Moreover, discussion of the secondary characters contributes to the originality of this study, since most critics have tended to focus on the same few major figures. It certainly cannot be denied that Fontane's characters are convincingly portrayed as individuals. Yet, it was beyond the scope of this investigation to examine those features which are unique to each character. The typology possesses a certain utility, however, in that it establishes a framework which facilitates comparisons and contrasts that would not arise as readily if characters were studied singly.

One other aspect in connection with the typology itself requires some clarification. The three hypothesized types are mutually exclusive in the sense that each one consists of a distinct personality profile which is associated with a particular manner of response to the basic conflict and which cannot be confused with either of the other two types. The majority of characters selected for

this enquiry can be readily identified as exponents of one type, for their personalities remain static and so does their manner of response to the conflict. A few characters, however, undergo a process of maturation or significant development of their personality. This is not surprising, given that some of the novels span several years in time. A corresponding change in the response to conflict accompanies this evolution of the character's personality - a factor which lends further credence to the hypothesis. One example of this phenomenon is provided by Innstetten in Effi Briest, who - for most of what we see of him - is clearly a conformist type. Our last glimpses of this character, however, reveal a figure who has become resigned, melancholic, cynical and sceptical of society's values which he once believed in. In short, Innstetten comes to bear many of the features typical of a compromiser. A second example of a character who undergoes a transition from one type to another is Melanie. When L'Adultera opens, she reveals the traits of restlessness, dissatisfaction and disappointment associated with the compromiser type. This character very soon embarks upon a journey of personal growth during which she displays the various hallmarks of a courageous type.

A few transitions like these from one type to another do not undermine the hypothesis that distinct modes of response to the conflict which are associated with a

particular personality type do exist. On the contrary, such transitions reflect the realism of Fontane's character portraits by illustrating that growth and change are possible. Moreover, the characters who do fit more than one type do so in succession, not simultaneously. The transitions are also logical in that we might well expect a conformist to eventually become disillusioned with society's values and adopt the cynical pose of a compromiser. Similarly, a compromiser could conceivably summon the will to overcome the inertia of resignation and pursue a new direction. The few transitions which occur do so only in the two directions just described. No character, for example, changes from a conformist to a courageous type, or from a courageous type to a compromiser. Also, no character displays the traits of all three types.

It must be conceded that any critical approach possesses inherent strengths and weaknesses. There is, however, no definitive method of literary interpretation available to us. In this investigation, I have relied primarily upon internal evidence cited from the texts as the best means to support my hypothesis. Yet, the contributions of previous scholarship have certainly been taken into consideration as much as possible and I have shown where I agree, or disagree, with pertinent views expressed by a number of critics with different theoretical points of view.

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It is not the contention of this study that Fontane ever consciously proceeded to create his characters according to the typology presented in this thesis, or to any other formula. There is textual evidence, however, that the author perceived three different attitudes which may be adopted by individuals toward other members of their social group. These are identified by the character Hofprediger Dörffel as "'Hochmut,'" "'Demut,'" and "'Mut.'"⁹ Such attitudes of pride, humility and courage can, interestingly, be discerned in the conformist, compromiser and courageous types, respectively. Ultimately, the only absolute "proof" of my hypothesis would be a quotation from Fontane's correspondence attesting to the existence of the three character types which I describe. In lieu of such testimony, my aim can be at most to offer a reasonably persuasive argument in support of my thesis.

I. The Conformist Type

"'...im Zusammenleben mit den Menschen hat sich ein Etwas ausgebildet, das nun mal da ist und nach dessen Paragraphen wir uns gewöhnt haben, alles zu beurteilen, die andern und uns selbst'"(IV,236).

- Innstetten

a. Profile of the conformist type

We commence our discussion with a basic personality profile of the conformist character type. Individual characters associated with this type can be identified by a constellation of significant features which they share with the following basic profile.

The hallmark of the conformist type is an essentially authoritarian nature. By this we mean that such a character accepts without question the values and expectations of the society in which he or she is depicted. In the novels by Fontane under consideration, that society is Imperial Berlin of the 1870's and 1880's. Regarding society as the ultimate arbiter of appropriate behaviour and goals for its members, the conformist type adheres strictly to prevailing social

norms of conduct. These tend, of course, to be conservative and traditional. Principled to a fault, there is an inclination with this type toward rigid perceptions of right and wrong. Little tolerance for unconventional behaviour is discernible and considerable prejudice against those who exhibit individual lifestyles is apparent. Fearful of ridicule, the conformist sees only one acceptable option in life - namely, to abide by society's expectations.

Another important feature of the conformist type is a negative form of pride in which there is a desire to elevate the self in relation to others. This characteristic finds expression in a number of ways. A conformist believes, for example, that by living according to conventional standards, he or she will not only avoid disapproval, but will win the approval and even the admiration of others. Such preoccupation with reputation, or how one is viewed by others, is accompanied by intense striving to enhance social prestige. The male conformist type is an ambitious careerist, while the female counterpart is an equally status conscious social climber. Moreover, this character type displays a certain arrogance, or air of superiority, often revealed through a patronizing and domineering attitude toward those who are considered to be inferior. Not surprisingly, the conformist tends to be manipulative and competitive in relationships, although this inclination is

largely concealed behind a socially acceptable role or polished façade.

Also typical of the conformist is a conviction that the individual can and ought to control every aspect of daily life. Active and goal-oriented, the conformist is disciplined, cautious, concerned with order and routines. This type experiences difficulty in coping with the unpredictable as well as with the uncontrollable. Emotional and instinctual expression is, therefore, inhibited. And reliance upon reason supplants creative imagination in this type. Despite the advantages of possessing youth, good health and physical attractiveness, the conformist remains inwardly unfree - that is, he or she remains unable to develop a personal set of values distinct from those of society. In response to what one critic has defined as "the problem of social order, of the demands of society as opposed to the desires of the individual," ¹⁰ the conformist is reluctant to acknowledge that any such conflict exists. When faced with a situation in which a conflict of this nature cannot be ignored, the customary response of this character type is to uphold society's prescripts in the belief that they are the only acceptable values.

b. Selection of characters and the nature of their conflicts

The specific characters selected for discussion in this chapter as representatives of the conformist type include: Baron von Innstetten, Annie von Innstetten and the housemaid, Johanna, from Effi Briest; Major Gryczinski, his wife, Jacobine and Lydia van der Straaten from L'Adultera; Stine Rehbein from Stine; and Käthe von Rienäcker (née Sellenthin) from Irrungen, Wirrungen. In the novel Cécile, only the three principal characters are portrayed in situations of the basic conflict and each of those three is a compromiser type.

Among the eight characters just mentioned, we encounter a variety of contexts in which the conflict between self and society is revealed. A brief description of the circumstances of conflict in which Fontane depicts each character will be offered at this point in order to justify the choice of figures as ones who do, in fact, experience the basic conflict. Detailed discussion of their situations and of their responses to them is undertaken in the main body of the chapter.

Innstetten's conflict arises out of his discovery of his wife's former liaison with another aristocrat and fellow officer, Crampas. He is faced with a decision between restoring his blemished honour through the custom of

challenging Crampas to a duel or, on the other hand, forgiving his wife's indiscretion - an alternative toward which he expresses a personal inclination.

Johanna's conflict between personal desire and social expectation centers upon the romantic attraction which she feels toward her master and social superior, Innstetten. Once the latter is married, of course, her aspirations are even more socially unacceptable.

Gryczinski is a figure who, in the past, was faced with a choice between retaining his Catholic religion, or relinquishing it in order to further his career in Protestant Prussia. Also, Gryczinski is cognizant of another possible conflict impending between sacrificing his established military career or his wife, if she should commit adultery.

Jacobine is an additional character who is confronted with two separate episodes of the fundamental conflict. On the one hand, she must decide whether to maintain her relationship with her sister, Melanie - who has become an adulteress and divorcée - or, to comply with social expectation and her husband's directive by shunning her. Secondly, Jacobine herself experiences the temptation of infidelity.

Stine's instance of conflict - namely, her romantic attachment to a man of a much higher social class than her

own - is complicated by a vow she made to her deceased mother that she would avoid relationships with men altogether.

Lastly, Käthe's albeit only alleged episode of conflict is one shared with Jacobine and numerous other characters in Fontane's novels - the lure of adultery. And the conflicts of both Annie and Lydia concern the problem of their mothers' adultery, which places these girls in a position of being expected to reject them.

c. Physical attributes of the conformists

The first significant observation concerning the physical characteristics of the conformists is that they are all young. The eldest at thirty-eight years, Geert von Innstetten, is not yet middle-aged when he makes his first appearance in the novel which is generally regarded as Fontane's masterpiece, Effi Briest. Two additional characters in this work belong to the conformist type - namely, the servant, Johanna, and Innstetten's daughter, Annie. The former is described as a "nicht mehr ganz jugendliche Person"(IV,49). She is, however, younger than her employer and our last glimpse of Annie is as a ten year old schoolgirl. Major Otto von Gryczinski and his wife, Jacobine - both of whom we meet in the first novel of the

author's Berlin series, L'Adultera, are young adults. A third conformist character, Lydia, who also appears in this work, is approximately the same age as Annie. Käthe, the young bride of Botho von Rienäcker in Irrungen, Wirrungen, as well as Stine, the youthful heroine of the work which bears her name, may also be counted among the group of conformist characters.

The common feature of youth among these characters who have not questioned the demands of society, cannot be regarded as purely accidental. A reasonable explanation would seem to be that they either have not yet experienced the disappointment of unmet expectations or, if they have, as in the case of Innstetten after his proposal of marriage to Luise is rejected, they continue to feel optimistic for a while - perhaps because they are still young enough to believe that life will give them a chance to recoup their loss. The bitterness, resignation and even despair which are typical of so many characters in Fontane's works, only rarely manifest themselves in those who are not yet middle-aged. As long as their adopted code of values is not seriously challenged by their life experience, most of these figures continue upon the path of conformity.

Another physical distinction shared by the conformists - with the possible exception of Stine - is that of good health. These characters are fit and trim, apart

from the "stattliche Fülle" (IV,49) of Johanna, which provides the only contrast. She is not, however, obese - a feature often encountered among the compromisers. Although Innstetten has abandoned his career as an officer for that of a civil servant, he remains "schlank...und von militärischer Haltung"(IV,18). We may assume that Major von Gryczinski is likewise physically fit and of similar bearing.

The women of the conformist type are portrayed as very feminine counterparts to the very masculine male figures. Each has been endowed with at least one outstanding physical feature. In Jacobine's case, it is her strawberry-blond hair (II,22), while Käthe is described as a "'[w]undervolle Flachsblondine mit Vergissmeinnichtaugen'"(II,361). Indeed, blond hair is predominant among women of this category. Johanna, too, has "'schönes flachsenes Haar'"(IV,250). Even Stine possesses hair which is "flachsgelb" and which "als Typus einer germanischen...Blondine gelten konnte"(II,483). Annie, as an exception to the rule, is predictably dark-haired like both her parents; Lydia is also dark.

These characters are free of any obvious physical blemishes. Their attractiveness helps them to win approval and ensures that they are readily accepted into the mainstream of society. Rewarded with a sense of belonging, the conformist characters are encouraged to remain

conventional not only in appearance, but in their behaviour as well. To do otherwise, would cost them the esteem of others, which they are loathe to surrender.

Despite this positive picture of the conformist type, we find numerous indications that, under the surface, all is not well. Problems range from a weak constitution, which may predispose the individual to a physical breakdown if unusual stress is encountered, to nervousness and other types of physical symptoms arising from chronic underlying tension.

Stine is the only character in this category who, while not actually ill, is not of robust health either. A marked contrast drawn by the narrator between Stine and her sister accentuates our impression of her delicacy:

Auch sie [Stine] trug einen gewellen Scheitel, aber ihr Haar war flachsgelb, und die Ränder der überaus freundlichen Augen zeigten sich leicht gerötet, was, aller sonst blühenden Erscheinung und einer gewissen Ähnlichkeit mit der Pittelkow unerachtet, doch auf eine zartere Gesundheit hinzudeuten schien. Und so war es auch. Die brünette Witwe war das Bild einer südlichen Schönheit, während die jüngere Schwester als Typus einer germanischen, wenn auch freilich etwas angekränkelten Blondine gelten konnte. (II,483)

The narrator's remark concerning the rims of Stine's eyes, combined with comments made by the apartment caretakers at the close of the story, have led Martini to conclude that the heroine will probably die as a result of the shock to her system caused by Waldemar's sudden death.¹¹ But as

Steinhauer writes: "...this is by no means certain; it is not in the spirit of Fontane. It is quite possible that she will recover, cherish the memory of this romantic episode...,but marry a worker or petty shopkeeper...."¹²

This assertion is not, however, adequately supported.

Insofar as "the spirit of Fontane" is concerned, death of even a young heroine is not unusual in the author's works, to which the novels Effi Briest and Cécile testify. Stine is not really very likely to follow in the footsteps of Lene - who, as the heroine of Irrungen, Wirrungen, shares a number of other similarities with her - if only due to a simple lack of the requisite physical stamina to do so. In Irrungen, Wirrungen, the lovers both survive to go their separate ways with new partners and to achieve a satisfactory level of social integration. There is every likelihood that Fontane intended Stine to portray the opposite outcome of an essentially similar situation - namely, a tragic conclusion for both lovers.¹³

Despite the outward composure of the conformists, inwardly they experience a high degree of tension, which reveals itself through agitation. Two of the women in this classification betray their uneasiness through compulsive talking. Jacobine and Käthe display what, according to the narrator in L'Adultera, constitutes "das tiefste Bedürfnis der Frauennatur: das Plauderbedürfnis"(II,42). While Fontane

does not include these ladies in much actual dialogue, nevertheless, we are given numerous reports from other characters, as well as from the narrator, which create an impression of considerable verbosity. It is probable that the author deliberately employed this indirect method of characterization in the case of these two figures, not merely because they are secondary characters, but precisely due to the vacuity of their speech, which could only have detracted from the novel's impact. Fontane's subtle technique in this regard is illustrated by the following description of Käthe: "Eigentlich führte sie das Wort, und keiner nahm Anstoss daran, weil sie die Kunst des gefälligen Nichtssagens mit einer wahren Meisterschaft übte"(II,427).

The shallow content of these characters' recorded speech, combined with what is often inappropriate timing of their utterances, inclines us to interpret the women's habit as a means of maintaining emotional detachment. The narrator reinforces our impression in this direction with his account of Jacobine's response to her sister Melanie's strained reunion with her children: "...Jacobine versuchte nach ihrer Art eine Plauderei. Denn sie war ohne jede tiefere Bewegung und betrachtete das Ganze vom Standpunkte einer dramatischen Matinee"(II,125). Jacobine's lack of empathy could well indicate a substantial loss of contact with her own emotions, which would logically reduce her capacity to

respond with sensitivity to those of another. Wölfel describes her, for instance, as being "von charakterloser Flachheit," and as suffering from "Selbstentfremdheit."¹⁴ Jacobine's superficiality is also encountered in Käthe and serves to exasperate her husband, Botho:

...wenn ihn...von Zeit zu Zeit eine Mißstimmung anwandelte, so war es, wie schon damals auf seiner Dresdener Hochzeitsreise, vorwiegend darüber, dass mit Käthe wohl ein leidlich vernünftiges, aber durchaus kein ernstes Wort zu reden war...auch das Beste, was sie sagte, war oberflächlich und 'spielrig,' als ob sie der Fähigkeit entbehrt hätte, zwischen wichtigen und unwichtigen Dingen zu unterscheiden. (II,418)

The problem is clearly not a lack of intelligence, as the foregoing quotation concedes, but rather a refusal to acknowledge the existence of sad and serious aspects of life. For Käthe, everything is simply "'zu komisch.'"

Another female conformist, Johanna, uses talking not so much to avoid negative feelings, as to vent them. She accomplishes this aim through gossip. It is, for example, evident in her chat with Frau Paaschen (IV,72) that Johanna is considerably more supportive of her master, than of her mistress, Effi. She regards the other household staff members as, for one reason or another, unsuitable persons with whom to engage in conversation (IV,73). In fact, the rest of the staff is loyal to Effi and would not tolerate Johanna's sly innuendos.

This character's gossip, though engaged in less frequently, is just as compulsive as the banter of Jacobine and Käthe, insofar as all of these figures appear to be unaware of the reasons motivating their actions. They seem driven to repeat the same behaviour without being able to exert any conscious control over it. In Johanna's case, a plausible explanation for her habit of gossiping is that it may afford her some relief from feelings of hostility which could stem from frustration connected with her social position. Rumoured to be the illegitimate daughter of an officer (IV,127), Johanna has had to content herself with a lower station in life than perhaps her aspirations would have dictated. Through gossip, Johanna can release some of the tension stemming from anger over this situation.

In contrast to these three women who use talking either to avoid dealing with, or to vent their negative feelings, Stine is the only character among this group who actually employs language for its intended purpose - communication.¹⁵ She establishes a genuine dialogue with her suitor, Graf Waldemar von Haldern, which she believes accounts for his attachment to her (II,519-520). Stine's sincere expression of her feelings has an unexpectedly strong emotional impact upon Waldemar, who has never known anything but the most superficial verbal exchanges at his level of society.

Whereas the female conformists - apart from the two girls - tend to be highly talkative, the men in this classification are of the proverbial strong and silent type. We learn of Innstetten, for example, that his "Ernst" and "Zugeknöpftheit"(IV,130) prevented him, when he was an officer, from fitting in with his more spirited comrades. Yet, the narrator reveals of him: "...so nüchtern er schien, eigentlich war er nervös..."(IV,103). Major Gryczinski is likewise "ein Schweiger," who dons "ein beständiges, jeden Sprecher ermutigendes Lächeln, das er, alle nutzlose Parteinahme klug vermeidend, über Gerechte und Ungerechte gleichmässig scheinen liess"(II,23). His perpetual grin, which might be regarded as a sort of nervous tic, does not indicate that the Major is a happy man. It does testify, however, to a rigid control of emotional response, which is confirmed by a statement from his wife: "'Gryczinskis drittes Wort ist ja, dass es im Leben darauf ankomme, seine Gefühle zu beherrschen'"(II,123).

With their military background, both Innstetten and Gryczinski have naturally been exposed to the harsh discipline of army life, but this does not appear to be the only factor involved, since Crampas - a former officer of Innstetten's brigade - exhibits quite a different sort of emotional constitution to what these two men possess. An actual fear of feelings, or perhaps the potential

consequences of expressing them, seems to play a part in their marked reticence. The fact that this trait isolates such characters from others is remarked upon by Martini:

"Der vereinsamte Mensch zieht eine Grenze des Schweigens um sich, die einen Raum der inneren Selbstbewahrung umschreibt."¹⁶

Anxious to conform to the standards which society prescribes as appropriate for them, Innstetten and Gryczinski shun any display of emotion which might be construed as evidence of weakness or unmanliness.

Interestingly, both men are enthusiastic Wagnerians. By way of explication, the narrator comments upon Innstetten's case: "...er war ein Wagnerschwärmer. Was ihn zu diesem hinübergeführt hatte, war ungewiss; einige sagten, seine Nerven..."(IV,103). The view has been put forth that music can serve to release blocked energy.¹⁷ Perhaps these two gentlemen - instead of verbalizing their feelings - experience music as an avenue of emotional expression.¹⁸

In addition to inhibited emotional expression, another source of chronic tension in the adult conformists is the frustration of instinctual urges. Parmée has commented upon "suspicions aroused in the reader of sexual inadequacy on Innstetten's part:"¹⁹ "Um zehn war Innstetten dann abgespannt und erging sich in ein paar wohlgemeinten, aber etwas müden Zärtlichkeiten, die sich Effi gefallen liess, ohne sie recht zu erwidern"(IV,103). What could, in fact, be the

case here is that Innstetten has simply learned to pursue his work even at home in the evenings as a means of avoiding physical intimacy - much as he appears to have arranged a "cultural" honeymoon to prevent excessive time spent in private. Certainly, this is the view of Klieneberger, who asserts: "In characters like...Innstetten..., conformism is symptomatic of a general human deficiency and goes...with a careerism which is an attempt to compensate for an incapacity for intimate personal relationships."²⁰ The parallel between Innstetten and Gryczinski, another driven careerist, is quite discernible here and may account for the jaundiced view which the Major takes towards children: "'Er ist ohnehin gegen Kinder'"(II,126). Certainly, it is difficult to agree with Grawe's impression of Gryczinski and Jacobine as possessing "eine starke sexuelle Bindung."²¹ No textual evidence is provided to substantiate this opinion.

It is not only the men, however, but also the women who appear to suffer from inhibition of their instinctual urges. Despite good health and no reason to suspect infertility, the two married women, Käthe and Jacobine, have both remained childless. In the case of the former, the narrator observes: "Was andere junge Frauen vielleicht betrübt hätte: dass das Paar einfach ein Paar blieb, wurde von Käthe keinen Augenblick schmerzlich empfunden...Der Sinn für Familie, geschweige die Sehnsucht danach, war ihr noch nicht

aufgegangen..."(II,418). Käthe's attitude would surely have been considered by many in the late nineteenth century to be somewhat irregular for a young woman.²² By the end of the novel, however, Käthe's dormant maternal instinct asserts itself. Jacobine, on the other hand, appears to be without children more by her husband's choice than by her own. We glean from one of her letters to Melanie, however, that she probably experiences at least the desire for motherhood: "...ich denke mir, Mutterliebe bleibt doch das Schönste..."(II,123).

The two unmarried women, Stine and Johanna, are not in a position to allow themselves expression of their sexuality without incurring the censure of society. Stine, who has witnessed her sister endure this type of reproach, is anxious to avoid a similar fate herself. She is also determined to uphold a vow of chastity, which was made to her dying mother - long before she had experienced any kind of romantic attraction. Johanna, on the other hand, is far from shy once Effi is out of the picture. As Innstetten describes her behaviour to his friend, Wüllersdorf: "'Dieses Sich-in-Szene-Setzen...,diese halb komische Büstenplastik, die mit einem Spezialanspruch auftritt...es wäre zum Totschiessen, wenn es nicht so lächerlich wäre'"(IV,286).

The young girls, Annie and Lydia, warrant brief mention in this context as well. Although they have not yet

entered puberty, there is reason to suspect that a satisfactory adjustment to the female role will be difficult, if not impossible, for them to achieve. Not only have they both been deprived of a suitable role model to guide them into maturity, but the circumstances giving rise to this deprivation have provoked a smouldering resentment which, if not somehow overcome, will interfere with their happy and healthy functioning in adulthood.

To consolidate the observations made up to this point, some common threads linking conformist characters include youth, health, attractiveness and a high level of tension due to inhibited emotional or instinctual expression, which betrays itself through various compulsive habits.


d. General features of the conformists

i) Authoritarian characteristics

The conformist characters are fundamentally authoritarian in their outlook. Webster's New World Dictionary defines authoritarian as: "believing in or characterized by unquestioning obedience to authority rather than individual freedom." The "authority" may be simply another person, or it can be represented by a character's superiors in a hierarchy. Even unwritten laws of society,

which are perpetuated through the force of tradition, for example, can constitute authority. Jacobine - whom one critic has aptly termed, "eine Marionette ihres Mannes"²³ - exhibits a typically authoritarian readiness to capitulate to the demands of another person, when she obeys her husband's stipulation that she sever all relations with her sister (II,118). On another level, the same attitude is expressed by Innstetten towards his superiors, as he explains to Effi: "'...ich lasse dich ja nicht allein aus Rücksichtslosigkeit oder Laune, sondern weil es so sein muss; ich bin ein Mann im Dienst'"(IV,78).

Both characters may actually be trying to excuse behaviour which they want to engage in anyway. It is conceivable, for instance, that Jacobine fears her own reputation could be damaged through association with Melanie. Her husband's injunction releases her from taking the responsibility of making her own position clear - an act which would have made her, instead of Major Gryczinski, the target of her sister's indignation. Similarly, Innstetten ignores the fact that after his disappointment in the courtship of Effi's mother, he made a choice to put the pursuit of a career ahead of personal relationships. By way of contrast, Effi's father - a compromiser type - made a conscious decision to avoid the civil service precisely because it would have restricted his personal freedom and



independence:

'So nach meinem eigenen Willen schalten und walten zu können ist mir immer das liebste gewesen, jedenfalls lieber...als so die Blicke beständig nach oben richten zu müssen. Man hat dann bloss immer Sinn und Merk für hohe und höchste Vorgesetzte.' (IV,21)

Herr von Briest is clearly not an authoritarian personality, in that he neither salutes authority, nor does he attempt to establish himself as an authority. Innstetten, however, as both a lawyer and a civil servant, does defend the values of society over those of the individual.

Self-control, plus a desire to control the behaviour of others, emerge as two features associated with the authoritarian attitude of the conformists. Gryczinski neatly sums up the former aspect: "'Ein jeder hat die Kunst zu lernen, sich zu bescheiden und einzuschränken'"(II,38). The habit of self-control is disclosed by a penchant for ritual and routine. We learn that Innstetten, for example, is always an early riser and is very strict about adherence to a precise morning schedule. This habit of early rising - though it may be partly conditioned by his military background - is very strongly ingrained, as Johanna remarks: "'Darin ist er streng; er kann das lange Schlafen nicht leiden..."(IV,53). Moreover, Innstetten's habit of punctuality reinforces our impression that this is most likely another example of this character's personal

preference for routine. "Und es entsprach seinem Charakter und seinen Gewohnheiten," observes the narrator regarding Innstetten, "genau Zeit und Stunde zu halten"(IV,42). Käthe, too, is accustomed to routine - so much so, that it may even be a factor in her quiescent desire for motherhood:

"Sie...fand...,dass sie vor einer Veränderung ihrer Häuslichkeit eher erschrak, als sie herbeiwünschte"(II,418).

Their preoccupation with Ordnung appears to serve a dual purpose for the conformists. On the one hand, it eliminates the need for continual decision-making, once the initial choice of a routine has been made; while, on the other hand, it contributes to a sense of security by removing, as far as possible from the day's activities, elements which are spontaneous and unpredictable.

The desire to control, or endeavour to control, the behaviour of others is not limited to specific conformist characters. For a reciprocal relationship exists between society as authority, and the conformists, who condone and uphold its values. One manner in which society exercises influence over its members is by law enforcement. The conformists, as one would expect, abide by the law themselves and view any transgression of it as contemptible. Innstetten, who as a lawyer actually participates in the creation of laws, is outraged by the pronouncement of Crampas - a compromiser character - that all regulations are

boring (IV,128):

'...einer wie Sie, Crampas, der unter der Fahne der Disziplin grossgeworden ist und recht gut weiss, dass es ohne Zucht und Ordnung nicht geht, ein Mann wie Sie, der sollte doch eigentlich so was nicht reden, auch nicht einmal im Spass. Indessen, ich weiss schon, Sie haben einen himmlischen Kehr-mich-nicht-dran und denken, der Himmel wird nicht gleich einstürzen. Nein, gleich nicht. Aber mal kommt es.' (IV,129)

Innstetten's threat of dire consequences awaiting anyone who transgresses society's laws has an ominous ring to it. We sense that he would not hesitate to volunteer his services as the agent of retribution. However, as Bance notes: "...to set oneself up as the representative of Ordnung is always dubious, a way of expressing the will to power and domination over others."²⁴

Another manner in which society seeks to influence its members is through education. In the words of Koc:

...society makes an enormous effort to pass on its beliefs, ideals and principles from generation to generation, doing so through a program of indoctrination called education. This education (Erziehung) is a training program which aims at instilling in the individual the values held by society as a whole.²⁵

Moreover, Koc elaborates: "... Fontane...depict[s] Erziehung not only as a tool society uses to assert its values upon the individual, but...also...as a tool certain 'principled' individuals use to assert their ego over another ego."²⁶

Again, Innstetten is culpable on this account. Crampas says of him: "'...er operiert nämlich immer erzieherisch, ist der geborene Pädagog...'"(IV,133). This essentially paternalistic attitude finds what is perhaps its most obnoxious expression in a tendency towards moralizing: "Innstetten hielt nur einen seiner kleinen moralischen Vorträge, zu denen er überhaupt hinneigte"(IV,129).

Children are the most susceptible targets of pedagogical talent and it is no coincidence that Innstetten enlists Johanna, another authoritarian type, rather than Roswitha to help him "educate" Annie after the discovery of her mother's adultery: "'Das arme Kind. Sie müssen es ihr allmählich beibringen, dass sie keine Mutter mehr hat. Ich kann es nicht. Aber machen Sie's gescheit. Und dass Roswitha nicht alles verdirbt'"(IV,245). Critics appear to have overlooked this key quotation and, consequently, place far too much of the blame for Annie's "conversion" upon Innstetten. Parmée's viewpoint constitutes one such example:

...we are made to feel very strongly that Innstetten's inhibiting, for his own selfish social and personal purposes, of the child's natural feeling towards her mother is a graver sin even than his killing of his wife's former lover in a duel.²⁷

Effi's remarks after the meeting with her estranged daughter, which attribute the responsibility to Innstetten, have doubtless encouraged this error: "'Das hat er

[Innstetten] dem Kinde beigebracht, ein Schulmeister war er immer...und ehe er das Kind schickt, richtet er's ab wie einen Papagei...'"(IV,275). We learn from her conversation with Frau Zwicker, however, that Effi has quite misjudged Johanna (IV,250). She does not suspect the servant of any involvement in the poisoning of Annie's mind, much less of having any designs upon Innstetten. It is quite clear from the Baron's remarks, nevertheless, that it is Johanna who performs the deed, and only the directive - cruel as it remains - has come from him. Ultimately, it is Annie who must make a decision in this episode of conflict between her affection for her mother and society's expectation that she sever the bond with her. As a conformist character, Annie opts for the latter course.

Regarding Annie's formal education, the narrator states:

Roswitha hatte das poetische Department, die Märchen- und Geschichtenerzählung, Johanna dagegen das des Anstands, eine Teilung, die hüben und drüben so fest gewurzelt stand, dass Kompetenzkonflikte kaum vorkamen, wobei der Charakter Annies, die eine ganz entschiedene Neigung hatte, das vornehme Fräulein zu betonen, allerdings mithalf, eine Rolle, bei der sie keine bessere Lehrerin als Johanna haben konnte. (IV,226-227).

Annie appears to have been predisposed towards identifying with the values of her father ("des Anstands"), which are represented by Johanna, as opposed to those of her mother

("Märchen- und Geschichtenerzählung"), represented by Roswitha. We also learn that Annie - unlike her mother, whose best subject was mythology (IV,273) - receives her highest marks in religion (IV,273).

Organized religion is, of course, another major mode of influence for upholding certain values deemed appropriate by society. As Evans remarks:

The culture of the Protestant church [in Imperial Germany] was...an official culture, and its values were strongly identified with those of the ruling elite. Perpetuating the political quietism of the Lutheran Church, German Protestantism - united in the Evangelical Church in 1814 - represented conservative values and indoctrinated its congregations into loyalty to the State and obedience to the social and political status quo.²⁸

Organized religion of any faith is generally not portrayed in a favourable light by Fontane, although members of the clergy are sympathetically drawn. As Ernst points out: "Zwar gibt es in seinem Werk Pfarrer und Kirchen, aber kein Heil und keine Gemeinde."²⁹

The conformist type, as Prinzipienreiter, is quick to appeal to the authority of religion in order to strengthen his own position. A case in point is Major Gryczinski, who fears his wife may break the seventh commandment, as her sister has already done. He tells her:

'Und sieh dich vor, Jacobine. Du bist ein entzückendes kleines Weib..., aber ihr seid wie die

Zwillinge, wie die Druväpfel, und es spukt dir auch so was im Blut. Ich bin aber nicht van der Straaten und führe keine Generositätskomödien auf. Am wenigsten auf meine Kosten.' (II,118)

Gryczinski is decidedly less concerned with ethics than he is with his own reputation. His moralizing is simply a bid for control, which the threat of punishment for disobeying his injunction reveals. Were the event which he fears ever to take place, it is clear from these remarks that Gryczinski, as a typical conformist, would sacrifice his marital relationship in order to safeguard his reputation. This moralizing tendency begins early, as displayed by both Lydia and Annie. Rubehn, who becomes Melanie's second husband, says of the former: "'...Lydia war immer ein kleiner Grossinquisitor...'" (II,128). Annie, when we see her for the last time in conversation with her estranged mother, reveals that she, too, is well on the way towards assuming the same role (IV,272-274).

The judgmental attitude of the conformist characters is reflected not only in their moralizing tendency, but also expressed in another form of intolerance, namely prejudice. This prejudice extends beyond ethnic and religious boundaries to encompass whatever does not conform to the given social standard. Soon after their arrival in Kessin, Innstetten warns Effi: "...hüte dich vor dem Aparten oder was man so das Aparte nennt'" (IV,87). The conformists tend to

view the world in terms of an either/or dichotomy. They believe things are either "right" or "wrong," "good" or "bad." People are classified as either "one of them" or "one of us." Innstetten's response, for instance, to the local population of Kessin, which consists almost entirely of immigrants (IV,46), is one of marked discomfort: "'Hier ist alles unsicher'"(IV,44). Innstetten's prejudices also extend to anti-semitism (IV,103). Miller observes:

"In order to increase the realism of the portrait of Innstetten and to intensify the association of his mentality with that of the officer, Fontane endowed him with some of the typical prejudices which were commonly encountered within the officer corps during the late nineteenth century.³⁰

That Gryczinski is similarly prejudiced and judgmental - "'...Gryczinski, der doch so kritisch ist und alles immer auf Disposition hin ansieht...'"(II,117) - would appear to support Miller's viewpoint. This same critic also draws a connection between such rigid thinking and Innstetten's habit of governing his conduct "'nach Grundsätzen'" (IV,271).³¹ Indeed, the desire to live life according to preconceived formulae, or principles, is very strong in the conformists generally and may be viewed as an aspect of pride, which figures prominently in these characters. For by "following the rules," they hope to avoid incurring the disapproval of society.

Apprehension of ridicule and of social ostracism is

prevalent among the majority of Fontane's characters, but probably most severe in the conformist types. "Die Furcht vor dem Ridikülen spielt in der Welt eine kolossale Rolle," commented Fontane.³² Again, it is the fear associated with "dem Aparten" (IV,87) - the fear of appearing different from the norm and hence, being deemed unacceptable. To Innstetten's mind, eccentricity and happiness are mutually exclusive: "'...das bezahlt man in der Regel mit seinem Glück'"(IV,87). This fear of ridicule is typically associated in the men with the threat of potential failure in their careers, due to a tarnished image. As Innstetten explains to Effi:

'Ich kann hier in der Stadt die Leute nicht sagen lassen, Landrat Innstetten verkauft sein Haus, weil seine Frau den aufgeklebten Chinesen als Spuk an ihrem Bette gesehen hat. Dann bin ich verloren, Effi. Von solcher Lächerlichkeit kann man sich nie wieder erholen.' (IV,80)

Gryczinski is likewise obsessed with how he appears to others and with the opinion which others hold of him. He forbids Jacobine to associate with Melanie and Rubehn out of fear that he will be passed over in his career: "'Das unterbleibt. Ich habe nicht Lust, um solcher Allotria willen beiseitegeschoben zu werden'"(II,118). Similarly, this character sacrificed his Catholic religion in order to enhance his career prospects in Protestant Prussia.

In the women, this fear of judgment and exclusion is

connected with their moral reputations. Stine is a prime example of the phenomenon. Having made a vow of chastity to her dying mother, she now finds herself torn between her mother's expectations for her and her own desire for a romantic attachment: "'Warum hab' ich nicht nein gesagt? Ich habe mich nun in seine Hand begeben....Und doch, ich will nicht, will nicht. Ich hab' es ihr auf dem Sterbebette schwören müssen'"(II,514). As Stine explains to Waldemar when he spontaneously visits her, she fears becoming the subject of gossip: "'Das geht nicht, Herr Graf. Ich bin allein, und ein alleinstehendes Mädchen muss auf sich halten. Sonst gibt es ein Gerede. Die Leute sehen alles'"(II,507). Her anxiety is not without justification, since their encounter has not gone unnoticed by the landlady: "Die Polzin hatte, solange das Gespräch dauerte, beobachtend an ihrem Türguckloch gestanden"(II,507).

Stine's dawning awareness of a conflict between her own desires and those of society, which have been mediated by her mother, represents a significant turning point for her. She has apparently never questioned until now the values with which she was raised. Her pride has been invested in spurning the advances of male admirers and we suspect that this resistant stance is a defensive manoeuvre designed to keep feelings with which she is not entirely comfortable at bay:

'Den ersten Tag hatte ich eine Aussprache mit ihm und redete von Anständigkeit und redete von Auf-sich-Halten, und dass ich ein ordentliches Mädchen sei. Aber ich schäme mich jetzt fast, dass ich so was gesagt habe. Denn immer ängstlich sein ist auch nicht gut und zeigt bloss, dass man sich nicht recht traut und dass man schwächer ist, als man sein sollte.' (II,519)

The heroine's decision to renounce the validity of her own impulses in favour of social respectability - an act which provokes the death of her suitor and quite possibly her own premature demise, as well - is a frightful example given us by Fontane of the degree to which social pressure can lead an individual not only to self-denial, but even to self-destruction. Where religious, judicial and educational institutions may fail to control the behaviour of society's members, the threat of ridicule and ostracism may succeed.

Stine's virtue could also represent, in part, a compensation for her sister Pauline Pittelkow's unorthodox lifestyle. Another character whose virtue is undoubtedly compensatory is Johanna. Through no fault of her own, she must bear the stigma of illegitimacy (IV,206). Yet, she is well thought of "weil sie...der Männerwelt gegenüber von einer ausgesprochenen und selbstbewussten Reserviertheit war" (IV,206). Johanna also suffers from the same conflict which Stine experiences between her own desires and the fear of social censure. She is, however, better looking than Stine. Hence, a certain amount of her pride is invested in being

attractive to men, as well as in being morally upright. Johanna has unsuccessfully attempted to suppress her awareness of this conflict. Yet, Roswitha is sufficiently perceptive to notice those feelings toward Innstetten of which Johanna is only dimly aware: "'...aber das weiss ich, Johanna, dass Sie in den gnäd'gen Herrn verliebt sind.' Johanna schlug eine krampfhaft Lache auf"(IV,248). As a conformist type, however, Johanna's behaviour toward the object of her affections remains within the bounds of propriety.

The aristocratic female conformists experience an even greater need for male admiration than does Johanna. While marriage satisfies Käthe's desire for social respectability, it leaves her need to be a constant center of attention - "'weniger Mond als Sonne'"(II,361) - inadequately met by Botho. She yearns for "'die verbotene Frucht'"(II,419) and longs to experience a sense of power through seduction and conquest: "'Alles, was man sich erobern muss...'"(II,412). The possibility that Käthe may have followed through on this impulse - or at least encountered the opportunity to do so - does not appear to have been widely recognized by critics. Her sudden interest in motherhood upon her return from Schlangenbad - the name of which alludes to a setting of temptation reminiscent of the Garden of Eden - may derive from something other than the waters. What has been

interpreted as "development in her character and the outlook for a more deeply committed marriage"³³ might be a variation of Effi's resolve to put the past behind her after leaving Kessin. On the couple's way home from the railway station, the narrator remarks of Käthe: "...sie seufzte, wie wenn sich ihr plötzlich etwas Schreckliches und tief in ihr Leben Eingreifendes vor die Seele gestellt hätte"(II,465). She then launches into a conversation about Mr. Armstrong, another guest at Schlangenbad, as if he were somehow connected with the anxiety she is feeling. This interpretation is reinforced by an unusually serious outburst from Käthe: "'Ach, Botho, welcher Schatz ist doch ein unschuldiges Herz'"(II,470). Why, one is tempted to ask, would such a thought occur to her unless she has experienced lost innocence and peace of mind?³⁴ Käthe's request for Botho to protect her from temptation also provokes suspicion:

'Ich habe mir fest vorgenommen, mir ein reines Herz zu bewahren. Und du musst mir darin helfen...du musst mir dreimal einen Kuss auf die Stirn geben, bräutlich, ich will keine Zärtlichkeit, ich will einen Weihekuss....'
(II,470)

Clearly, Käthe has faced a conflict concerning adultery while staying at Schlangenbad, although we do not know whether she is actually guilty of infidelity. It is apparent from her various remarks to Botho, however, that she still upholds fidelity within marriage - a view which we expect of a

conformist.

Jacobine, also, does not appear to be having her needs for affection and attention met by her emotionally cold and controlled husband. Jacobine admits in a letter to Melanie that Gryczinski's comparison of her nature with that of her sister's contains an element of truth: "'...ich fühle, dass er recht hat, und dass eine sonderbare Neugier in mir steckt'"(II,118). She already enjoys a mild sort of flirtation with her brother-in-law, van der Straaten, and may well have more serious designs upon the landscape artist, Arnold Gabler (II,123). Though Jacobine denies that her husband is a Bluebeard, we suspect that if this character's curiosity were to get the better of her, she would experience a rather rude awakening. As with Käthe, we do not know the eventual outcome of this instance of the basic conflict. In Jacobine's other instance of conflict over the issue of whether to reject her sister, however, she definitely responds by conforming to social expectation.

The need for control - as mentioned earlier - is associated with the authoritarian attitude of the conformists. It is not merely the control over their daily activities, however, which these conformist characters pursue. They endeavour to control their very emotions and even seek to check the spontaneity of others. Lack of emotional depth and an unwillingness to communicate their

feelings openly, precludes truly intimate and loving relationships in which these characters could be accepted for themselves. Their involvements tend, instead, to degenerate into competitive power struggles. It is the purpose of the following section to examine the various ways in which the flight from feeling reveals itself and how it wrecks havoc in the lives of the conformist characters.

ii) The flight from feeling

The flight from feeling which is typical of conformists, serves the dual purpose of maintaining an illusion of control over the self, while it also protects against emotional intimacy with others. Both of these goals are associated with conformity because the conformists' fear of rejection by others leads them, not merely to avoid disclosure of, but to reject outright in themselves, those characteristics which they believe would be unacceptable to others. The conformists feel driven to present to society a particular image of themselves which is designed to win approval.

To be sure, the conformists regard their emotional impulses as one sort of enemy within, which must be vanquished. Gryczinski's belief that the principal thing in life is "Gefühle zu beherrschen" (II, 123) sums up this

attitude. Käthe, as a female representative of this group, echoes the same concern: "'...unsere Wünsche bedürfen doch beständig einer strengen und gewissenhaften Kontrolle'"(II,438). Losing emotional control is regarded by these characters as a sign of personal failure and weakness. Upon closer examination, we discover that the real difficulty resides with those feelings which might be termed "soft" or "sentimental." Part of Innstetten's dilemma over the duel, for example, arises from his fear that if he forgave his wife's infidelity, word would get around that he was too soft-hearted - even cowardly - and lacked sufficient fortitude to do the proper thing (IV,237). Miller has suggested that Innstetten's apprehension over Wüllersdorf's potential loss of respect for him may actually stem from the fear that he will lose his self-respect: "Innstetten complies [with the code of honour] rather than risk his own subsequent fear and suspicion that he was motivated by cowardice."³⁵ His remarks after the duel: "'Aber Verjährung ist etwas Halbes, etwas Schwächliches...'"(IV,243), offer confirmation of this interpretation.

The conformist characters learn too late, however, that it is not possible to deny themselves emotional expression in one direction only. Instead, the entire emotional spectrum shrinks in response to attempts at

controlling any portion of it. The male characters typically deal with the resultant sense of inner emptiness by concentrating with fanatical devotion upon their careers. A classic example of this phenomenon is furnished by Innstetten. We are told that after being rejected by Luise, "...er...fing an, Juristerei zu studieren,...mit einem "wahren Biereifer"..."(IV,13). Likewise, Gryczinski pursues his career to the exclusion of all else: "Dass er den Strebern zugehörte, war eine selbstverständliche Sache..."(II,22).

The working class female character, Stine, also appears to use excessive dedication to work as a means of avoiding both confrontation with her own feelings and interaction with other people. Although her low economic status certainly warrants a need for steady employment, she gives the impression of having unnecessarily restricted her social sphere by working at home all the time and rarely venturing outside of the apartment. Stine has been able to keep her life predictable and under control by these means, but at the cost of terrible emotional deprivation.

The aristocratic female conformists are forced to occupy themselves in a manner appropriate to their role in a society which did not permit women of the upper classes to engage in employment. Although it was permissible for a "lady" to undertake good works,³⁶ we observe neither

Jacobine, nor Käthe engaged in such activities. In fact, the latter devotes the bulk of her time to a ritual of shopping: "Sie fuhr täglich in die Stadt, um Einkäufe zu machen, und wurde nicht müde zu versichern, wie sie jetzt erst das so hoch in Gunst und Geltung stehende 'shopping' der englischen Damen begreifen lerne..."(II,426).

The conformist characters exhibit this spectrum of behaviour in response to a desire to control their emotions and, at the same time, relieve the tension created by the unexpressed emotions. Unfortunately, these tactics neither establish control, nor do they relieve tension. Their continued use eventually brings about a state opposite to the one sought - namely, a condition of instability due to accumulated tension, the force of which threatens to create an actual loss of control. A dramatic instance of this literal loss of control is provided by Stine's episode of fainting, which occurs when she is suddenly overwhelmed by the intensity of her previously unacknowledged feelings for Waldemar (II,554).

An inevitable consequence of the fear and suppression of emotion in these characters is that they become excessively dependent upon reason as a directional guide. Bance has referred to Innstetten, for example, as "an apparently rational being, but one who maintains his equilibrium by resolutely suppressing any inner life he

has."³⁷ This includes not only the instinctual, but also spirituality, intuition and imagination, for example. These aspects of the irrational are denied by the conformists because they cannot be subjected to the individual's control.

Garland has made the perceptive observation that "Innstetten, though cautious by nature, nevertheless acts with almost reckless folly where Crampas is concerned."³⁸ A partial explanation for his poor judgment can be drawn from Innstetten's reluctance to trust his own intuitive faculties. His fears, which are entirely justified given the nature of Crampas' reputation, surface intermittently only to be brushed aside:

Und er fühlte seinen leisen Argwohn sich wieder regen und fester einnisten. Aber er hatte lange genug gelebt, um zu wissen, dass alle Zeichen trügen, und dass wir in unsrer Eifersucht, trotz ihrer hundert Augen, oft noch mehr in die Irre gehen als in der Blindheit unsres Vertrauens. Es konnte ja so sein, wie sie sagte. (IV,183)

The extent of Innstetten's "reckless folly" is truly appalling when we consider how clear and accurate his perceptions of the situation originally are, as revealed in conversation on the morning after the incident "im Schloön" (IV,162ff.). Whether the dream he recounts has, in fact, been experienced, or is merely fabricated to convey his accusation and warning, is not altogether certain.

As far as the spiritual realm is concerned, none of the conformist characters places any special emphasis upon religion in their day to day lives. Their moral values are secular in origin, not derived from a particular religious faith. A possible explanation for this rejection of the spiritual is that it presupposes a higher power, which is beyond the individual's capacity to manipulate. These characters, being obsessed as they are with matters of control, naturally disdain the very notion even that a force which they cannot command might exist.

Another facet of the irrational is superstition, a feature which is not observed in the conformists, although it is seen frequently in the compromiser characters. Contrary to what Crampas asserts (IV,130), for instance, the narrator denies that Innstetten possesses any sort of mystical bent: "Er glaubte nicht an Zeichen und Ähnliches, im Gegenteil, wies alles Abergläubische zurück"(IV,21). The refusal to acknowledge any supernatural phenomena - such as ghosts, on Innstetten's part - enables these characters to maintain their self-images as strong persons, while avoiding dreaded fears over loss of control. Encouraging fear in another person, as Johanna and Innstetten do with Effi, also serves as a means to deny fear in oneself.

Superstition is born not only of fear, but of imagination, as well. The conformists lack imagination,

probably due to the twofold reasons of not permitting themselves any unstructured time in which to develop it, and of not being willing to give their emotions free expression. As a result, these characters are largely devoid of both creativity and humour. Stine is the only character in this group who might have some very limited scope for creativity, in her otherwise predominantly monotonous work as a seamstress. Johanna, Innstetten and Stine share with Gryczinski an intensely serious outlook on life - one which focusses upon work and duty to the exclusion of pleasure and relaxation. Perhaps most importantly, these characters lack a capacity to laugh at themselves.

The excessive control which the conformists exert over their emotions eventually results in a state of detachment and deprivation of all that gives life colour and zest. These characters attend only to their most basic materialistic needs, while denying themselves fulfillment of their emotional, spiritual and instinctual needs. It is no wonder that Innstetten - whom we see as he approaches his fifties, trapped in a debilitating depression - finally declares: "'...ich habe mich zu freuen verlernt'"(IV,286). "Incapable of deep feeling," writes Pascal of Innstetten, "he is incapable of happiness...."³⁹ Innstetten pays for his conformity, not only with his happiness - ironically, a fate he thought was reserved for those who defy convention

(IV,87) - but also with his identity, since the ultimate price of conformity is forfeiture of one's individuality.

In lieu of the emotional intimacy with others which the conformists cannot risk, we observe a quest for power as the basis of their interactions with others. This quest is discernible in manipulative power struggles with family members, friends and associates. It results in the destruction of the very relationships which these characters seek to preserve and it deepens their already considerable isolation.

The various ways in which the power struggles manifest themselves may be loosely grouped under overt attempts at domination and more subtle manipulative behaviour. Lydia provides a good example of the former approach, when the family contemplates an excursion: "...aber Lydia war nicht zu bewegen und erklärte bestimmt, sie wolle nicht. Da musste denn, wenn man keine Szene haben wollte, nachgegeben werden..."(II,52). This self-willed girl not only prevents her younger sister from going on the outing, "...da sie sich daran gewöhnt hatte, dem Beispiele der ältern in all und jedem zu folgen"(II,52-53), she also deprives her of a reconciliation with her mother: "...Lydia...riss das Kind am Achselbande zurück...Und dabei zog und zwang sie die halb widerstrebende Kleine mit sich fort und zu der halb offengebliebenen Tür hinaus"(II,125). Lydia, in fact, seeks

to impose her conformist response to the conflict regarding her mother's adultery upon her sister who is too young to understand the issue and make her own decision in the matter. In light of this incident, it is difficult to agree with Koc's assertion that "Fontane maintains throughout his works...a basically optimistic outlook on the ability of the younger generation to change society, improving it gradually."⁴⁰ Actually, there exists a strong tendency, certainly in the novels under discussion in this study, for the offspring to reflect the conflicts of their parents, to take sides in the power struggle, and to become victims of an inability to resolve these conflicts, as we see with Stine, Lydia, Annie, Waldemar, Cécile and Effi. In particular, with Effi Briest and with L'Adultera, we see young children who reject even their own mothers for having transgressed social norms.

While the objection could be raised that Lydia's behaviour is only the temper tantrum of a child, it must be conceded, nevertheless, that this willful behaviour is also observable in the conformist adults. Jacobine, for instance, receives "sehr bestimmte Weisungen"(II,84) from Gryczinski, and Innstetten blatantly wags his finger at Effi on more than one occasion. Typically, these characters choose someone younger, or otherwise more submissive than they are, to dominate. Garland notes that Innstetten, as "a man of

fixed character and habits," doubtless perceives Effi's tender age "as an advantage....She will be malleable enough to be shaped into the decorative and submissive wife of which he dreams."⁴¹ It is not always the men who dominate, however. Käthe's ascendancy in her marriage, for example, is prefigured by the canary which "piepte so lang und eigensinnig, bis ihm der Wille getan war. 'Alle Lieblinge sind gleich,' sagte Baron Rienäcker, 'und fordern Gehorsam und Unterwerfung'"(II,347).

Another aspect of the tendency to dominate a partner is revealed by these characters through their jealousy. Innstetten is so possessive of Effi that he would deprive her of life in order to deprive any other man of having her: "'Freilich, wenn ich dann stürbe, nähme ich dich am liebsten mit. Ich will dich keinem andern lassen..."(IV,56). The desire for control which underlies domination is clearly stated by Käthe:

'...auf alte, ganz alte Geschichten bin ich eifersüchtig, viel, viel eifersüchtiger als auf neue...neue Geschichten hat man doch immer halb unter Augen...Aber alte Geschichten, da hört alle Kontrolle auf, da kann es tausend und drei geben, und man weiss es kaum.' (II,420)

The sense of personal insecurity accompanying this attitude of anxious vigilance is readily apparent.

A natural extension of viewing one's partner as a possession is to treat him or her as a pawn. This is the

area where we observe the more subtle manifestations of manipulation. The status-conscious conformists seek out mates who will enhance their social standing. Gryczinski's marriage constitutes a perfect example of this tactic, according to the disgruntled Baron Duquede:

'Er ist ein Streber....Er hat sie geheiratet, weil sie die Schwester ihrer Schwester ist....es gibt heutzutage Personen, denen alles bloss Mittel zum Zweck ist. Auch die Liebe. Und zu diesen Personen gehört auch unser Freund, der Major....Er braucht diesen Schwager.' (II,40-41)

Yet, Jacobine indirectly betrays by her remarks in a letter to Melanie that she, too, has likely been motivated by the desire for material security and social status, rather than by love: "'Er [Rubehn] ist reich und jung, und bei Deinen Lebensanschauungen, mein' ich, kann es Dich nicht unglücklich machen, dass er unbetitelt ist'"(II,117). Stine's attraction to the young Count and Johanna's enthrallment with Innstetten may also be inspired, to some degree, by the wish to escape from a lower social stratum by attaching themselves to a partner of a higher class.

The inclination to treat another as the means to an end is not restricted in these characters to romantic attachments; it manifests itself in any relationship which could further their ambitious aims. Innstetten warns Effi regarding the influential innkeeper, Golchowski, for example: "'Wir dürfen es nicht mit ihm verderben, weil wir

ihn brauchen'"(IV,44) and Gryczinski's succinct summation of his relationship with van der Straaten, his brother-in-law, is: "'Ich spiele mit ihm'"(II,37). This latter quotation evokes the image of a puppeteer and discloses one of the principal rewards of manipulation - namely, the avoidance of intimacy. The manipulator remains distant and uninvolved emotionally while playing upon the emotions of another individual. The sense of superiority derived from this activity is also quite evident.

Probably the most cruel display of this type of manipulation revolves around the business of the "ghost" in Effi Briest. Although Innstetten definitely plays a role in this charade, his contribution has been greatly overestimated by critics such as Schober: "Durch allerlei dunkle Andeutungen nährt Innstetten in seiner Frau die im Ort verbreitete Vorstellung, der Chinese könne im oberen Stockwerk noch spukhaft sein Wesen treiben."⁴² A close reading of the text does not support the foregoing statement. It is only after the couple's move to Berlin, that Innstetten gratuitously informs Effi that Johanna has brought the picture of the Chinese with her (IV,207-208). This is really the first and only clear evidence we have of Innstetten possibly employing Effi's already established fear of the ghost as "eine Art Angstapparat aus Kalkül"(IV,134). His initial response to her mention of what

she believes to have heard upstairs is one of embarrassment: "Innstetten sah in einer kleinen Verlegenheit vor sich hin und schien schwankend, ob er auf all das antworten solle. Schliesslich entschied er sich für Schweigen"(IV,58). The reason for Innstetten's discomfiture - that he had expected "'einen adligen Spukstolz'" of Effi - is not uncovered until somewhat later (IV,80).

In the meantime, he has futilely tried to counter her anxiety with rational explanations for the noise: "'Es kann auch was anderes sein, im Rauchfang, oder der Wurm im Holz oder ein Iltis'"(IV,58). Johnson notes that Innstetten fails to deal adequately with Effi's fears⁴³ and surely this is, in fact, a more accurate assessment of the problem than is offered by Bance, who asserts: "[Innstetten]...has done his best to foster these fears."⁴⁴ Innstetten's offense is distinctly more one of omission than of commission. His inadequacy in dealing with Effi's feelings is entirely understandable given the reluctance with which he accepts his own. He does not comprehend the fundamental difference between her nature and his - namely, that she is governed by emotion and imagination, not by reason.

Johanna does, however, recognize this aspect of Effi's disposition and is considerably more guilty than is Innstetten of playing upon it for her own amusement. In a deliberate attempt to exacerbate her mistress' anxiety, she

has quite likely affixed the picture of the Chinese to the chair after listening to Effi recount her interpretation of the noise and before Innstetten takes her upstairs later the same day. By encouraging Effi's irrational fears, Johanna gains a sense of power and superiority over someone she perceives as a rival for the affections of Innstetten. Effi states about the ghost in a letter to her mother: "'...aber Johanna sagt mir, es käme immer mal wieder, namentlich wenn wer Neues im Hause erschiene'"(IV,100). It cannot be ruled out that Effi's flair for dramatics coupled with her extreme egocentricity may have contributed to an elaboration of this sort upon her delusion. The other possibility, which is not inconceivable, is that Johanna actually has said this, although it contradicts her original explanation that the noise was caused by the curtains (IV,54). Creating confusion in one's victim is, however, in itself an excellent means of manipulation.

The illusion of control which the conformist characters pursue can eventually dissolve into the very feelings of helplessness they have sought to defeat. Innstetten's embittered end, for example, is foreshadowed by his remarks about Louis Napoleon: "'Wer ist am Ende Herr in seinem Hause? Niemand'"(IV,66).

iii) The problem of pride

The final distinguishing feature of the conformists to be discussed is their pride. This is not a healthy sort of pride born of self-respect, but rather a negative type, or false pride. Lynd describes this form of pride as one which "depends on external approval and has constantly to be reinforced."⁴⁵ In essence, the pride of the conformists is an exaggerated concern with how others are evaluating and judging them. It is not enough for these characters simply to conform; they must receive acknowledgement for their behaviour. As Garland observes of Innstetten, he has an "imperative principle: to conform to the customs, conventions, and rules of his class and (of equal importance) to be seen to do so."⁴⁶

The conformists' pride, which reveals itself in a variety of ways, is readily betrayed in some characters by their attitude of arrogance, or superiority. Gryczinski is described by another character as having "'alle Sorten Stolz'"(II,40) and his "superiore Haltung"(II,51) is confirmed by the narrator. Innstetten's pride is revealed by a desire, "sich von der grossen Menge zu unterscheiden"(IV,134). This haughtiness is not confined, however, to the male characters, nor only to the aristocratic ones. Johanna is portrayed as being "von Stolz und Überlegenheit ganz erfüllt"(IV,245) and Waldemar suspects

Stine of possessing considerable arrogance; although she denies this accusation, it may contain an element of truth (II,553).

The ostensible reason as to why these characters feel superior varies according to what they have chosen to invest their pride in. For the men, pride is associated mainly with power derived from social class, military rank and career prestige. The aristocratic women pride themselves on their physical attractiveness, while the working class women attach their pride to moral virtue. The underlying reason for this form of pride appears to be a lack of self-acceptance and a consequent desire to cultivate acceptance from others. This behaviour not only takes the form of approval-seeking, but also entails strenuously avoiding anything which might provoke disapproval.

Another telltale sign of pride in the conformists is their competitiveness. This can take the form of either striving to elevate oneself, or endeavouring to diminish another. Sometimes, the objective is to win general acclaim, while at other times, it is the favour of a particular individual which is sought. In the case of Innstetten, whose pride may be symbolized by the swelled sails of the ship which hangs from the ceiling of the Kessin residence (IV,50), we see a character driven by the need for recognition. Excelling has always been a way of life for the

Baron, from his military days, including volunteer service when he received the Iron Cross (IV,13), to his civil service career, in which he proceeds from Landrat to Ministerialrat and finally, to Ministerialdirektor all within approximately a decade. In large measure, his satisfaction appears to derive from the knowledge that he is preferred over others: "Der Fürst hatte noch von Versailles her eine Vorliebe für ihn und...der jugendliche durch Haltung und Klugheit gleich ausgezeichnete Landrat stand ebenso in Gunst bei der Fürstin"(IV,68-69).

"'Innsetten ist ein Karrieremacher -,'" says Frau von Briest, "'vom Streber will ich nicht sprechen...dazu ist er zu wirklich vornehm...'"(IV,40). The narrator of L'Adultera, however, does not hesitate to accord the less flattering term to Gryczinski (II,22). Critical comment has been similarly terse: "Major im Generalstab mit der entsprechenden Arroganz."⁴⁷ Gryczinski's desire to stand above the common mass is clearly betrayed by his conviction, "dass es in der ganzen Welt nicht zwei so grundverschiedene Farben gäbe, wie das allgemeine preussische Militär-Rot und das Generalstabs-Rot"(II,22). The only redeeming quality of this otherwise grim character is that he is not entirely beyond employing "ein bescheidenes Mass von Rücksichtnahme"(II,22) - providing he is not given reason to take umbrage.

In the women, pride exhibits itself in the guises of vanity and virtue. As an example of the former type, Käthe is not content simply to bask in the admiration of Botho's friends; she also demands from her husband a posture of superlative devotion, even adoration: "'Botho...Puppen werden am meisten geliebt und am besten behandelt. Und darauf kommt es mir an'"(II,466). The wish for preferment is not quite so strong in Jacobine, although there is more than a hint of rivalry between her and Melanie. Jacobine is not as pretty as her older sister; nevertheless, her red hair is believed by some to restore the balance of power (II,22). The fact that she remains childless, however - and not of her own choice - may well be a cause for some feelings of envy towards a sister who has been thrice blessed.

Another competitive relationship between a pair of sisters is found in Stine. The young heroine of this story plays a subtle and self-righteous game of one upmanship with her mistress sister, Pauline Pittelkow. Stine cannot, or dares not, act out the femme fatale role and chooses instead to glorify herself in its opposite - even to the point of martyrdom:

'...solch ein Leben, wie's meine Schwester führt, verführt mich nicht; es schreckt mich bloss ab, und ich will mich lieber mein Leben lang quälen und im Spital sterben, als jeden Tag alte Herren um mich haben, bloss um Unanständigkeiten mit anhören zu müssen oder Anzüglichkeiten und Scherze, die vielleicht noch schlimmer sind.' (II,508)

Finally, with Johanna we observe both vanity and virtue adding up to a considerable degree of pride. The mental habit of envious comparison associated with the conformists' pride, is readily detectable in this character. Her attitude of hostile competitiveness is etched into her facial expression: "...sie....sah jederzeit mit einer eigenen, ihr übrigens durchaus kleidenden Siegermiene gradlinig und blauäugig...fort"(IV,226). Johanna's ire is roused by her eagerness for preeminence with Innstetten. She does not vie with Roswitha for approval from Effi, since the latter is a rival and, therefore, someone whom Johanna is compelled to diminish in her own mind, as well as in the eyes of Innstetten:

Diese [Johanna]...verwunderte sich im stillen, dass die gnädige Frau an all dem dummen Zeuge [Geschichten] so viel Gefallen finde; diese Verwunderung aber, die mit einem starken Überlegenheitsgeföhle Hand in Hand ging, war doch auch wieder ein Glück und sorgte dafür, dass keine Rangstreitigkeiten aufkommen konnten. Roswitha war einfach die komische Figur, und Neid gegen sie zu hegen wäre für Johanna nichts anderes gewesen, wie wenn sie Rollo um seine Freundschaftsstellung beneidet hätte. (IV,115)

Johanna succeeds in simultaneously defeating both women. The discovery of Effi's affair, which is doubtless provoked by Johanna's insistence upon breaking open the drawer - wherein

no bandages can be found, although the incriminating letters are - accomplishes the elimination of Effi from the household, as well as the "Triumph einer gewissen Intimitätsstellung zum gnädigen Herrn"(IV,245) over Roswitha. Her victory is dubious at best, however, in that the Baron comes to regard her as the "comical figure" - in more ways than one (IV,286).

The desire for preeminence, or positive distinction, is matched in these characters by an equally strong preoccupation with avoiding negative distinction, or das Aparte. Conformists seek to achieve this latter goal by upholding the conservative, traditional values of society and shunning any eccentric behaviour which might provoke ridicule. They become what Richter has referred to Innstetten as - namely, "die Verkörperung eines gesellschaftlich geprägten und genormten Seins schlechthin."⁴⁸

"There are people who can only act in situations which have in some way been formalized for them," states Bance, "and Innstetten is one of these. In his anxiety to comply with the social code, he seeks out the formalized role where one is available...."⁴⁹ For the aristocratic men - Innstetten, whom Müller-Seidel has characterized as "der Typ des Prinzipienreiters,"⁵⁰ and for Major Gryczinski - the "formalized role" is that prescribed by the Ehrenkodex of

the officer corps. The fact that Innstetten is no longer an active member of the army has not affected his value system. As Miller observes: "Innstetten pursues his career within the civil service very much as if he were still serving within the corps, preserving his habit of rising early and cherishing values such as Zucht, Ordnung, and Dienst."⁵¹

Moral values were also prescribed by the Ehrenkodex and these applied not only to the officers themselves, but to their kin as well. Miller points out, for instance, "that failing to prevent one's wife from having an affair with another man could be considered a serious breach of the code of honor."⁵² This is, of course, precisely the predicament which Innstetten finds himself in and the one which Gryczinski is determined to avoid.

The notion of duty also provided a guide to socially acceptable behaviour for both men and women. Duty may be understood as one pole of the classical dichotomy of Pflicht and Neigung. This dichotomy is one of many ways of expressing the essential conflict in Fontane's works between society and the individual. Müller-Seidel, for example, views the conflict as being "zwischen Ordnungsmacht und Herzensbestimmung,"⁵³ while Vincenz chooses to label it as one "zwischen Müssen und Wollen."⁵⁴ Regardless of how the conflict is phrased, however, in the conformist characters, it is the former aspect - duty, or the fulfillment of

obligations - which prevails.

To be sure, the exact nature of the obligations involved varies according to gender and social class, but the necessity to place duty first remains constant. The upper class male characters share with the lower class females the task of sustaining Ordnung. Work supplies the focal point in this endeavour and suggests a likely explanation for the lack of concern about Ordnung exhibited by the non-working upper class women. The aristocratic men are also charged with the responsibility of upholding the honour of their caste:

The concept of honor, as it was interpreted within the officer corps, had a collective as well as an individual aspect. Each member of the corps was obliged to avoid any act - and permit nothing to be done to him - which could reflect negatively on the reputation, i.e. the honor of the corps as a whole.⁵⁵

The aristocratic women, on the other hand, are called upon principally to be decorative and idle wives. Ideally, they were also expected to provide heirs, but curiously none of the women of either class - in this sample of characters - is seen performing the duties of a mother. For that matter, neither of the two working class women is even married - a situation which does not, however, constitute as dire a financial and social disgrace for them, as it would have for the "ladies." Apart from marriage and childbearing, it was

also incumbent on women in the late nineteenth century to reflect a certain image of what was believed to constitute femininity and propriety. This image served to restrict many forms of behaviour, as we see most clearly illustrated by Stine. All of the conformist women, however, are careful to adopt and guard such an image.

A false image of respectability can, in fact, prevent detection of behaviour and motivations which would otherwise provoke censure. Wandel describes Gryczinski's image, for example, as "äusserlich tadellos," but points out that this is nothing other than a cloak to conceal his "kalte Strebertum."⁵⁶ In a similar vein, Park alludes to an element of hypocrisy in the Baron's values, declaring that his "conservatism...is not the recognition of the power and sanctity of decorum but rather a mask hiding his weakness and indecision."⁵⁷ Thus adherence to principles and performance of duty can endow the conformist characters with an aura of strength and irreproachability, which is not always merited.

Unquestionably, the inhibiting influence upon behaviour exerted by governing one's life according to principles and duty is considerable; even so, the same constraint provides the conformists not only with a sense of security through familiarity, but also releases them from the burden of personal responsibility. In the final

analysis, the fear of ridicule exhibited by these characters may actually be cowardice in the face of exercising initiative and assuming responsibility as an individual. The conformists' desire for safety and the avoidance of conflict between themselves and others outweighs, however, any fleeting wish for autonomy.

A character whose response to an instance of the basic conflict well illustrates this attitude of the conformists is Innstetten. The discovery of his wife's adultery - and his disclosure of it to his friend, Wüllersdorf - place this character in a situation where he is obligated to uphold the custom of his officer class by challenging the former lover to a duel. His personal feelings, however, incline him to forgive his wife. During the discussion with Wüllersdorf - a dialogue which Wandrey regards as the "grösste Sprechszene des deutschen Romans"⁵⁸ - Innstetten denies any feelings of hatred or revenge (IV,235). Yet, as Bance sums up the encounter: "...he [Innstetten] turns the personal decision into an external, bureaucratic affair, to be settled according to regulations governing conduct."⁵⁹ After considerable debate, Innstetten decides upon the duel with the following justification: "'Man ist nicht bloss ein einzelner Mensch, man gehört einem Ganzen an, und auf das Ganze haben wir beständig Rücksicht zu nehmen, wir sind durchaus abhängig von ihm'" (IV,235). But Schillemeit regards

Innstetten's preoccupation with his own reputation as this character's essential motivation: "Vor dem Urteil der Gesellschaft zu bestehen, ist die Maxime, unter der nicht nur Innstettens Entschluss zum Duell, sondern sein ganzes Leben bis zu diesem Entschluss steht."⁶⁰

After the duel, however, we see Innstetten - who Frau von Briest assured Effi before her marriage "'in allem das richtige Mass hält'"(IV,34) - ruminating over what he now fears may have been an excessive reaction: "'Treibt man etwas [Ehrenkultus] auf die Spitze, so übertreibt man und hat die Lächerlichkeit....Aber wo fängt es an? Wo liegt die Grenze? War sie da? War sie schon überschritten?'"(IV,243). He cannot decide whether the length of time which has elapsed since the episode of adultery constitutes an instance of the Verjähierungstheorie - a theory for which the officer class had no exact definition to guide them. Our last glimpse of the Baron reveals an individual disillusioned with society's values and in despair of ever achieving genuine happiness: "'...nichts gefällt mir mehr; je mehr man mich auszeichnet, je mehr fühle ich, dass dies alles nichts ist. Mein Leben ist verpfuscht....Mir ist alles verschlossen'"(IV,287). Arising from an inability to envision a new direction - "'Kann es anders sein?'"(IV,286) - Innstetten's attitude of resignation signifies an evolution of his personality from that of a conformist to a

compromiser type.

e. Summary

This chapter has examined a selection of Fontane's characters who deal with conflict between society and themselves as individuals, through conformity to the prevailing social norms. It has been established that these characters - the conformists - share a number of significant features. Physically, they tend to be young, healthy and attractive. Yet, they are plagued by symptoms of chronic tension created by excessive inhibition of emotion. Endeavouring to reduce their tension, the conformists engage in a variety of compulsive activities from which they appear to derive a sense of comfort through familiarity. Basically authoritarian, such characters are unwilling to accept personal responsibility for their decisions and actions. The intolerance exhibited by conformists toward others who are less orthodox, is matched by a fear of being ridiculed themselves. Not surprisingly, these characters hide what they believe would be considered unacceptable aspects of their personality behind a mask, or a role, which is designed to win approval and to ward off disapproval. As a result, they become alienated from their own emotional center - a condition which is also aggravated by these

characters' over-reliance upon reason coupled with their rejection of the irrational and instinctive. Essentially competitive, rather than co-operative in nature, life is a serious business of getting ahead for the ambitious conformists. This obsession with achieving preeminence suggests an excessive dependence upon the opinions of others. Although upholders of tradition, the conformists' values are fundamentally materialistic and neither truly ethical, nor spiritual. These characters remain in the conformist mode of thinking and behaving until disappointment forces them to reconsider the validity of society's values.

II. The Compromiser Type

"'Es hilft nichts. Also Resignation. Ergebung ist überhaupt das Beste.'" (II,400)

- Botho

a. Profile of the compromiser type

The key distinguishing feature of the compromiser type is an attitude of resignation toward ever satisfactorily resolving the conflict between personal inclination and social expectation - a stance which Richter has defined as "Verzicht auf eine wirkliche Auflösung aufgeworfener Widersprüche."⁶¹ Essentially, this type has abandoned hope of finding personal fulfillment within society. In the words of one such character: "'Leben heisst Hoffnungen begraben'"(II,295). Melancholic and cynical, the compromiser feels controlled by other individuals, by society, or by fate. A sense of helplessness in the face of these forces encourages passivity, detachment and aimlessness in this character type. The compromiser lives in the past as an escape from chronic disappointment and discontent associated with his or her present situation. Idealism and a romantic

yearning for the unattainable are also typical.

Another significant feature of the compromiser type is humility - to be understood in this context, as a sense of inferiority toward other members of society. This characteristic reveals itself through self-doubt, self-effacing behaviour and feelings of inadequacy. Often, a desire for protection or rescue by others is expressed by this type. Social withdrawal is common or, if superficial social contacts are pursued, the compromiser remains emotionally distant and isolated. Duplicity in relationships with others is also characteristic. Moreover, there is frequently evidence of envy and resentment toward individuals who are perceived by the compromiser as being better off than he or she. This type is also plagued by feelings of guilt which are experienced not only as a sense of culpability, but as a general sense of unworthiness.

Also notable in the compromiser is a sensitive and emotional nature. Inner conflict between desires and fears leads to indecisiveness, ambivalence and sometimes even physical illness. Some form of physical disfigurement is also frequently associated with this type. Unprincipled, he or she is given to expediency. Highly imaginative and often superstitious, the compromiser lives in a fantasy world of dreams. Initiative, discipline and perseverance in the pursuit of realistic goals are lacking. Nervous and

restless, this type impulsively seeks stimulating experiences - including the challenge of romantic conquests. A fondness for the exotic and unconventional activities as the means for dispelling boredom also emerges as a prominent feature.

When faced with situations of conflict between personal desire and social expectations, a compromiser sees two possible options - namely, defiance of authority, or submissive acquiescence to its demands. This contradictory behaviour stems from the fact that, on the one hand, a compromiser is sceptical - even contemptuous - of society's values. On the other hand, he or she at times feels overwhelmed by social pressure or by the fear of negative repercussions which might follow in the wake of rebellious behaviour. Underlying this willingness to sacrifice personal happiness, we sense a profound self-abnegation, or as Richter has termed it, "eine Unterwerfung."⁶² Each of the individual compromiser characters tends to favour one or other response - either defiance or submission. However, vacillation is typical of the compromiser type and an alternation between both responses may be observed in the same character. To avert confusion on the reader's part, the point should be made here that the spirit of resignation in which a compromiser character submits to society's demands is distinctly different from the attitude of respect for

society's values exhibited by a conformist. The compromiser's submission is essentially capitulation, not conformity.

b. Selection of characters and the nature of their conflicts

The specific characters selected for discussion in this chapter as representatives of the compromiser type include: Robert von Leslie-Gordon, Cécile and Pierre St. Arnaud from Cécile; van der Straaten from L'Adultera; Waldemar von Haldern and Pauline Pittelkow from Stine; Major von Crampas, Gieshübler, Effi, Marietta Trippelli, Frau von Briest and Herr von Briest from Effi Briest; Königin Isabeau, Frau Dörr, Herr Dörr and Botho von Rienäcker from Irrungen, Wirrungen.

Each of the aforementioned sixteen characters experiences a situation of conflict between personal desire and social expectation. Numerous parallels exist between these situations which will be discussed at length in the body of this chapter. To assist the reader who may not be familiar with all characters under consideration, a brief elucidation of the nature of their conflicts will be offered here.

Gordon and Crampas share the same conflict over whether to have an affair with a married woman. Cécile and

Effi, as the married women concerned, face a conflict over infidelity.

Both St. Arnaud and Herr Dörr were confronted with the decision of whether to marry women who had tarnished reputations. Van der Straaten, when he discovers his wife's infidelity, is not - unlike the aristocrat Innstetten - required to decide upon a duel. However, his personal inclination to forgive his wife and maintain their marriage does place him at odds with society's expectations.

Botho's conflict revolves around the issue of whether to maintain a common-law relationship with a working class girl whom he loves, or to follow tradition and comply with his family's wishes by marrying a rich cousin of his own class. Waldemar's situation is virtually the same as Botho's except that the former's family does not wish him to marry at all.

The situation of conflict in which we find Pauline and Königin Isabeau is that of choosing between earning a living by respectable means, or by being the mistress of an aristocrat. Frau Dörr, too, was faced with this conflict in her youth and we also see a variation upon the same theme with the character, Marietta. The latter's situation is further complicated by her desire to be associated with the theater - an affiliation detrimental to her reputation.

With Gieshübler, we encounter a character who is placed

in a situation of ongoing conflict in which he is expected to deny himself romantic relations with women because society views such involvement as inappropriate for the physically disabled.

Effi's father, Herr von Briest, experiences a conflict over the issue of whether to ostracize, or to forgive, his daughter. Briest also encountered conflict in the past over expectations that he pursue a career in the civil service.

Lastly, Frau von Briest is involved in a few episodes of the basic conflict. One concerned her own choice of a marriage partner between the man to whom she felt attracted and another man with whom an alliance offered greater social prestige. Subsequently, she must decide whether it is acceptable for her daughter to marry her former suitor. And, of course, on two separate occasions she faces with her husband the same conflict over rejecting, or forgiving, Effi.

c. Physical attributes of the compromisers

i) The motif of disfigurement

In contrast to the conformists, who are noted for their physical attractiveness, a common motif which can be detected among several compromisers is that of physical

disfigurement. This disfigurement tends to appear in one of three forms: wounds, deformities and distortion of natural features.

The husband of the heroine in Cécile, Pierre von St.Arnaud, as well as the suitor of the heroine in Stine, Waldemar von Haldern, both received wounds in the War of 1870. Whereas the former experienced a miraculous recovery (II,148), the latter was so seriously injured that he never fully regained his health (II,544-545). Major von Crampas in the novel, Effi Briest, arrives on the scene with a shattered left arm as the legacy of a duel. He ultimately dies of a second wound received in a subsequent duel. Physical scars can, of course, readily be understood as the symbols of suffering in individuals who have been emotionally scarred. Wounds may also imply a sense of shame or humility - typically associated with the submissive stance of compromisers - as Helen Merrell Lynd observes: "Experiences of shame appear to embody the root meaning of the word - to uncover, to expose, to wound."⁶³

The second type of disfigurement - namely, deformity - reveals itself in a variety of apparently congenital defects. A member of this category, as well, is St.Arnaud, "dessen scharfer und beinah stechender Blick durch einen kleinen Fehler am linken Auge noch gesteigert wurde"(II,142). Herr Dörr, the bow-legged gardener in

Irrungen, Wirrungen, would have been in the opinion of the narrator, "eine vollkommene Trivialerscheinung..., wenn ihm nicht eine zwischen Augenwinkel und linker Schläfe sitzende braune Pocke was Apartes gegeben hätte"(II,324). Curiously, it is the left side of the body which seems to have been selected by the author with more than average frequency to display scars and other blemishes.

Those who have been most cruelly treated by Nature remain, however, sympathetic characters despite - or possibly due to - their high degree of eccentricity. A prime example of this type is the apothecary in Effi Briest, Dr. Alonzo Gieshübler. The heroine of this novel, Effi, observes him through the window, "ein kleiner, schiefschultriger und fast schon so gut wie verwachsener Herr"(IV,62). Gieshübler's deformity has had tragic repercussions in his social and personal life. As he explains:

'Man hat keinen rechten Mut, man hat kein Vertrauen zu sich selbst, man wagt kaum, eine Dame zum Tanz aufzufordern, weil man ihr eine Verlegenheit ersparen will, und so gehen die Jahre hin, und man wird alt, und das Leben war arm und leer.' (IV,63)

The feelings of inferiority and lack of acceptance by others which plague the compromiser characters, find their clearest expression in this poignant quotation. Gieshübler's response to the conflict between his own desire for romantic involvement and society's expectation that he renounce such

relationships is one of submissive acquiescence to social pressure. His response does not constitute conformity, since he does not believe that society's position is right; he merely feels that he has no choice in the matter. The apothecary has received compensation for his suffering, however, in that as Johnson remarks: "Gieshübler's physical deformity has compelled the cultivation of emotional sensitivities."⁶⁴ Emotional shallowness, as we have already established, is usually the lot of the physically attractive conformist type.

Finally, a third type of disfigurement - distortion of natural features from obesity - is, unfortunately, self-inflicted. The female characters are especially vulnerable in this regard. Rees notes that a counterpoint is discernible in Victorian ladies between the "pious, frail and submissive" type, and the "remarkably robust."⁶⁵ Both varieties can be found in the category of compromiser. Among the latter variety, we encounter in Irrungen, Wirrungen "die wohlarrondierte Königin Isabeau"(II,391) and her alter-ego, Frau Dörr, "eine sehr stattlich aussehende Frau"(II,320) of whom another character remarks: "...sie macht eine Figur, aber sie hat keine" (II,342). Both ladies may be deriving their excessive calories more from alcohol than from food, especially Frau Dörr, who appears to have a weakness for Kirschwasser (II,341). It may be no

coincidence, either, that Königin Isabeau wants to buy a distillery some day with the proceeds of her lifestyle as an aristocrat's mistress. The obesity of these characters may result from attempting to gratify with food and alcohol an unspecified - and never satisfied - emotional hunger, which is typically associated with the compromisers.

ii) Retreat into illness and invalidism

Illness - whether organic or functional in origin - affords some compromiser characters a refuge from the conflict between their personal aspirations and the expectations which others in society would normally place upon them, if they were well. Invalidism, or a lifestyle of chronic sickliness, provides these characters with an excuse not only for being relieved of social obligations, but also for the failure to achieve their personal desires. Their relationship to society is essentially parasitical in nature, for they make no real contribution to it. Nevertheless, society tolerates them because their willingness to sacrifice individual ambitions ensures that they will pose no threat to the status quo. We will now turn to an examination of those compromiser characters for whom sickness provides an escape from the dilemma between personal desires and the demands of society.

For one such character, Effi, the retreat into illness and eventual death ironically begins with the mere pretense of sickness. Anxious to avoid even a temporary return to Kessin, during which time her affair with Crampas might have resumed, Effi alights upon the perfect solution: "Es gab also nur ein Mittel: sie musste wieder eine Komödie spielen, musste krank werden"(IV,197). Her malingering does not entirely convince Frau von Briest (IV,199) and, as Effi herself realizes, in no way deceives the doctor, Geheimrat Rummschüttel: "'Schulkrank und mit Virtuosität gespielt; Evastochter comme il faut'"(IV,200). Yet, it achieves the heroine's end of avoiding a situation which would have been laden with conflict for her.

Rummschüttel's mention of "'Evastochter'" is reminiscent of various statements previously made by Innstetten to Effi. Before the marriage, for example, Innstetten sometimes refers to Effi as his "'kleine Eva'"(IV,33) in the salutation of his letters. After the birth of their child, he tells her that she is "'eine kleine Kokette'"(IV,122) and that she possesses "'was Verführerisches'"(IV,123). Effi's response to these declarations is ecstatic: "'Gott sei Dank, dass du das sagst. Das ist für euch das Beste, was man sein kann....Wir müssen verführerisch sein, sonst sind wir gar nichts...'"(IV,122-123). These remarks betray Effi's

profound sense of worthlessness and helplessness, which she hopes to mitigate by wielding a measure of power over others through seduction. The meaning of seduction need not be restricted here to its sexual connotation. Rather, it can be regarded, in the specific case of malingering, as an attempt to lead others astray from reality into a world of fantasy controlled by the seducer.

Rummschüttel's actual diagnosis is assuredly that of hysteria, which has been defined as:

A kind of neurosis, most often affecting women and once thought to arise in the uterus. Sustained anxiety, usually with little foundation, expresses itself in physical symptoms vaguely resembling those of physical illness of the part of the body that the patient associates with her worries.⁶⁶

Although malingering is normally differentiated from hysteria on the basis that the former is consciously executed, whereas the latter is an unconscious phenomenon,⁶⁷ it has been asserted that hysterics nevertheless, in rare instances, consciously simulate illness in the manner in which we observe Effi doing.⁶⁸ Regardless of whether the underlying conflict is conscious or unconscious, however, hysterical conditions can be interpreted as "a means by which a person who feels helpless or trapped may none the less make a bid for freedom."⁶⁹ It is precisely such a desperate search for a way out of irreconcilable conflict which those compromisers who are sickly share.

Another, and somewhat more typical, case of hysteria is presented by Cécile von St.Arnaud. In this character, conflict between her desires and her fears manifests itself in actual physical symptoms. The narrator confirms this interpretation of Cécile as an hysteric with his comments regarding her "nervöses Fliegen und Zittern," which he terms "diese hysterischen Paroxysmen"(II,260). Müller-Seidel, who - in seeking to ascertain the exact nature of the heroine's illness - refers to the narrator's "Verzicht auf Allwissenheit," appears to have overlooked this citation.⁷⁰ Whereas Effi's hysterical pretense of illness is fully conscious and intended only for temporary expediency, Cécile's hysteria, by way of contrast, apparently springs from unconscious psychological conflicts and invalidism has become a way of life for her.

It may be true, as Müller-Seidel contends, that Fontane's concern in Cécile did not reside so much with an individual case of illness, as it did with what this critic labels "Krankheitserscheinungen als Zeitsymptome."⁷¹ Müller-Seidel leaves unanswered, however, the question as to why disorders such as Cécile's were so widespread in the late nineteenth century. Some light is shed upon this phenomenon by Rycroft. He attributes the prevalence of hysteria in the Victorian era to strict methods of upbringing that forced offspring to adopt a submissive attitude, which then

persisted into adulthood and found expression in hysterical symptoms.⁷²

Dirk Mende, another critic who explores at some length the issue of Cécile's illness, regards it as a distinct case of hysteria. He asserts that this character reacts "mit ihrem Körper, weil sie mental zu reagieren nicht gelernt hat."⁷³ Although Cécile is uneducated, she lacks neither basic intelligence, nor the ability to express herself verbally. Mende's view is misleading insofar as it implies that hysterical conversion symptoms are caused by a lack of intellect or of formal education. Rather, the origin of hysteria lies, according to Rycroft, in "a sense of having been defeated and forced into a submissive role."⁷⁴ Thus, one possible explanation for the somatic expression of Cécile's psychological conflicts could be the apprehension of further social rejection - and even abandonment by her protector - if she were to risk voicing her frustrations openly.

Another possible explanation for Cécile's array of physical symptoms is that her innate biological temperament may predispose her towards exaggerated physiological response to stress, whether the source of the stress be an element in her physical environment, or simply strong emotion. To illustrate this point, we are told, for instance, that Cécile possesses "'etwas angeboren

Feinfühliges'"(II,295) and is hypersensitive to her physical environment: "Die Sonne brannte heiss..., und Cécile, die nach Art aller Nervösen sehr empfindlich gegen extreme Temperaturverhältnisse war, suchte nach einer schattigen Stelle..."(II,173). Also clear, is that Cécile's threshold for stress, even in the positive form of excitement, is apparently below average. This point of view is supported by the narrator's following remarks upon Cécile's return from the Rosstrappe excursion:

...die nervenkrankte Frau...hatte sich tapfer gehalten; nichtsdestoweniger rächte sich, als sie wieder auf ihrem Zimmer war, das Mass von Überanstrengung, und ihren Hut beiseitewerfend, streckte sie sich auf eine Chaiselongue, nicht schlaf-, aber ruhebedürftig. (II,168)

The foregoing quotations suggest that Cécile was perhaps born with an unusually delicate nervous system, which is not only highly vulnerable to the effects of stress, but which may itself be a cause of additional stress by rendering her extra sensitive to sensory stimuli. An admirer of Cécile, Gordon, makes the following cogent observation of her heightened physical sensitivity and consequent instability:

'Mir persönlich will es scheinen, dass sie, nach Art aller Nervenkranken, im höchsten Grade von zufälligen Eindrücken abhängig ist, die sie, je nachdem sie sind, entweder matt und hinfällig oder aber umgekehrt zu jeder Anstrengung fähig machen.' (II,188)

Another character, Hofprediger Dörffel, is aware of Cécile's mental impressionability as well:

...der Hofprediger, der wohl wusste, dass ihr, wenn diese hysterischen Paroxysmen kamen, einzig und allein durch ein Ab- und Überleiten auf andere Dinge hin und, wenn auch das nicht half, lediglich durch eine fast rücksichtslose Herbheit zu helfen war.... (II,260-261)

This feature of suggestibility is strongly associated with the hysterical personality. As Sperling explains:

"...hysterias usually respond to suggestion. Unlike a true epileptic, for instance, a person whose convulsions are hysterical will stop them when told to in an authoritative voice."⁷⁵ Dörffel's first tactic - namely, distraction - permits an interpretation of Cécile's illness as being, at least in part, a reaction to boredom.⁷⁶ For it is quite conceivable that the socially restricted life she leads could encourage her to focus excessively upon bodily functions, whether they be normal or disordered. Again, the narrator confirms our suspicion: "Aber so lang der Weg war und so ruhebedürftig Cécile sich fühlte, dennoch sprach sie kein Wort von Ermüdung, weil das Bild, das die Dorfstrasse gewährte, sie beständig interessierte"(II,222).

An additional feature of hysteria, as previously mentioned in Peter Wingate's definition, is its symbolic representation of emotional conflict. It is Gordon who gives

us, as well as Cécile, the key to understanding this symbolism: "'Aber was Ihnen fehlt, das ist nicht Luft, das ist Licht, Freiheit, Freude. Sie sind eingeschnürt und eingezwängt, deshalb wird Ihnen das Atem schwer, deshalb tut Ihnen das Herz weh...'"(II,290).

No one would deny that Cécile suffers from the sense of oppression which Gordon describes. Yet, it is questionable as to whether her illness is, to quote Mende, "der ästhetische Reflex auf eine patriarchalische Krankheitsideologie, die als Instrument zur Unterdrückung der Frau, wissenschaftlich verbrämt, im historischen Kontext des Romans einsetzt."⁷⁷ Firstly, if Mende's view is correct, how can we account for the fact that while presumably all women were subjected to this "Instrument zur Unterdrückung," only random cases of hysteria are to be found among Fontane's female characters? Secondly, Mende appears to hold the common misconception that hysteria is a disorder confined to women. Rycroft informs us, however, that hysteria, or the submissive defence, was demonstrated by Freud to occur in men, too⁷⁸ and would "be recognized as hysterical if it were not for the resistance to applying to men a word which derives from the Greek for womb."⁷⁹ Moreover, he adds that even the seventeenth-century physician, Sydenham, knew "that men could have hysterical symptoms and got round the verbal objections to diagnosing hysteria in men by calling male

hysterics hypochondriacs."⁸⁰

This information sheds an interesting light on the case of Waldemar von Haldern, whom another compromiser character, Pauline Pittelkow, labels "'[e]in armes, krankes Huhn'"(II,506). Wingate describes hypochondria as "[u]ndue preoccupation with one's real or supposed ailments; it is more of a hobby than an illness."⁸¹ The latter portion of this definition bears a striking resemblance to Waldemar's own assessment of his situation, "'...das Kranksein, das eigentlich von Jugend auf mein Lebensberuf war...'"(II,509). Waldemar's father, "'der arme, traurige Mensch, der...immer einen Katarrh...hatte'"(II,551), appears to have provided a model of invalidism for his son to imitate. It must be conceded, of course, that Waldemar may also have inherited a weak constitution, which would naturally have set the stage for his role as an invalid. Although we learn that Waldemar sustained injuries in battle - from which he has only half-recovered (II,517) - a precise reason for his failure to recuperate completely is not provided. "Da der Verfall von Adelsgeschlechtern zu den Themen gehört, die man gegen Ende des Jahrhunderts bevorzugt behandelt," speculates Müller-Seidel, "könnte die Kränklichkeit des jungen Haldern als eine Thematisierung der Decadence verstanden werden."⁸² As Müller-Seidel proceeds to acknowledge, however, such an interpretation of Waldemar's health is undermined by the

fact that Stine, too, is portrayed as being in delicate health. The Invalidenstrasse, on which Stine lives and down which we observe Waldemar walking (II,50), may be regarded as symbolic not only of the latter's disability as an officer, but also of his general incapacity for living.

A parallel can be drawn between Waldemar and Cécile, in that with both characters, it is impossible to distinguish those complaints which may have an organic basis, from those which are hysterical conversions of psychological conflicts into physical symptoms. For an important point which must be understood in regard to hysteria is that it can occur in an individual who also suffers from an actual disease process. Hence, although Cécile clearly possesses the submissive personality associated with the psychological disorder of hysteria, it would be incorrect to assume that all of her physical complaints are necessarily hysterical conversions. Cécile's symptoms, apart from those already mentioned, include: trembling fingers (II,255); a pallid complexion (II,154); chills and insomnia (II,147); an apparent heart condition for which she has been prescribed digitalis (II,289); difficulty breathing (II,290); plus difficulty walking (II,148). While this list of symptoms may appear impressive, it does not, however, seem to add up to a definitive diagnosis. Some of these difficulties may be attributable merely to poor diet and insufficient exercise,

rather than to a specific disease. Yet, as Garland maintains, Cécile's "frail health may have organic causes, as the cardiac complaint which is eventually diagnosed appears to confirm."⁸³ Moreover, if we consider St.Arnaud's remark to the effect that Cécile's physical difficulties may be ascribed to her "'Vertebrallinie'" (II,167), then the possibility of a disease such as tuberculosis of the spine should not be dismissed either.

In contrast to the frequent discussion of Cécile's numerous complaints, Effi's definite case of pulmonary tuberculosis progresses to its fatal conclusion with virtually no mention of what must have been considerable physical suffering. Yet, it is difficult to share Müller-Seidel's view, "dass in diesen Schilderungen die Gefahr der Sentimentalität nicht ganz umgangen worden ist."⁸⁴ For the depiction of Effi's illness and death is perhaps better described as romantic, a term which suggests an idealized view, rather than sentimental, an epithet which implies excessive or artificial emotion.

Fontane's idealized treatment of his heroine's demise reflects the influence of various myths concerning the nature of tuberculosis; these myths persisted for some time even after the disease was discovered in 1882 to result from bacterial infection.⁸⁵ Other European writers in the nineteenth century also had recourse to these myths, which

lent themselves well to metaphorical expression. As Thomalla explains: "Die Schwindsucht war als romantische Krankheit in der Décadence ausserordentlich beliebt, weil sie den erwünschten Eindruck von Eleganz und Geistigkeit nicht zerstört, sondern hebt."⁸⁶ Thomalla's remarks are echoed and elaborated upon by Sontag: "Nineteenth-century literature is stocked with descriptions of almost symptomless, unfrightened, beatific deaths from TB, particularly of young people."⁸⁷ Tuberculosis, states Sontag, "provided a metaphoric equivalent for delicacy, sensitivity, sadness, [and] powerlessness."⁸⁸

To be sure, Fontane was not ignorant of those facts concerning TB which were already known at the time he wrote Effi Briest from 1888 to 1889.⁸⁹ The actual onset of Effi's consumption - initially foreshadowed by Innstetten's remark to her about dangerous bacilli in the air (IV,80) - is realistically presented as pursuing an insidious course. Although the infection begins to manifest itself in symptoms towards the end of her marriage (IV,223), it smoulders for several years until it is eventually compounded by a nervous disorder (IV,275-276).

Effi's condition is further exacerbated by mental depression, which evidently diminishes her physical resistance to the disease: "...als das neue Jahr herankam, begann Effi ganz schwermütig zu werden"(IV,265). Sontag draws

attention to the fact that resignation is featured as a recurrent motif in accounts of TB.⁹⁰ Moreover, in the nineteenth century, the tubercular person's character was believed to resemble the classical concept of the melancholy character.⁹¹ It is interesting to note that, already in the first chapter, Effi appears to betray such a melancholy temperament with her remarks about Innstetten's courtship of Luise: "'Eine Geschichte mit Entsagung ist nie schlimm'"(IV,10).

Another nineteenth century belief relevant to our discussion is that "...TB was thought to come from too much passion,"⁹² selecting as its victim "a hectic, reckless creature of passionate extremes."⁹³ These very attributes are applicable to Effi, who is chastised by her mother for being "'so leidenschaftlich'"(IV,9); described as possessing "'auch was Rabiates'"(IV,40); and as "viel zu beweglichen Gemüts"(IV,89). It may be this nineteenth century notion of tuberculosis as a disease afflicting a certain personality type which explains Rummschüttel's otherwise obscure assertion that Effi was always predisposed toward consumption (IV,276). Unless we accept this association of temperament, it is difficult to relinquish our initial impression of Effi as "ein Bild frischesten Lebens..."(IV,17).

From the perspective of the twentieth century, we can

account for Effi's depression as an understandable reaction to her prolonged social isolation. We also know that women, in general, were more vulnerable to TB as a result of being confined to a sedentary life indoors, where they were dressed in restrictive clothing and inhaled fumes from open coal fires.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, it is significant that Effi dies of TB specifically, rather than of influenza or pneumonia - two other leading causes of death in the nineteenth century. For it was believed that a process of spiritual refinement accompanied the gradual wasting of the physical body wrought by consumption. As Thomalla explains: "Man stirbt lange und sanft an ihr und wird während der agonie sichtbar körperloser und ätherischer."⁹⁵ The narrator's description of Effi's appearance as she approaches death accords with Thomalla's remarks, "dass es nicht die helle Jugend, sondern eine Verklärtheit war, was der schlanken Erscheinung und den leuchtenden Augen diesen eigentümlichen Ausdruck gab"(IV,279). Effi's "Verklärtheit" can be interpreted not only literally, but also figuratively as spiritual transfiguration. "The inveterate spiritualizing of TB," states Sontag, "provided a redemptive death for the fallen."⁹⁶ Expiated of her guilt through the physical suffering of illness, in addition to the emotional suffering of her ostracism, Effi dies at peace, "'mit Gott und Menschen versöhnt'"(IV,293).

This discussion would not be complete without an examination of the numerous secondary gains - for the victims and for society - which can be derived from illness and invalidism. One advantage of sickness is that it permits withdrawal from society, as Sontag points out, "without having to take responsibility for the decision."⁹⁷ By secluding themselves, the sickly characters can largely avoid unpleasantness, conflicts and confrontations with others. In Cécile's case, for instance, apparent ill health legitimizes her desire to avoid social interaction, which she fears will ultimately lead to the pain of rejection, once her unfortunate past is discovered. Contrary to Mende's view that St.Arnaud deliberately sequesters Cécile for his own personal ends - using her illness as a pretext -⁹⁸ the following dialogue between the couple makes it clear that Cécile seeks to isolate herself: "...und so sagte sie: 'Ich hoffe, das wir viel allein sind.' 'Warum immer allein? Und gerade du. Du brauchst Menschen'"(II,144).

Invalidism, as a way of life, can not only ward off rejection from others and reduce conflicts with them. It can also garner extra attention, sympathy, co-operation and special consideration, which would otherwise not be forthcoming. Both Mende⁹⁹ and Mittelman¹⁰⁰ have observed this phenomenon in regard to Cécile. The significant point here is that, as Rycroft explains, if hysterical symptoms

"lead to the kind of invalidism which brings with it attention and power, they are likely to persist indefinitely."¹⁰¹ Thus, sickness can enable characters who feel helpless, to exercise power passively over others.

Illness can also serve to check anger in others by eliciting their pity and be effectively used to manipulate them with guilt. We see this evidenced in Cécile's relationship with St.Arnaud, an individual of considerable temper, who might leave her if she were not sick and in need of his protection - a factor which encourages him to feel superior and in control. Similarly, Rummschüttel's success at persuading Effi's parents to take her back into their home likely rests as much upon their guilt over having banished her in the first place, as it does upon their love.

Another benefit to be derived from sickness is that it can mollify the demands and expectations of others by providing the sufferer with an excuse to evade normal duties. Regarding Cécile, Mende observes: "...die Krankheit...gewährt ihr jede Form des Rückzugs, insbesondere im Handhaben der sexuellen Appetenz männlicher Verehrer."¹⁰² One remains unconvinced, however, of this same critic's assertion that Cécile and Effi, too, are "Opfer der Repression von Sexualität im Wilhelminismus."¹⁰³ Rather, the passivity typical of the hysterical personality is, according to Rycroft, incompatible with normal sexual

functioning, especially in men.¹⁰⁴ We are given the impression with Waldemar, for example, that he has used ill health as a justification for avoiding romantic involvements: "'Ich bin krank und ohne Sinn für das, was die Glücklichen und Gesunden ihre Zerstreuung nennen'"(II,509). It is apparent from the remarks of Waldemar's uncle, however, that fear of competing with and thereby provoking the disapproval of other males in the family may also be a factor motivating the young count's celibacy:

'...du...weisst, dass dein Leben an einem seidnen Faden hängt....Debauchiere, wer kann und mag, aber jeder nach seinen Kräften, und durchschwärmte Nächte sind nicht für jedermann und sicherlich nicht für dich....du bist für immer ins Schuldbuch der Tugend eingeschrieben,...du musst leben wie eine eingemauerte Nonne....' (II,534)

Clearly, Waldemar receives a good deal of encouragement to persist in acting out the role of an invalid.

An additional secondary gain resulting from illness can be a sense of superiority it confers upon the sufferer. In the words of Thomalla: "Krankheit war für das Fin de siècle identisch mit geistiger Verfeinerung. Man...feierte den Zustand der Krankheit als eine höhere und elegantere Form des Lebens."¹⁰⁵ This attitude finds expression in the following remarks of Waldemar: "'...das Kranksein...hat auch seine Vorteile; man kriegt allerlei Nerven in seinen zehn Fingerspitzen und fühlt es den Menschen und Verhältnissen

ab, ob sie glücklich sind oder nicht'"(II,509). Similarly, Dr. Wiesike perceives Effi as possessing a superior sensibility: "'...solche Kranken haben ein sehr feines Gefühl'"(IV,283).

The notion of elegance associated with the lifestyle of an invalid derived largely from the passive, sheltered dependency upon others which illness afforded its victim. For sickness tends to enhance the sufferer's egocentricity by encouraging both self-indulgence as well as forbearance from others. Fulfillment of the longing to be taken care of - a desire which appears to be shared by all three sickly compromiser characters under consideration - leads Effi, for example, to declare that her days spent as an invalid at Hohen-Cremmen have been nearly her most beautiful (IV,294). Presumably, they rank second only to her healthy childhood days, also spent at Hohen-Cremmen.

Although the weakness associated with illness detracts somewhat from Waldemar's masculinity, it accentuates the femininity of the female characters. Rees points out that the invalid's role conformed to "the idea of the Perfect Lady. A lady on a couch, languid, delicate and above all spiritual...."¹⁰⁶ Indeed, we are presented with this very image both of Effi (IV,292) and of Cécile (II,287). In the case of the latter, Gordon specifically draws attention to the correspondence of her weakness with her femininity

(II,289). Cécile's delicacy is further underscored by contrast with St.Arnaud's phenomenally strong constitution, as witnessed by his miraculous recovery from a serious bullet wound (II,148). Thomalla explains that this type of contrast is commonly encountered in the literature of Fontane's day: "Vielen femmes fragiles wird ein brutal gesunder Partner an die Seite gestellt, um ihre finesse gegen seine gesunde Grobheit abzuheben."¹⁰⁷ Even the narrator suggests that much of Cécile's charm may be attributable to her illness: "Aller Krankheit und Resignation unerachtet, oder vielleicht auch gesteigert dadurch, war etwas Bestrickendes um sie her gewesen..."(II,292).

Mende draws our attention to yet another feature of hysterical illness - namely, that it can actually serve as a covert form of rebellion against the expectations of others in society - "...die Hysterie ist nicht nur Ausdruck des Leidens, sondern gleichzeitig Kampfform...."¹⁰⁸ This interpretation of hysteria is supported by Rycroft, who remarks: "...the hysterical defence includes an underground attack on authority and an attempt to escape from it."¹⁰⁹ We see a specific illustration of this phenomenon when Effi feigns illness in order to defy Innstetten's wish for her to return to Kessin. A more generalized expression of hysterical illness masking defiance is provided by Waldemar who,

contrary to the obligation usually associated with his aristocratic class, has failed to marry and produce an heir. Similarly, we may interpret Cécile's chronic health complaints as a disguised form of birth control, in that they provide her with an excuse to avoid her conjugal duty and hence, motherhood as well.¹¹⁰

It is curious to note that each of the three sickly compromiser characters has been cast in the role of a scapegoat - either by family members, society, or both of these. The question arises as to what extent their invalid lifestyles - and possibly even organic illness - may stem, at least in part, from the burden of this role. Schuster uncovers a number of sacrificial motifs connected with Effi.¹¹¹ And Bance observes, in regard to these motifs associated with Effi: "The scapegoat still performs a ritual function."¹¹² Unfortunately, Bance does not elaborate sufficiently upon this observation. Valuable insight relevant to the origin of the problem is, however, provided by Waldemar:

'Das Schlimmste war, dass ich im Hause selbst, bei meinen eignen Eltern, ein Fremder war. Und warum? Ich habe später darauf geachtet und es in mehr als einer Familie gesehn, wie hart Eltern gegen ihre Kinder sind, wenn diese ganz bestimmten Wünschen und Erwartungen nicht entsprechen wollen.'
(II,551)

By way of comparison, the narrator notes that Frau von

Briest is also excessively critical of Effi (IV,23) and, like Cécile's mother, she endeavours to live out through her daughter, ambitions more properly suited to herself. Individuals whose expectations - even though unrealistic - have not been met, however, tend to resist accepting responsibility for this failure and instead, blame a convenient target. In fact, Webster's Third New International Dictionary defines scapegoat as, "a person...bearing the blame for others [and]...against whom is directed the irrational hostility and unrelieved aggression of others." This definition permits a three-fold interpretation of the function of illness and invalidism.

Firstly, the suffering associated with an illness, be it fancied or real, and the pursuit of a self-limiting lifestyle as an invalid can serve these characters as a vehicle to atone for guilt - whether that guilt has been induced by failure to meet the expectations of others, or by transgressions of society's values. Such an attempt at reconciliation is, however, ultimately doomed. For it aims to pacify others at the characters' own expense.

Secondly, invalidism may be interpreted as a means of symbolically striking back at those who have directed hostility towards the scapegoat. The sickly characters can passively vent their anger by employing illness as an excuse to avoid assuming adult responsibilities for themselves,

thus burdening those who must care and provide for them. We see this phenomenon illustrated most clearly by Effi's return, in time of sickness, to a state of child-like dependency upon her parents. And she reveals awareness of this effect her invalidism has had upon them: "'Und eigentlich hab' ich doch auch euer Leben geändert und euch vor der Zeit zu alten Leuten gemacht'"(IV,291). The indirect form of protest - through invalidism - in reaction to being made a scapegoat miscarries in the long run, however. For it, too, shares the self-destructiveness of submissive adaptation to the role in hope of gaining acceptance.

Thirdly, not only have the scapegoat characters fallen short of the expectations of others in society, they have also met with defeat in the pursuit of their own aspirations. Consequently, illness and invalidism may be interpreted as final attempts - short of suicide - on the part of deeply resigned characters, at resolving the inherent conflict between the individual's will and the collective will of society. For these characters, the physical symptoms of illness and the limitations which invalidism imposes may provide a much needed diversion from distressing memories, as well as from the emotional pain of facing their disappointment and disillusionment with life. Cécile, for instance, can attribute her misery to illness, rather than to her past which society will never forgive. We

also observe that Effi's sense of frustration at unmet expectations - "'...ich kann eigentlich von vielem in meinem Leben sagen "beinah""(IV,280) - finds graphic illustration in the half-circles drawn by Waldemar - "'Unwillkürliches Symbol meiner Tage. Halbkreise! Kein Abschluss, keine Rundung, kein Vollbringen...Halb, halb..."(II,556).

By way of summary, the preceding investigation has endeavoured to show how illness and invalidism arise from, and provide a few of the compromiser characters with a means of escape from, the conflict between their individual desires and the dictates of society. Illness relieves them of the burden of choice between these two options by rendering them incapable of pursuing either. Sickliness permits these characters to evade social responsibilities, yet appease society through self-sacrifice. Their suffering serves to lessen their feelings of guilt over failure to conform to society's expectations. At the same time, it constitutes a silent reproach toward a society which would tolerate such waste of human potential - especially in young adults. The path of invalidism, once embarked upon, tends to be self-perpetuating due to reinforcement afforded the characters by numerous secondary gains - not the least of which is avoidance of confrontation both with themselves and with society. The eventual winner in this arrangement, however, is society, which purges its collective guilt and

failure by scapegoating an individual. By acquiring a scapegoat, through opposition to which other members of society are united, it also furthers its own goals of order, cohesion and resistance to change.

d. General features of the compromisers

i) Rebellion and distraction

In contrast to the conformists, who exhibit a high degree of emotional control, the compromisers are distinguished by an extreme emotional lability. Their unstable natures are reflected in moods that fluctuate between elation, which is generally quite short-lived, and despondency, which tends to be the more predominant state. The narrator states of Effi, for instance: "...sie war ...viel zu beweglichen Gemüts"(IV,89). "Es ist diese Unruhe," declares Kienbaum, "die von den Männern nicht geteilt wird...."¹¹³ But can we agree with Kienbaum? For the following description is given of St.Arnaud: "Von ähnlicher Unruhe war der sie [Cécile] begleitende Herr..."(II,141). Also, this perception is reinforced by another character's observation of the former lieutenant colonel: "'...er [ist] voll Egoismus und Launen, viel launenhafter als Cécile selbst'"(II,277). In addition, Botho von Rienäcker - the

hero of Irrungen, Wirungen - experiences similar contradictory emotional responses: "...eine Unruhe bemächtigte sich seiner, weil ihm allerwiderstreitendste Gefühle durchs Herz gingen: Liebe, Sorge, Furcht"(II,349). By way of comparison, we observe that Koc draws attention to "Nachgiebigkeit den eigenen Stimmungen und Launen gegenüber" as one distinguishing feature of those characters, both male and female, whom he terms "impressionistic"¹¹⁴ - a group which is alike in many respects to the compromisers.

The periods of elation, which most though not all of the compromisers experience, are characterized by several features including: a high degree of activity, sensation-seeking and risk-taking behaviour. Whereas the conformists shun spontaneity and prefer repetitive activities directed either towards achieving specific goals or towards relieving tension, the compromisers, on the other hand, favour impulsive activity which is seemingly without purpose, apart from serving as a diversion. Moreover, in contradistinction to the conformists, who resist change and cling to the familiar, the compromisers yearn for change and variety: "Effi war nicht für Aufgewärmtheiten; Frisches war es, wonach sie sich sehnte, Wechsel der Dinge"(IV,144). Crampas, to whom Effi finds herself strongly attracted, subscribes to the same philosophy - "'Abwechslung ist des Lebens Reiz'"(IV,125). "Wechsel der Reize als der grösste

Reiz" is also an essential feature of Koc's impressionistic type.¹¹⁵

This feature is further reinforced by the animal symbolism associated with Effi and Crampas: "'...und auf dem Flur ein kleiner Haifisch und ein Krokodil, beides an Strippen und immer in Bewegung'"(IV,241). These two animals, known for their voracious appetites, hang in the hallway of the Kessin home along with the sailing ship (IV,50) which, as previously mentioned, is an appropriate symbol for Innstetten. Their constant motion suggests the restlessness accompanying the perpetual search of these characters for the stimulating diversions which seem to provide them with some vital form of sustenance. Despite the "nourishment" they receive, however, their Sehnsucht, which takes the form of a hunger for sensation, is never alleviated. The "'junge[s] Krokodil'"(IV,50) in all likelihood represents Effi. An allusion to false, or affected, tears might have been part of the author's intention in choosing this symbol - an assertion which is supported by Effi's theatrical tendency: "'...ich so allein, und so jung. Ach, wenn ich doch wen hier hätte, bei dem ich weinen könnte'"(IV,76). Furthermore, as an aquatic creature, the crocodile furnishes yet another motif connected with water which, as Grawe observes, is repeatedly associated with danger for the heroine.¹¹⁶ Concerning Crampas, Grawe maintains: "Im Gegensatz zu Effi ist das

Wasser, das Elementare, keine Gefahr für ihn...."¹¹⁷ This interpretation is questionable, however, given the fact that Crampas meets his unfortunate fate near the ocean - the habitat of the shark.

The restlessness of the compromiser characters is often associated with a type of nervous disorder. Hans Otto Horch explores the multi-faceted concept of Nervosität as it existed in the late nineteenth century. Quoting from the 1889 edition of Grimm's Dictionary, Volume 7, Horch notes the following variant definition of nervös: "'reizbare Nerven habend, nervenschwach.'"¹¹⁸ "Die[se] negative Variante wird gegen Ende des alten und zu Beginn des neuen Jahrhunderts zunehmend betont;" elaborates Horch, "gleichzeitig entsteht die artistisch-ästhetische Verkehrung ins Positive, Elitäre."¹¹⁹

Koc affirms, regarding Effi's "whims," that Fontane "draws the two phenomena of nervousness and the constant search for diversion into direct correlation."¹²⁰ The exact intention of the author in uniting these two features remains, however, somewhat obscure. On the one hand, it is possible to view the sensation-seeking behaviour of both Effi and Cécile, for example, as an attempt to allay anxiety fostered by inner conflict over their extra-marital liaisons. As Koc remarks: "Cécile's nervous inclination, apparent from the beginning, intensifies as her relationship

with von Gordon becomes more involved and confused."¹²¹ Still, the fact that her nervousness is "apparent from the beginning" - just as it is with Effi even before she is married (IV,18), let alone involved with Crampas - leads us to suspect that anxiety resulting from emotional conflicts may not be so much a causative factor of nervousness, as it is a source of aggravation to the pre-existing condition.

The comment by Cécile's admirer, von Leslie-Gordon, that she possesses "'etwas angeboren Feinfühliges'" (II,295) suggests the possibility of a genetic, biological basis for the highly sensitive and unstable emotional dispositions of these characters. Their nervousness may actually be an effect of the exaggerated fluctuations in mood to which a constitution hypersensitive to both emotional and sensory stimuli predisposes them.

A similar attempt to define nervousness in terms of "contrasting emotional reactions" has been made by Hellpach, from whom Koc cites the following comment: "Die Nervosität hat ihre wesentliche psychologische Grundlage in der übermässigen Steigerung eines normalen seelischen Vorganges: des Gefühlskontrastes."¹²² If Hellpach's view is correct, then the compelling quest for stimulation could represent an effort to maintain a consistently elevated mood by endeavouring through continuous excitement to prevent the unwanted emergence of contrasting feelings of boredom and

melancholy - an occurrence which is heralded by nervous anxiety. This interpretation is lent credence by remarks from Effi: "'...ja, Zerstreuung, immer was Neues,....Was ich nicht aushalten kann, ist Langeweile'"(IV,32.)

Regardless of what motivates the compromiser characters in their restless search for stimulation, they inevitably come into conflict with society, as their desire for new and exciting experiences leads them down unconventional paths. "Hang zum Ausgefallenen und Verbotenen" is likewise typical of Koc's impressionists.¹²³ The element of risk or danger, as well as that of novelty, exerts a powerful fascination upon the compromiser characters. Some of them court actual physical danger. A prime example of this tendency is furnished by Effi, whose "'Hang nach Spiel und Abenteuer'"(IV,40) appears to have always been a part of her nature: "'Ich kletterte lieber, und ich schaukle mich lieber, und am liebsten immer in der Furcht, dass es irgendwo reissen oder brechen und ich niederstürzen könnte'"(IV,34).

Effi does, in fact, experience falls "'jeden Tag wenigstens zwei-, dreimal'"(IV,11). According to Johnson, "[t]he physical and emotional security of her environment infuses Effi with the confidence to experiment with risk in her physical activity...."¹²⁴ However, Effi's penchant for

climbing and swinging - activities which yield a sense of unfettered freedom in space - might also be explained as an attempt to escape from the feeling of parental over-protectiveness.

Effi's tomboyish streak not only threatens her with physical injury; it also betrays a rebellious attitude with respect to societal norms of feminine behaviour. Moreover, the nautical costume (IV,9) in which this heroine makes her initial appearance, has been remarked upon by Ritchie as contributing what he terms "a strange sexual ambiguity."¹²⁵ Another compromiser character, Marietta Trippelli, in whom we find many of Effi's traits exaggerated, is frankly described by the narrator as "stark männlich"(IV,90). Lacking not only in feminine refinement, but in basic social graces as well, Marietta exemplifies through her unconventional lifestyle the defiant mode of response associated with compromisers. In the words of Grawe:

Als Sängerin kann sie [Marietta] im Gegensatz zu Effi Briest ungestraft im "Aparten"...leben und hat in der Kunst einen Bereich der Freiheit und Angstlosigkeit, lebt aber ausserhalb der bürgerlichen Normen und unterhält in aller Offenheit ein Verhältnis mit einem russischen Fürsten.¹²⁶

These remarks, while valid up to a point, depict Marietta's situation in a light which is perhaps too optimistic. Neither she, nor any other character in Fontane's novels, is permitted the luxury of living entirely "ungestraft im

'Aparten.'" Marietta is well aware that her association with the theater has blighted her reputation, "'...also das Beste, was man hat'"(IV,93). Furthermore, her resolution - henceforth, to share sleeping quarters with a Quaker as protection against ghosts, by which she believes to have been previously haunted (IV,93) - casts doubt upon Grawe's assertion of Marietta's "Angstlosigkeit."

It is interesting to note that Gieshübler is drawn to both Effi and Marietta, each of whom presents an image of sexual ambiguity. The apothecary himself exhibits this phenomenon with his outmoded jabots, as well as other somewhat foppish attire. Gieshübler's personality, too, reveals a strongly developed "feminine" side of his nature, to which his numerous creative pursuits and his keen desire to nurture - expressed not only in his relations with people, but also in his hobby of flower cultivation - testify. By way of contrast, neither Effi nor Marietta appears to possess a nurturing tendency; they prefer to be the recipients of care and attention from others. No such blurring of the boundaries of gender which these compromiser characters display - both in appearance and personality - is discernible among the conformists, who exemplify conventional sex role stereotypes.

Another instance of Effi's departure from customary feminine behaviour is revealed by her desire to ride

horseback along the beach with Crampas and Innstetten:

"...sie habe nun mal die Passion, und es sei doch zu viel verlangt, bloss um des Geredes der Kessiner willen, auf etwas zu verzichten, das einem so viel wert sei"(IV,127).

Innstetten, as a conformist, is naturally against the idea, but the rebellious Crampas views Effi's wish with approval.

Cécile is another character for whom "'Eselreiten und Ponyfahren'" constitute an actual "'Passion'"(II,208) to such an extent that she exclaims: "'Ach, ich könnte den ganzen Tag so reiten, und von Müdigkeit wäre keine Spur'"(II,217). At the turn of the century, riding and cycling, too, were still considered unconventional activities for women. Such amusements can readily be interpreted, therefore, as symbols of emancipation or, in connection with Effi and Cécile, as symbols of their yearning to be liberated from anxiety and restriction. Certainly, the mobility which the donkey affords Cécile - to explore the countryside with a minimum of physical exertion in search of stimulation - appears to have temporarily relieved her spirit of an undefined burden: "'Ja, sie hat ein Verlangen, eine Sehnsucht. Aber welche? Mitunter ist es, als sehne sie sich, von einem Drucke befreit zu werden oder von einer Furcht und innerlichen Qual'"(II,241).

Effi experiences a similar sense of escape when she journeys in the sleigh with Innstetten: "'Es ist ja

himmlisch, so hinzufliegen, und ich fühle ordentlich, wie mir so frei wird und wie alle Angst von mir abfällt'"(IV,85). The element of danger is found here, too, in that Effi cannot tolerate the safety strap which both protects and restricts (IV,157). Such deliberate courting of physical danger appears to serve the function of momentarily overcoming chronic anxiety by converting it into a sensation of excitement. Occasionally, the feeling of exhilaration is desired for its own sake - perhaps as an antidote to the numbness of boredom and depression.¹²⁷ As the narrator observes of Effi: "Am liebsten aber hatte sie [Effi] wie früher auf dem durch die Luft fliegenden Schaukelbrett gestanden und in dem Gefühle: 'jetzt stürz' ich,' etwas eigentümlich Prickelndes, einen Schauer süßer Gefahr empfunden"(IV,118).

As opposed to the female characters, whose proclivity for dangerous activities usually seems connected to a desire for movement and freedom from restraint, the male characters, generally speaking, gravitate more toward deeds of raw physical bravery, such as both Waldemar and St.Arnaud displayed through their heroism in battle. Even in peacetime, characters like St.Arnaud, Gordon and Crampas appear to create gratuitous opportunities to risk their lives in duels. The provocation for these duels resides in a socially unacceptable involvement with a member of the opposite sex. These characters know their involvements will

affront other members of society, yet appear to be motivated precisely by the threat of censure and retribution.

St.Arnaud realized full well, for instance, that his betrothal to Cécile would be condemned by his fellow officers. As Evans explains, it was customary for the officer corps to require that members obtain permission to marry:

The granting of this official consent depended on the social acceptability of the prospective bride, not only on her social antecedents (which had to be respectable, non-Jewish and preferably wealthy but not necessarily aristocratic) but also on her conformity to the mores of the upper classes.¹²⁸

Nevertheless, St. Arnaud seems to have pursued Cécile, as Christiane Wandel expresses it, "mehr aus eigensinniger Laune als aus wirklicher Zuneigung."¹²⁹ St.Arnaud's rebellious streak is confirmed by the narrator, who describes in his facial features "ein Zug von Herbheit, Trotz und Eigenwillen"(II,143). Interestingly, Cécile is also attracted to Gordon, in whom Hofprediger Dörffel notes, "'einen eigensinnigen Zug um den Mund'" and whom he judges to be "mutmasslich fixer Ideen fähig"(II,258). Defying social convention, although it costs St.Arnaud a brilliant career, appears to satisfy some profound psychological need. Dörr, in choosing the former mistress of a count to be his second wife, imitates essentially the same rebellious pattern which St.Arnaud exhibits. As a member of the working

class, however, the former does not suffer the same repercussions as the latter. A parallel may also be drawn here between St.Arnaud and Crampas, whom Bance terms, "a self-styled adventurer" prone to acting "not out of free will but in reaction to restrictions of society. With him, defiance passes for independence."¹³⁰

In Fontane's novels, the usual provocation for a duel is, however, specifically adultery. With regard to the unfortunate case of Gordon, the deed is merely contemplated, just as Schiller's Wallenstein - with whom Gordon is compared (II,15) - only entertained thoughts of treason, but was punished as if he had committed the crime.¹³¹ Affairs, whether actual or anticipated, nevertheless offer the participants some reward. Effi's brief liaison with Crampas, for example, illustrates a number of such benefits. First, she appears intrigued both by the Major's reputation - "'Er soll nämlich ein Mann vieler Verhältnisse sein, ein Damenmann..." - and by his charm - "'ausgelassen und übermutig....Vollkommener Kavalier, ungewöhnlich gewandt'"(IV,105). To be sure, this dashing portrait forms quite a contrast to the rather staid impression which Innstetten projects.

Another interpretation is advanced by Mittelman in her recently published dissertation, Die Utopie des weiblichen Glücks in den Romanen Theodor Fontanes, wherein

she states that Effi's adultery can also be regarded as "ein Ausdruck eines latenten Gefühls der Auflehnung und Rachsucht gegenüber Innstetten."¹³² Certainly, Crampas does encourage feelings of suspicion and anger on Effi's part towards Innstetten with his assertion that her husband is employing the ghost story as a means to keep her "'in Ordnung'"(IV,134). Bance carries Mittelmann's view perhaps one step too far, however, with his assertion that Effi's affair "represents a childish retaliation upon a neglectful male-dominated world which she is otherwise powerless to combat."¹³³

Finally, the aspect of danger associated with an illicit affair - of which Effi is well aware from the outset: "'Sie [Crampas] sind gefährlich...'"(IV,132) - generates considerable excitement as an antidote to her ennui. In the words of Koc: "...the stimulation [for adulterers] comes from the element of danger that is involved, the danger of being discovered."¹³⁴ Thus, Effi is able to shift the focus of her anxious worrying from the nebulous entity of the ghost to the realistic possibility of divorce and disgrace. At no point, however, are we encouraged to attribute Effi's behaviour to desire. For such feeling was deemed in Fontane's day as quite inappropriate for a woman - even for an adulteress. As Cunningham observes: "Indeed, no novelist of the mid-Victorian period

who wished to arouse sympathy for a fallen woman would risk portraying her as remotely sensual....to suggest that her body influenced her...would invite critical disaster."¹³⁵

In summary, her affair with Crampas rewards Effi with attention from an attractive man, who forms an exhilarating contrast to her husband. This attempt to fulfill a romantic fantasy also yields a sense of getting even with Innstetten, while it counteracts depression and boredom. The last factor - relief from monotony - is an element which appears to be common to the affairs of all compromisers.

Two additional means by which the compromisers seek to maintain a mood of exhilaration - namely, by gambling and by engaging in power struggles with others - may appear, at first glance, to have little in common. Yet, both activities provide stimulation through the uncertainty of winning or losing.

In the case of the former activity, four principal characters, all of whom belong to the category of compromiser, are seemingly addicted to games of chance. We learn of Gordon, for instance, that he left the army for no other reason than gambling debts (II,192). It is interesting to note a parallel in this regard between Gordon and Cécile's father, whose alleged suicide may have been motivated by growing debt, despite the fact that he enjoyed a good income (II,282). Botho von Rienäcker, the "unheroic hero"¹³⁶ of

Irrungen, Wirrungen, regularly passes time gambling at the officers' club, where he has actually won a valuable horse from a comrade (II,339). Still, Botho consistently lives beyond his means and is compelled to marry his rich cousin in order to remain solvent. The third example of a compromiser character who gambles "mit beinahe wissenschaftlichem Ernst"(II,264) is furnished by St.Arnaud. In the words of another character: "'Vor Tisch liest er Zeitungen, nach Tisch spielt er Whist oder Billard; ...es geht um Summen, die für unsereins ein Vermögen bedeuten'"(II,277). By way of comparison, St.Arnaud 's passion for reading newspapers - an auxiliary source of stimulating distraction - is shared by another compromiser character, Gieshübler. We encounter the fourth example of a character who possesses a gambling streak, van der Straaten, in L'Adultera. His preoccupation with the stock exchange - essentially a form of legal gambling - is commented upon by Mende: "Die Börse durchdringt van der Straaten: Der blitzschnelle Umschlag seiner Stimmungen gleicht dem raschen Wechsel der Kurse in der Gründerzeit...."137

As far as the power struggles engaged in by the compromiser characters are concerned, it is necessary to make two important distinctions regarding the aim and nature of these conflicts. For the conformist characters also reveal themselves to be inclined toward such competitive

interactions. In contradistinction to the conformists, however, who seek to control their relationships in order to maintain a sense of safety and security through predictability, the compromisers, on the other hand, appear drawn to power struggles for the sense of excitement afforded by a contest of wills. Moreover, whereas the conformists generally favour one to one relationships in which they are clearly the dominant partner, the compromisers are distinctly prone to involvement in triangles, which are more volatile and hence, more exciting.

We commence our discussion with Cécile, in which the narrator remarks at the outset upon a certain impression conveyed by the heroine and her husband: "Täuschte nicht alles, so lag eine 'Geschichte' zurück, und die schöne Frau...war unter allerlei Kämpfen und Opfern errungen"(II,143). This very aura attracts and intrigues the third member of the triangle, Gordon: "'Dahinter steckt ein Roman'"(II,149). We know that Gordon has previously been involved in at least one similar situation by his reference to Lady Windham in Dehli (II,245). The challenge to Gordon of securing a liaison with Cécile is increased not only by St.Arnaud's possessiveness - which also contributes an element of danger - but, in addition, to quote Garland, "by Cécile's ethereal beauty, which gives her a certain remoteness, enhancing desirability."¹³⁸ Unfortunately,

Gordon's jealousy distorts his judgment to such a degree that he imagines Hedemeyer has usurped his position and, acting upon that false assumption, ends by losing not only the power struggle, but his very life as well.

This pattern of excitement provided by a contest of wills, which eventually ends in defeat, is also exemplified by two of the compromiser characters in Effi Briest. Major von Crampas, who shares with Gordon a history of "conquests," experiences a fate remarkably similar to that of the latter when he interposes himself between Effi and Innstetten. A second triangle - commonly overlooked in this novel - is created by Effi, Crampas and Frau von Crampas. The fact that a power struggle exists here, too, is revealed by Crampas' letter in which he refuses Effi's request to abandon his wife and run away with her (IV,233). Interestingly, each pair of lovers in Cécile and in Effi Briest ultimately meets with death.

The same theme of excitement afforded by a power struggle, which is then followed by loss, is played out with less unfortunate consequences in Irrungen, Wirungen. Here, we observe Frau Dörr occupying a nodal position in no fewer than three romantic triangles. The first triangle is comprised of Frau Dörr, her husband and the count of whom she was formerly a mistress. Granted, we never actually meet the count. Yet, he is present not only in Frau Dörr's memory, but

also in the imagination of her husband, whom Bance describes as "a happy man because he fondly imagines his wife a sought-after beauty."¹³⁹

Disenchanted with her end of the bargain, however, Frau Dörr endeavours to capture the attentions of another aristocrat, Botho. He appears actually to welcome her intrusion, for it serves his need to distance himself emotionally from his sweetheart, Lene: "'Frau Dörr muss immer dabei sein. Ohne Frau Dörr geht es nicht'"(II,373). This second triangle ends in loss for each of its members when Botho, who is involved in an additional triangle with Lene and Käthe, becomes obliged to choose between his sentiment for the former and his need for solvency through marriage to the latter.

Finally, it is again Herr Dörr who wins - by default - the power struggle of the third triangle composed of himself, Frau Dörr and Botho. Frau Dörr, who shares with Effi and Cécile a need for constant attention from male admirers, ironically suffers the greatest sense of loss in these romantic triangles, which she appears to initiate.

Two more illustrations of how the compromisers attempt to sustain a mood of exhilaration - namely, through travelling and social interaction - warrant brief mention. Gordon, whom Grawe describes as "heimatlos,"¹⁴⁰ has travelled extensively, although even the less sophisticated

van der Straaten has undertaken short trips to France and Italy. Other characters pursue the stimulating diversion furnished by numerous excursions within and without of Berlin. Cécile neatly sums up the satisfactions to be derived by compromisers from travel:

'Wie leicht und gefällig macht sich hier das Leben. Und warum? Weil sich beständig neue Beziehungen und Anknüpfungen bieten. Das ist noch der Vorzug des Reiselebens, dass man den Augenblick walten und überhaupt alles gelten lässt, was einem gefällt.'
(II,191)

Effi's loss of interest in travel - which occurs during her years as an outcast (IV,259) - reflects the realization that no avenue of escape from her conflict with society is possible.

In regard to social interaction, the compromiser characters tend to be drawn to foreigners, eccentrics and malcontents. Effi, for example, is intrigued by Innstetten's description of the diverse population of Kessin: "'...nun finde ich...eine ganz neue Welt hier. Allerlei Exotisches....vielleicht einen Neger oder einen Türken, oder vielleicht sogar einen Chinesen'"(IV,45). The most eccentric circle is that of van der Straaten, in which - between the diatribes of Baron Duquede and the entertaining anecdotes of Police Councillor Reiff - there is never a dull moment. Lastly, we find associated with St.Arnaud a group of men whom Garland terms "casualties of public careers."¹⁴¹

"Beinah alle waren Frondeurs, Träger einer Opposition quand même, die sich gegen Armee und Ministerium," elaborates the narrator, "und gelegentlich auch gegen das Hohenzollerntum selbst richtete"(II,265).

This section has explored various manifestations of the rebellious and distraction-seeking behaviour which distinguishes compromiser characters from the conformists. Such behaviour is displayed when the compromisers, who are noted for their emotional lability, experience a mood of elation. While under the influence of this mood, they indulge in a hectic round of activities, which often includes sensation-seeking and risk-taking. The compromisers yearn for constant change and variety to serve the purpose of diversion. A nervous temperament appears to give rise to this restlessness, although it is also possible to view both nervousness and the search for diversion as responses to anxiety generated by conflicts, boredom and melancholy. Their desire to escape feelings of restriction - in addition to the quest for ever new sources of stimulation - sometimes encourages the compromisers to defy social norms of appropriate conduct. In the male characters, particularly, we observe a rather headstrong determination to provoke censure through antagonizing other members of society. A more subtle expression of rebellion can be observed in the motif of sexual ambiguity found in both appearance and

personality traits of some male and female compromiser characters. Among the activities regularly sought out for their stimulating potential are gambling, affairs, power struggles, travelling, as well as social interaction with foreigners, eccentrics and malcontents. Periodically, these attempts undertaken by the compromisers to avoid confrontation with themselves fail. At such times, negative moods typified by ennui, passive indecision, self-reproach and resignation emerge. We now turn to an examination of these themes in the following section.

ii) Resignation and despair

The periods of elation which the emotionally labile compromisers experience are, unfortunately, countered by intervals of profound despondency. During these intervals, we become aware of the essentially apologetic stance with which the compromiser characters approach the world. This apologetic stance is distinguished by an attitude of self-doubt, which contrasts with the air of self-assurance exhibited by the conformists.

Hofprediger Dörffel shares with Cécile his perception of the matter:

'Ich weiss wohl, was diesen Ihren beständigen Zweifeln zugrunde liegt, es ist das, dass Sie, vor Tausenden, in Ihrem Herzen demütig sind....es ist doch zweierlei: die Demut vor Gott und die Demut vor den Menschen. In unserer Demut vor Gott können wir nie zu weit gehen, aber in unserer Demut vor den Menschen können wir mehr tun als nötig. Und Sie tun es. Es ist freilich ein schöner Zug und ein sicheres Kennzeichen edlerer Naturen, andere besser zu glauben als sich selbst, aber wenn wir diesem Zuge zu sehr nachhängen, so verfallen wir in Irrtümer und schaffen weit über uns selbst hinaus allerlei Schädigungen und Nachteile....' (II,259)

The compromisers' acquiescent posture toward others, which Dörffel here describes, finds expression in various forms. It can appear, for example, as a sense of inferiority in comparison with a specific person, as we observe in Effi's relationship with Innstetten: "'Ich habe mich immer klein neben ihm gefühlt...'"(IV,275). And, it can reveal itself - as it also does with Effi - in a general pattern of deference toward the wishes of others: "'Man muss doch immer dahin passen, wohin man nun mal gestellt ist'"(IV,71-72).

As a consequence of feeling inferior, the compromiser characters tend to regard their own needs and desires as being of lesser importance than those of others. In this context, Crampas draws our attention to an element of fear which Effi experiences as a concomitant of self-assertion: "'Du musst Dich nicht um alles so bangen. Wir haben auch ein Recht. Und wenn Du Dir das eindringlich sagst, wird ...alle Furcht von Dir abfallen'"(IV,232). A second illustration of

this phenomenon of anxiety linked with self-assertion is provided by Waldemar, who wants his family to pardon him for exercising his own will in the choice of a wife (II,526).

In fact, our key to understanding the compromisers' submissive reaction to the conflict between the individual and society is the recognition that these characters are motivated by fear - of other people, in particular, and of society, in general. Cécile, for instance, is plagued by fear which presents itself in an omnipresent and acutely intense form, as her plea to the Hofprediger reveals: "'...und, vor allem, beten Sie mir das Grauen fort, das auf meiner Seele liegt'"(II,260). Effi tends, however, to view specific persons and things as the objects of her fear. In addition to Innstetten: "'...ich fürchte mich vor ihm'"(IV,35) - and the Chinese ghost, of course - Effi is, at times, apprehensive of other people in general: "'...sie sind hier [in Kessin] so streng und selbstgerecht'"(IV,84).

To be sure, it is not only the female compromiser characters who are subject to such fears. Old Briest, for example, suffers from nightmares (IV,75) and Gieshübler is excessively modest due to anxiety over provoking the displeasure of others: "'...er führt auch den Dokortitel, hat's aber nicht gern, wenn man ihn dabei nennt, das ärgere, so meint er, die richtigen Doktors bloss, und darin wird er wohl recht haben'"(IV,51).

Not surprisingly, the compromisers' sense of inferiority leads them to expect ridicule from others. Frau Dörr reveals the extent to which compromisers continue to want society's approval - or, at least to avoid its disapproval - despite the transgressions which they might have made in the past:

'...ich habe nu Dörren. Na, viel is er nich, aber es is doch was Anständiges, und man kann sich überall sehen lassen. Und drum bin ich auch in die Kirche mit ihm gefahren und nich bloss Standesamt. Bei Standesamt reden sie immer noch.' (II,321)

Higher social class does nothing to diminish the fear of disapproval, however, as Botho's embarrassment at being seen in a cheap cab betrays (II,448).

Another fear to which some compromisers are predisposed, due to their imagined inferiority, is that of ultimate rejection and abandonment by another. A feeling of being somehow unworthy of high esteem accompanies this fear, which Effi expresses to Innstetten: "'Alle Welt hat es so gut mit mir gemeint, am meisten du; das bedrückt mich, weil ich fühle, dass ich es nicht verdiene'"(IV,148). The materialization of such rejection - not only in Effi's case, but in that of Waldemar as well - leads to tragedy. Van der Straaten, a much less sensitive character than either of the former two, appears to survive his abandonment mainly by virtue of equating his personal worth with his monetary

worth. An interesting parallel may be seen to exist here between van der Straaten and Effi, in that the latter - prior to her marriage - curiously appears to doubt somewhat her chances of finding love and is quite prepared to opt instead for material wealth: "'Und wenn es Zärtlichkeit und Liebe nicht sein können,...nun, dann bin ich für Reichtum und ein vornehmes Haus, ein ganz vornehmes...'"(IV,32). Moreover, both Effi and van der Straaten are alike in that they provoke, by their own actions, the very rejection of which they live in fear.

Alternatively, we occasionally observe compromisers who, in anticipation of themselves being rejected, are the first to reject another. Indirect admission of self-doubt can, for example, be inferred from critical remarks made about another character who possesses greater self-confidence. This phenomenon can be noticed in Cécile's dislike of Rosa, which she reveals with the following statement: "'...ich finde das Fräulein sehr unterhaltlich, aber doch etwas emanzipiert oder, wenn dies nicht das richtige Wort ist, etwas zu sicher und selbstbewusst'"(II,190).

Still more evidence of a fearful attitude is betrayed by the desire of both Effi and Cécile, for instance, to remain forever protected from the world in a state of child-like dependency upon others. Effi quite unabashedly

declares: "'...ich bin ein Kind und werd' es auch wohl bleiben'"(IV,71). Her fondness for Brentano's poem, "Die Gottesmauer," conveys her wish to be passively kept safe, as it also recalls the security of the horseshoe-shaped enclosure formed by her parental home and its property, which borders upon the "Kirchhofsmauer"(IV,7). Also, Gordon surmises that Cécile - whom he regards as a "Kinderseele"(II,184) - has a marriage which constitutes "'eine Neigung mehr aus Schutzbedürfnis als aus Liebe'"(II,187).

Indeed, the principal source of anxiety for both women is probably their feeling of inadequacy in coping alone with the world. Reference to such child-likeness is also made of male compromiser characters, however, such as van der Straaten (II,37) and St.Arnaud (II,277).¹⁴² Whereas a child-like view of themselves in relation to others can be discerned in a number of compromiser characters, the conformists, on the other hand, frequently assume a parental attitude toward others, which approaches patronage. A feature which both attitudes - the Demut, or sense of inferiority typical of the compromisers, and the Hochmut, or sense of superiority typical of the conformists - have in common, however, is the presupposition that human worth and dignity can be measured on a vertical scale.

Generally speaking, the fear which motivates the

compromisers is expressed in the reasonably straight-forward manners just described. An important factor to be aware of, nevertheless, is that the compromisers may also disguise their fear in relationships and in social situations with masks, role-playing and even with anger.

A prime illustration of both the mask motif and role-playing, or acting, is furnished by the character of Botho, whose nickname among his comrades is Gaston. Lene discloses that she once saw a play entitled Der Mann mit der eisernen Maske. "'Und der mit der Maske, der hiess Gaston.'" Moreover, she tells Botho directly: "'Du hast auch eine Maske'"(II,371). This aristocrat's "Sinn für das Natürliche" (II,405) indicates, however, a genuine desire to be free of the artificiality which pervades every aspect of his life in the "'sogenannten Obersphäre der Gesellschaft'"(II,403). But, the pliancy of his nature - "'schwach und bestimmbar und von einer seltenen Weichheit'"(II,362) - encourages him to adapt albeit reluctantly to the roles in which he is cast by others. The modicum of approval he receives for his amenability fails, in the long run, to assuage his sense of inferiority: "'Gideon ist besser als Botho'"(II,475).

This theme of play-acting is further reinforced in Irrungen, Wirrungen by several of the other characters - especially, the men and women in Botho's circle, each of whom possesses a pseudonym derived from theater. The falsity

of the group's female members, in particular, is ironically exposed by lack of attention to detail regarding their "costumes:" "Sie [Isabeau] machte den eleganten, aber mit einem grossen Fettfleck ausgestaffierten Sonnenschirm zu, hing ihn an ihren Gürtel..."(II,394). An even more comical impression is conveyed by Frau Dörr, whose pretentious "'Staatshut'" is proportionate to her degree of insecurity: "'...der sei für Kroll oder fürs Theater," remarks Botho, "aber nicht für die Wilmersdorfer Pedenhaufe'"(II,372). A parallel may be drawn here between Frau Dörr and Cécile, who presents a more tasteful bid for attention: "Cécile, die sich inzwischen umgekleidet, trug, halb vorsichts-, halb eitelkeitshalber, ein mit Pelz besetztes Jackett, das ihr vortrefflich stand und mit dazu beitrug, sie zum Gegenstand allgemeiner Aufmerksamkeit zu machen"(II,240). And similarly, Effi expresses the desire for a fur coat which would serve the same purpose, though her mother aptly warns her: "'...wenn du mit deinen siebzehn Jahren in Nerz oder Marder auftrittst, so glauben die Kessiner, es sei eine Maskerade'"(IV,28).

Another compromiser character in Effi Briest - namely, Crampas - is, like the novel's heroine, "'[e]ine Spielernatur'"(IV,147). He actually stage-directs an amateur production of Wichert's play, Ein Schritt von Wege, in which Effi is assigned the role of Ella - a character whose very

name even suggests an alter ego. In addition, the following parallels and thematic links can be shown to exist between Wichert's play and Fontane's novel, as Grawe succinctly observes:

Dass Crampas die Rolle des Ehemanns ablehnt, weist darauf hin, dass er die Beziehung zu Effi nicht sehr ernst nimmt: Er weigert sich später, mit ihr zu fliehen. Allerdings führt er zu Effis Unbehagen Regie: "...man muss dann spielen, wie er will, und nicht wie man selber will"(144). Arthurs Charakter entspricht Innstetten in seiner Pedanterie, so wie Ella in ihrer Sehnsucht "aus dem Regelrechten ins Ungewöhnliche, aus dem Verkünstelten in die Freiheit der Natur, aus dem Conventionalen ins Abenteuerliche"(4. Akt, 8. Szene) Züge von Effi hat.¹⁴³

Indeed, Effi's acting skills are evidenced off-stage, as well. Her "'Komödie'"(IV,197) performed for the benefit of Rummschüttel, clearly demonstrates how masks and roles can camouflage fear of confrontation and of self-exposure.

Finally, Stine warrants brief mention here, too, in that like Irrungen, Wirrungen, it presents a constellation of characters with nicknames - in this instance, derived from an opera by Mozart - and like Effi Briest, it contains an amateur theatrical performance though, admittedly, not on the stage. An excellent in-depth analysis on this theme is provided in a work by Gunter Hertling.¹⁴⁴

Along with masks and role-playing as a means to conceal anxiety, Fontane also depicts some characters who typically cover their fear with a display of arrogance or

anger. In fact, these postures could also be regarded as masks and roles in themselves. Gordon, for example, perceptively notes this connection regarding Cécile: "'Trotz einer hautänen Miene, die sie, wenn sie will, sehr wohl aufzusetzen versteht, ist sie bescheiden bis zur Demut'"(II,188).

Similarly, the elder Count von Haldern and the Baron are intimidated by Pauline Pittelkow "um ihres unberechenbaren Temperaments...willen"(II,498). By keeping others at a safe distance in this manner, she prevents unwanted self-exposure. Commenting upon Pauline's "Witz und Frivolität," Reuter states: "Psychologisch gesehen handelt es sich jedoch um nichts anderes als um den Ausgleich für das beschämende Gefühl, im Kompromiss leben zu müssen."¹⁴⁵ It is debatable, however, as to whether Pauline, according to Reuter, "muss sich verkaufen"¹⁴⁶ - since as Stine tells her, she could instead work for a living (II,484). Neither is it clear how, in Martini's view, Pauline's "Lebensklugheit bewahrt Ordnung und Sitte,"¹⁴⁷ nor, how in Müller-Seidel's opinion, the widow is "alles andere als unterwürfig."¹⁴⁸ For Pauline tolerates the Count's visits - though she clearly resents them (II,483) - and makes no protest when he throws the tiger-lilies in her apartment out the window (II,493). She stores up her anger "auf andere Zeit zu vertagen"(II,493) only to vent "ihre schlechte

Laune"(II,479) upon an undeserving, but safer target than the Count - such as her daughter, Olga. Pauline's temper tantrums are not consonant with Müller-Seidel's view of her as someone who has preserved "ein gesundes Selbstbewusstsein."¹⁴⁹ Rather, they are evidence of inner conflict and the feeling of helplessness to alter her situation. Even Pauline's apartment reflects the influence of her discordant emotional life: "Gegensätze...zeigten sich in der gesamten Zimmereinrichtung, ja, schienen mehr gesucht als vermieden zu sein..."(II,490).

Another compromiser character who possesses a sharp tongue is van der Straaten: "'Er...weiss so wundervoll alles zu treffen, was kränkt und bloßstellt und beschämt'"(II,67). In this manner, the financier effectively maintains a smoke screen for himself by focussing the attention of others upon their shortcomings, rather than upon his own. This strategy of van der Straaten - which Johnson interprets too generously as merely "candor,"¹⁵⁰ - actually contains an element of overt hostility, in that - like the more mildly antagonistic antics of Briest - it hurts and embarrasses other people. The likelihood that van der Straaten's obnoxious behaviour springs, however, from insecurity is suggested by the narrator: "Van der Straaten, absolut ungezogen, konnte, vielleicht weil er dies Manko fühlte, nichts so wenig ertragen, als auf Unerzogenheiten aufmerksam

gemacht zu werden..."(II,34). As Grawe observes, despite his wealth, he remains van der Straaten - namely, "von der Strasse."¹⁵¹ Yet, this character does not entirely lack understanding as to the nature of his problem. As he explains to his wife: "'...auch in ihrer Furcht unterscheiden sich die Menschen'"(II,15).

Along with van der Straaten, St.Arnaud is a character who also likes to provoke defensiveness and even outright fear in others. This contention is substantiated by the narrator:

Nicht das Liebesabenteuer als solches weckte seinen Groll gegen Gordon, sondern der Gedanke, dass die Furcht vor ihm, dem Manne der Determiniertheiten, nicht abschreckender gewirkt hatte. Gefürchtet zu sein,...das war recht eigentlich seine Passion. (II,309-310)

The impression that an element of pretense may be connected with this pose is conveyed by St.Arnaud's choice of words, such as "Rolle" (II,309) and repeated mention of "Spiel" (II,310,311). In short, St.Arnaud's "game" is intimidation of others. Such an obsession presupposes, however, a sense of being somehow threatened oneself. And in fact, this is precisely the case: "'Das Gerede der Leute,' wiederholte St.Arnaud spöttisch das ihn allemal nervös machende Wort"(II,190). St.Arnaud's arrogance may thus be understood as a mask which conceals the fear of feeling fear, and the fear of being judged inferior.

The subject of power struggles among the compromisers - previously discussed in relation to sensation-seeking - is also linked with feelings of inferiority, which are indirectly expressed not only by maneuvers aimed at embarrassing and frightening others, but also through attempts to dominate them. An illustration of this strategy is furnished by the relationship between Herr Dörr and his wife: "die wohl wusste, 'das man zuzeiten nachgeben müsse, wenn man die Herrschaft behalten wolle,'" (II,341). Botho regards the couple as: "'Ein sonderbares Paar....Er muss tun, was sie will, und ist doch um vieles klüger.'" Lene's perceptive response gives us the key to this puzzle:

'...klüger ist er, aber auch geizig und hartherzig, und das macht ihn gefügig, weil er beständig ein schlechtes Gewissen hat. Sie sieht ihm scharf auf die Finger und leidet es nicht, wenn er jemand übervorteilen will. Und das ist es, wovor er Furcht hat und was ihn nachgiebig macht.' (II,342)

Ironically, Botho goes on to form a marriage with Käthe, which parallels that of the Dörrs. His principal source of guilt, however, is engendered by regret over his past liaison with Lene, as he laments: "'...nun bin ich gebunden und kann nicht los'" (II,454).

A second example of a compromiser character who seeks to maintain the upper hand is Crampas: "'...der Major hat so was Gewaltsames, er nimmt einem die Dinge gern über den Kopf fort,'" laments Effi. Crampas - like Frau Dörr - is

a clever tactician:

...er hatte es auch aus sich selber bemerkt, dass Effi beflissen war, sich von ihm zurückzuziehen. Und er war klug und Frauenkenner genug, um den natürlichen Entwicklungsgang, den er nach seinen Erfahrungen nur zu gut kannte, nicht zu stören. (IV,144-145)

Crampas succeeds in imposing his will upon Effi because, even prior to committing adultery, she feels guilt over her very desire to retaliate against Innstetten for her thwarted expectations of married life. By way of contrast, Cécile is consumed by guilt associated with incidents in the past. And as Mende points out: "St.Arnaud versteht es, teils beabsichtigt, teils unbeabsichtigt, Céciles Schuldgefühle immer neu zu mobilisieren, indem er aufs Vergangene anspielt, sei es auf ihre Rolle als fürstlich Mätresse, sei es auf den erschossenen Dzialinski."¹⁵² Unlike Frau Dörr and Crampas, however, St.Arnaud appears to be unacquainted with the practice of strategic retreat - a tactical deficiency which leads to grave repercussions. Whereas power struggles in the form of triangles are sought out by compromisers for the purpose of stimulation, their one-to-one power struggles are entered into with the aim of providing an illusory sense of superiority, which serves to mitigate underlying feelings of inferiority, for whichever character dominates.

As it will already be apparent to the reader, guilt - or the sense of culpability and remorse - is another facet

of the typically acquiescent, submissive posture associated with Demut. The feeling of guilt to which the compromisers are prone, appears sometimes to be, although is not necessarily, related to a specific transgression. More frequently, their guilt tends to find expression in a generalized susceptibility towards self-reproach, even self-destructiveness, and the unquestioned acceptance of censure by others.

The compromisers' guilt, which is irrational inasmuch as it generally possesses no basis in reality, owes its genesis to the fundamental conflict between the individual and society. It is the very recognition of their personal desires not being in accord with the expectations held for them by the social group of which they are members, that provokes guilt feelings in these characters. Concerning this interpretation of critical awareness towards society's prescripts, Fontane aptly observed: "So lange man die Dinge um einen her wie selbstverständlich ansieht, geht es, aber bei Beginn der Kritik bricht alles zusammen. Die Gesellschaft ist ein Scheusal."¹⁵³

Of course, the issue arises as to how compromiser characters have come to regard their natural inclinations as unacceptable and even reprehensible. The origin of the problem may be traced to the family unit; it is here that society's values are imparted to each successive generation.

Admittedly, Fontane rarely depicted children in his novels and with most of his adult characters, we know little or nothing about their childhoods. Nevertheless, his portrayal of Effi reveals that he was aware of the potential contained within the family constellation for molding personality and behaviour. As Parmée has commented regarding Effi: "...her... characteristics are flawlessly and indissolubly combined in the circumstances of her birth and upbringing to form one whole, rounded, complex individual human being."¹⁵⁴

Valuable insights regarding the origin of guilt are discernible in the first few chapters of Effi Briest. We observe, for instance, how Frau von Briest scolds her daughter for expressing what is merely the natural exuberance associated with adolescence: "'Nicht so wild, Effi, nicht so leidenschaftlich. Ich beunruhe mich immer, wenn ich dich so sehe...'"(IV,9). In effect, since Effi's behaviour does not accord with what her mother approves of, she is made to feel responsible for causing her mother's upset. Moreover, it is also evident that previous misconduct has instilled in Effi a pronounced fear of further castigation: "'Mama kann es nicht leiden, wenn die Schlusen so überall umherliegen...helft mir erst Ordnung schaffen auf dem Tisch hier, sonst gibt es wieder eine Strafpredigt'"(IV,10-11). The inevitable consequence for the heroine of such repeated episodes - which actually

constitute punishment in the wake of normal self-expression - is a sense of intrinsic fault at even so much as wishing to deviate from her mother's expectations.

That Frau von Briest does, in fact, consider her daughter to be an extension of herself is only too apparent from her remarks concerning Innstetten's proposal to Effi: "'...und wenn du nicht "nein" sagst, was ich von meiner klugen Effi kaum denken kann, so stehst du mit zwanzig Jahren da, wo andere mit vierzig stehen. Du wirst deine Mama weit überholen'"(IV,18). A symbiotic tie clearly exists between mother and daughter. It has been suggested by Grawe, that Luise's need to consult an eye doctor while visiting with Effi in Berlin represents "ein symbolischer Mangel an Sehkraft."¹⁵⁵ And perhaps the author's intention here was to portray metaphorically Frau von Briest's inability to view her daughter as unique and separate from herself. As a result of blurred boundaries between the two, Effi persists in an unhealthy over-attachment to her mother and is incapable of establishing an independent sense of her own identity. Before moving to Kessin, for instance, Effi tells her mother: "'Und das Bild von dir, das stell' ich dann auf eine Staffelei; ganz ohne dich kann ich nicht sein'"(IV,31). It is also worth noting that Effi's father exhibits an unusually strong bond with her: "Eigentlich aber galt all seine Zärtlichkeit doch nur Effi, mit der er sich in seinem

Gemüt immer beschäftigte, zumeist auch, wenn er mit seiner Frau allein war"(IV,214). Never having known any different way to relate, Effi forms another symbiotic union in marriage - a situation which her father's pre-nuptial remarks, as reported by the narrator, anticipated: "Geert, wenn er nicht irre, habe die Bedeutung von einem schlank aufgeschossenen Stamm, und Effi sei dann also der Efeu, der sich darumzuranken habe"(IV,19).

Another compromiser character who appears to have had a symbiotic relationship with her mother is Cécile; unquestionably, both women share Frau von Zacha's emotional instability: "'Sie...war abwechselnd unendlich hoch und unendlich niedrig'"(II,283). This mother's attitude towards her daughter is distinguished principally by exploitation in that, similar to Frau von Briest, she regarded her daughter as a vehicle to further her own ambitious ends. Cécile - who did not of her own volition embark upon the role of mistress - is, nevertheless, unfairly assigned the burden of guilt in connection with her past.

The male compromiser characters emerge as equally vulnerable to guilt. Waldemar, for example, suffers from inappropriate guilt stemming from childhood, when his stepmother blamed him for her own disappointments in life (II,551). The father failed, as well, to provide his son with a healthier sense of his worth (II,552). Fontane

depicts how even in adulthood, guilt can serve to perpetuate submission to the will of the parent. This tactic is illustrated by Botho's mother, who manipulates her son with guilt by making him feel responsible for the family's welfare: "'Ja, Botho, Du hast unser aller Zukunft in der Hand...'"(II,401).

We have observed how various factors in a character's upbringing can produce a sense of guilt, which inhibits normal self-expression - not only in childhood, but on into adulthood. These characters have, essentially, never been permitted to acquire a sense of their own identity, which would have been independent of the values and expectations of parental figures. Instead, they retain a child-like fear of, and an emotional dependency upon, others whom they perceive to be more powerful and worthy than themselves. This attitude encourages submission to the will of others - including persons encountered outside the family - in order to avoid disapproval and rejection.

Yet, the compromisers maintain a conscious awareness of the discrepancy between two sets of values - namely, that of their family, which to a large degree reflects that of society, along with that born of their individual needs and desires. As Rycroft sums up the problem:

The sense of guilt...is dependent on
internalization [of parental and societal values]
and indicates the existence of a conflict between

two parts of the self, one of which, the egoistic part, says 'I want to' while the other, the internalized authority, says 'I ought not to'; or, alternatively, 'I did' and 'I ought not to have.'¹⁵⁶

A prime illustration of this conflict is furnished by Effi, who yearns to travel at a time when she should be thinking of her unborn child's well-being: "'Es ist eine Sünde, dass ich so leichtsinnig bin und solche Gedanken habe und mich wegträume, während ich doch an das nächste denken müsste.'" Deserving of note, however, is the observation that Effi's sense of impending doom is grossly out of proportion to the nature of her offense: "'Vielleicht bestraft es sich auch noch, und alles stirbt hin, das Kind und ich'"(IV,109). Similarly, Effi believes that her current sense of loneliness is somehow linked with previous mockery of her childhood friend, Hulda (IV,98).

Schlaaffer's commentary on guilt in Fontane's characters lends itself nicely to our discussion at this point: "Die eigentliche Schuld des Menschen liegt weniger in seiner partikularen Untat als im prinzipiellen Widerstand gegen das System der Ordnung, im Verlangen nach Freiheit vom Zwang dieser Ordnung und nach eigenem Glück."¹⁵⁷ In short, guilt is associated with the desire for self-determination and self-realization. This sense of guilt encourages passivity and compliance on the part of compromisers in response to the demands of specific others, as well as to

those of society in general.

Alternatively, resentment at having to make such accommodations finds repeated expression in the types of defiant behaviour described earlier. Both extremes of behaviour - submission and rebellion - reflect the compromisers' sense of a divided self. Their inconsistent pattern of behaviour creates still more confusion for them by prompting similarly inconsistent responses from others. This uneasy mode of being is expressed most eloquently by Gordon: "'Die Welt ist eine Welt der Gegensätze, draussen und drinnen...'"(II,293).

To summarize, both responses to the basic conflict encourage victimization and are, therefore, self-destructive. Submission not only leads to exploitation; it hinders development of the personality's potential as well. And reckless defiance of societal norms invites censure, which in turn generates more guilt, and demands a placatory reversion to submission. This dichotomous cycle, which holds the compromisers in bondage through their fear of and rebellion against those whom they perceive as having power over them, unavoidably results in an accumulation of guilt. The variety of self-destructive habits engaged in by compromiser characters - which include: gambling, over-eating and physically dangerous activities - may thus be interpreted as attempts to expiate their store of guilt

through inflicting punishment upon themselves.

Another typical feature of the compromiser characters which can be understood as an expression of guilt, is their tendency toward inertia. On the surface, this facet appears to be incompatible with the compromisers' restless, sensation-seeking activities. Yet, both hyper-activity and inactivity can, in different ways, lessen anxiety stemming from conflict between the character's own set of values and society's. In the former case, anxiety is relieved by distraction; in the latter, awareness of the conflict - and hence, of anxiety-provoking guilt in connection with it - is reduced by seeking to avoid the burden of choice between one or other course of action. In contrast to the conformists, who display the capacity for consistent and purposeful action, the compromisers are plagued by "their inability to act as undivided characters."¹⁵⁸ This inner division caused by the unresolved basic conflict, gives rise to much self-castigation - an effect which can be observed in numerous soliloquies of compromiser characters. Even the most mundane choices are laden with doubt, as the following quotation from Cécile illustrates:

Die Kompartiments [des Zuges] waren noch leer, und so hatte man denn die Wahl, aber freilich auch die Qual, und mehr als eine Minute verging, ehe die schlanke, schwarzgekleidete Dame sich schlüssig gemacht und einen ihr zusagenden Platz gefunden hatte. (II,141)

It is debatable as to whether this passage is, according to Garland, evidence that Cécile is a "spoilt woman."¹⁵⁹

Rather, we may interpret retrospectively the function of this scene as a symbolic representation of the heroine's perpetual state of inner turmoil: "Denn ihr Herz und ihr Wille befehdeten einander, und je gewissenhafter und ehrlicher das war, was sie wollte, je mehr erschrak sie vor allem, was diesen ihren Willen ins Schwanken bringen konnte"(II,290).

The compromisers' typical responses to the dilemma of choice generally adhere to one of four principal patterns. Firstly, we observe in Herr von Briest - whom one critic has aptly described as being "for drift rather than for action"¹⁶⁰ - the consistent refusal to take a stand. For him, each given issue is dismissed as "'ein weites Feld.'" Briest's philosophy is valid insofar as it acknowledges that there can be no formula for living - an illusion to which the conformists are, however, subject. Yet, his desire "'nach meinem eigenen Willen schalten und walten zu können'"(IV,21) probably less constitutes inner freedom, than it does the compromisers' usual susceptibility to impulse. Briest's reluctance to commit himself either to opinions, or to action, is also a subtle form of rebellion, inasmuch as it represents passive resistance to the expectations of others. One decision, however, which he ultimately does

succeed in making is that of forgiving Effi's moral transgressions and inviting her back to her parental home. In this instance, too, Briest demonstrates defiance of social expectations, as he also did in refusing to pursue a career in the civil service.

The second common response by compromisers to the necessity of making a decision and acting upon it, is procrastination. Even once an appropriate decision has been made, they tend to postpone its execution without justifiable reason. Concerning Waldemar's decision to marry Stine, for example, the narrator remarks: "...ein seiner Natur entsprechendes Abwarten und Hinausschieben, und wenn auch nur auf ein paar Tage, war auch diesmal sein Plan gewesen..."(II,531). And Botho, in his avoidance of confrontation with Lene: "'Ich kann es nicht, heute nicht.' Und so liess er den Tag vergehen und wartete bis zum andern Morgen"(II,406) resembles not only Waldemar, but also appears to share a belief in van der Straaten's adage: "'Zeit gewonnen, alles gewonnen'"(II,15). All three men are victims of what we may term a "Hamlet complex" - namely, the tendency to contemplate their situations in lieu of taking action - or, as Park phrases it, their "[p]erception outruns the power of decision."¹⁶¹ In this context, it is interesting to note that van der Straaten's wife actually refers to him as "'mein Dänenprinz, mein Träumer'"(II,16) and

Waldemar - like Hamlet - recoils from the "'bare bodkin'"(II,557).

The third pattern of response - a search for the perfect solution which would meet with the approval of all and, thereby, resolve the dilemma - constitutes a variation of procrastination, in that it serves to keep the characters' options open. A good deal of wishful thinking, as well as denial of the existence of boundaries and limitations, accompanies this reaction. Botho's self-deception is, for example, particularly evident:

'Alles, was ich wollte, war ein verschwiegenes Glück, ein Glück, für das ich früher oder später, um des ihr ersparten Affronts willen, die stille Guttheissung der Gesellschaft erwartete. So war mein Traum, so gingen meine Hoffnungen und Gedanken.' (II,404)

A similarly utopian fantasy is also entertained by Waldemar, who dreams of starting over with Stine in America - a realm which he imagines to consist of unlimited freedom and possibility.

Sometimes, the wish for a perfect resolution of the conflict is expressed through concern with finding the "right" course, as we note with Cécile, who pleads with Dörffel: "'...ich beschwöre Sie, helfen Sie mir alles in die rechten Wege bringen...'"(II,260). Such an obsession appears to arise in reaction to circumstances which permit of no satisfactory resolution. A parallel may even be discerned

here between Cécile and Hamlet, in that both characters find themselves - through no fault of their own - in extraordinary situations from which they cannot extricate themselves. Also, the sensitivity of these characters is at once their virtue and their flaw.

Alternatively, compromisers endeavour to resolve their ambivalence through recourse to duty - that is, conduct prescribed by society. Gordon (II,263) and Cécile (II,306) - each rather unconvincingly - extol the merit of duty. The dual purpose of such a response, however, is to avoid confrontation with their own mixed feelings and to evade the task of formulating their own ethical values.

The compromisers' fourth type of reaction to a dilemma of choice is to wait passively in expectation that the necessary initiative and responsibility will eventually be borne for them by someone else. In short, they wait to be rescued. This feature of passivity, perhaps more than any other distinction, shapes the lives of compromiser characters. For it encourages them simply to live with problems, instead of actively dealing with them.

Undoubtedly, passivity renders these characters vulnerable to victimization, not only by circumstances, but also by other persons who wish to assert their will over them. As Lene - who is an autonomous courageous type - explains to Botho: "'Alle schönen Männer sind schwach, und der Stärkere

beherrscht sie....Nun, entweder ist's deine Mutter oder das Gerede der Menschen oder die Verhältnisse. Oder vielleicht alles drei...'"(II,345). Although Lene falsely attributes the source of passivity to good looks, she does describe its ramifications accurately.

Granted, the passivity of compromisers is essentially immobilization resulting from their inner conflict between self and society. Yet, the question arises as to whether, in some instances, passivity might be not only a psychological, but also a physiological, constituent of these characters. Park, for example, draws attention to the "lack of vital energy" in several male characters which, she asserts, "predisposes them to defeat."¹⁶² Since it does require energy to maintain resistance in the face of conflict, those characters who appear to be ill, must suffer from an impaired ability to defend their position. As Waldemar defines the problem to his uncle: "'...ich bin weitab davon, den Welt- oder auch nur den Gesellschafts-reformator machen zu wollen. Dazu hab' ich nicht die Schultern'"(II,538). Quoting Park again, the young count "is 'eigensinnig' but not obstinate enough to stem the tide of opposition he had raised."¹⁶³ In contradiction to Park's view, however, that Fontane's female characters are all "capable women,"¹⁶⁴ we are presented with what is virtually an identical feminine counterpart to Waldemar in the figure of Cécile. As Gordon

remarks of her: "...Frauen wie Cécile vergegenständlichen sich gar nichts und haben gar nicht den Drang, sich innerlich von irgendwas zu befreien, auch nicht von dem, was sie quält"(II,247-248).

Even in those compromiser characters who are well, however, we observe a similar lack of energy. In Gordon's case, excessive rumination may be responsible for draining his vitality. And this may also be the situation with Botho, whose words echo those of Waldemar: "'Es liegt nicht in mir, die Welt herauszufordern und ihr und ihren Vorurteilen öffentlich den Krieg zu erklären...'"(II,404). It is likewise possible that, to some degree, Botho is timid by temperament. Certainly, the narrator's remarks about Effi suggest her lack of stamina may be an inherent feature: "Aber wiewohl sie starker Empfindungen fähig war, so war sie doch keine starke Natur; ihr fehlte die Nachhaltigkeit..."(IV,169).

Whatever the cause of their passivity - be it fear and guilt associated with conflict; illness; brooding; biological temperament; or a combination of these - the compromisers, like Hamlet waiting for Providence to intervene, tend to hope some external agent will resolve their difficulties for them. Probably as a result of cultural conditioning which associated passivity with femininity, the wish to be rescued is encountered more

frequently in the female, than in the male, characters of this type. Common also, in connection with this wish, is the appearance of a fairy tale motif.

Given the fact that numerous fairy tales contain some sort of variation upon the theme of rescue, it is all the more interesting to note Fontane's specific choice in Effi Briest of Cinderella - a story in which the heroine plays the sacrificial role of a scapegoat. The initial allusion to this fairy tale is made by Effi herself, just prior to meeting Innstetten for the first time: "'...ich will mich nun eilen;...und in fünf Minuten ist Aschenpuddel in eine Prinzessin verwandelt'"(IV,17). Subsequent references are made by Old Briest - who comments upon the trip to Berlin made by mother and daughter in order to purchase a trousseau for "Prinzessin Effi"(IV,22) - as well as by the bride to be - who recalls the theatrical performance she attended there: "'...wie reizend im letzten Akt "Aschenbrüdel's Erwachen als Prinzessin"...; wirklich, es war ganz wie ein Märchen'"(IV,27). We are later given the impression, by remarks made to Innstetten after the marriage, that an aspect of Effi's common bond with Cinderella appears to be her identification with the fairy tale heroine's plight of submissive suffering: "'Ich habe sehr gelitten, wirklich sehr, und als ich dich sah, da dacht' ich, nun würd' ich frei von meiner Angst'"(IV,80). More evidence that Effi casts

Innstetten in the saviour role of a prince is revealed by her assertion that he resembles a Persian or Indian prince, which she once saw in a picture book (IV,56).

Disenchanted with both her husband and their social circle in Kessin, however, Effi next places her hope of rescue upon Crampas, even before he has arrived in the area: "'Tatsache bleibt: Notstand, und deshalb sah ich, durch all diese Winterwochen hin, dem neuen Bezirkskommandeur wie einem Trost- und Rettungsbringer entgegen'"(IV,104). Yet, it is not long before Effi yearns to be rescued again - this time, from her illicit relationship with Crampas. Bance points out that the episode of the shipwrecked sailors' narrow escape "gives Effi...a surrogate sense of rescue from her own 'drowning' in the depths of deception."¹⁶⁵ Soon, Innstetten's transfer to Berlin presents an actual way out of the situation. This fortuitous turn of events is welcomed, not only by the heroine, but also by Crampas, who writes her: "'...nur darin hast Du recht: es ist die Rettung, und wir müssen schliesslich doch die Hand segnen, die diese Trennung über uns verhängt'"(IV,233).

Another illustration of a female character who habitually looks to men as protectors and saviours is provided by Cécile. She has, in fact, previously been associated with actual princes. But for reasons which are not clear, she voluntarily left the sanctuary which, in a

sense, they afforded her. Despite the zealous efforts of St. Arnaud to shield her from harm, Cécile clings to a perception of herself as a powerless victim: "'Seit gestern aber ist mir auch noch eine Herzkrankheit in aller Form und Feierlichkeit zudiktiert worden, als ob ich des Elends nicht schon genug hätte'"(II,289). Predictably, Cécile - not unlike Effi - expects the next man who enters her sphere to provide the initiative which she lacks: "...am wenigsten aber werde sie sich gegen Herrn von Gordon auflehnen, der den Eindruck mache, wie zum Führer und Pfadfinder geboren zu sein"(II,157).

A natural complement to these female compromiser characters who yearn to be rescued, are the numerous male compromisers who are prone to do the rescuing. Occasionally, the desire to rescue remains a fantasy only, as we observe in the relationship between Gieshübler and Effi: "Gieshübler hätte nun am liebsten gleich eine Liebeserklärung gemacht und gebeten, dass er als Cid oder irgend sonst ein Campeador für sie kämpfen und sterben könne"(IV,65).

More frequently, however, the desire to rescue is acted out with varied success. Gordon, for example, fails miserably in his attempt to rescue Cécile from her invalid lifestyle. On the other hand, Botho manages to rescue Lene from a boating accident - a feat in which both Grawe¹⁶⁶ and Kienbaum¹⁶⁷ discern a fairy tale motif. The Baron also

rescues his mother, as well as other family members, from financial catastrophe. Another male compromiser - namely, van der Straaten, performs a similar financial rescue. By marrying Melanie, he saves her from impoverishment after the death of her father. It is with the figure of Waldemar, however, that at least one underlying dynamic of such rescues is exposed. After informing Stine of his sympathy and desire to help her escape from her environment - although he admits, he is "'kein Prinz'" - the young count quickly realizes that he has, in fact, seen a reflection of his own sense of inadequacy in her: "'Was hab' ich da gesprochen von Freiheit geben und Sie wieder losmachen wollen!....Weil ich mich selber hilfebedürftig fühle, war ich wohl des Glaubens, Sie müssten auch hilfebedürftig sein'"(II,509). Clearly, Waldemar possesses an unusually high degree of self-insight. The remaining characters who exhibit this desire to rescue others appear, however, to lack awareness that through these rescue attempts, they are seeking a vicarious sense of mastery which they do not experience over the circumstances of their own lives. Unquestionably, those who await rescue are also communicating the belief that they have no control over their situation.

Another prominent feature of the compromiser characters, which forms a thematic link with their passivity

and the feeling of inability to help themselves, is their fatalism. Whereas the conformists believe that the consistent application of effort will result in the attainment of their social and career goals, the compromisers - on the other hand - appear convinced that their lives are determined by some external force and that any action they might take would not improve their lot. Certainly, this defeatist attitude of the compromisers is a factor which encourages not only their passivity, but also their chronic sense of anxiety over some impending doom, in the face of which, they feel powerless.

This fatalism, or the belief in an external force which determines the individual's life, is manifested by the compromisers in a variety of ways. In the case of Pauline Pittelkow, "fate" is ostensibly economic in nature - a point of view which is espoused, for example, by Reuter: "Die Witwe Pittelkow muss sich verkaufen."¹⁶⁸ But can we agree with this critic? For Pauline's lifestyle as the mistress of an aristocrat is not one shared by all women of her class. Granted, Fontane does create parallel figures to Pauline, such as the mistresses of Botho's comrades - Königin Isabeau, in particular. He also shows us, however, several other working class female characters who earn their living as servants and seamstresses. Thus Pauline's response to her instance of the basic conflict is clearly one of defiance.

A second concept of fate - namely, as a social rather than an economic, force - is held by some compromiser characters. The belief in social background and class conventions as determinants of one's life is revealed by Botho, for instance, who asserts, "'dass das Herkommen unser Tun bestimmt'"(II,405). This recognition of certain obligations and restrictions typically associated with the social class of the character is not confined to the aristocrats, however, as Pauline's remarks to Stine disclose: "'Es hat nu mal jeder seinen Platz, un daran kannst du nichts ändern'"(II,521). This concept of the social milieu as fate is supported by a number of critics. Two such critics are Fritz Martini, who defines Schicksal in Fontane's novels as "[d]ie...umgebene Wirklichkeit,"¹⁶⁹ and Walther Killy, who defines it as "ein Produkt aus Tradition und Gegenwart."¹⁷⁰ Martini emphasizes the given physical environment depicted in the novels and asserts: "Das Milieu bestimmt nicht nur die Menschen, es lebt mit ihnen, es spricht sie aus."¹⁷¹ Killy, on the other hand, stresses the intangible influence which societal conventions from the past continued to exert in Fontane's day. A third scholar, Müller-Seidel, offers yet another interpretation of social milieu as fate through his description of "die Gesellschaft selbst" as "das Schicksal, das den Menschen umlauert und aus seinen Fängen nicht mehr frei gibt."¹⁷²

Also evident among several of the compromiser characters is the belief in fate as destiny - that is, the predetermined outcome by some metaphysical force of events in the character's life. A prime example of this conviction is furnished by Crampas, who informs Innstetten: "'Es steht mir nämlich fest, dass ich einen richtigen und hoffentlich ehrlichen Soldatentod sterben werde. Zunächst bloss Zigeunerprophezeiung, aber mit Resonanz im eigenen Gewissen'"(IV,124). The Major is convinced not only that he is fated to die in a particular manner, but also that his affair with Effi was foreordained: "'Alles ist Schicksal. Es hat so sein sollen'"(IV,233). Crampas' remarks are echoed in L'Adultera by van der Straaten, who accepts as hereditary in his family the inevitability of his being cuckolded: "'Es kommt, was kommen soll'"(II,16).

Not surprisingly, the compromisers typically ascribe the occurrence of fortunate, as well as unfortunate, events to some power beyond their control. They seem unable, or perhaps unwilling, to recognize cause and effect relationships between their actions and the consequences of them. For instance, despite the fact that she is not particularly religious, Effi says of her initial encounter with Roswitha: "'Mir ist, als hätte Gott Sie mir geschickt'"(IV,113). She interprets the occasion as the result of divine intervention, instead of giving herself the

credit for having exercised initiative in approaching Roswitha.

In contradistinction to their tendency to overlook logical cause and effect relationships, the compromisers are quick to perceive a connection between events where, in fact, none exists. Gordon, for instance, construes the coincidence of being called away from Thale on business - just when he felt his attraction towards Cécile increasing - as the work of a guardian spirit: "'Eine gnädige Hand muss uns bewahren....Mein gutes Glück interveniert mal wieder und meint es besser mit mir als ich selbst'"(II,242). Similarly, Innstetten's promotion with its attendant change of residence leads Effi to conclude: "'Dass wir hier abberufen wurden, ist mir wie ein Zeichen, dass ich noch zu Gnaden angenommen werden kann'"(IV,190).¹⁷³

This inclination to interpret the accidental as portent is also frequently revealed through the compromisers' superstitiousness. When Cécile is unexpectedly surrounded by hundreds of yellow butterflies, for example, she does not know what to make of it: "'Sieh nur, das bedeutet etwas'"(II,207). In an earlier scene, however, when a gust of wind sends a cloud of rose petals her way, she exclaims: "'Das ist mir eine gute Vorbedeutung'"(II,193). To be sure, ill omens are also detected, as Botho observes: "'Diese Brummer sind allemal Unglücksboten...'"(II,400). And

Effi remarks, shortly before her death: "'Ja, da ruft der Kuckuck. Ich mag ihn nicht befragen'"(IV,281).

A vital distinction to be aware of, however, is that although many of Fontane's characters believe, as Kricker maintains, that they are "der Spielball eines allgewaltigen Schicksals,"¹⁷⁴ it does not necessarily follow that the author - despite his Calvinist background - held this opinion himself, nor that he wished readers to interpret the novels in such a light. Certainly, we are not dealing with the Fates of classical mythology,¹⁷⁵ although Garland appears to think we are in Cécile given his assertion that all of its characters are "overtaken by Nemesis."¹⁷⁶ Müller-Seidel's point of view on this issue varies with the particular work in question. Regarding L'Adultera, he states: "Das Zwangsläufige, in das die Menschen hineingleiten und hineintreiben, ist vorwiegend gesellschaftlich bedingt."¹⁷⁷ In referring to Effi Briest, however, he emphasizes the role of the individual instead of that of society: "Von irgendwelcher Transzendenz, vom Spiel dämonischer Mächte, kann nicht die Rede sein. Die Motivierung ist eine solche der Psychologie."¹⁷⁸ Riechel, in opposition to Müller-Seidel, asserts that the presence of mythical and demonic motifs in Effi Briest testifies to "an ineluctable fate."¹⁷⁹ Moreover, Riechel concludes: "...both motivations, the demonic and the psychological-realistic,

are present, and an either/or argument is illegitimate."¹⁸⁰

Riechel fails to consider, however, at least two other possible explanations for the author's use of mythological and seemingly demonic elements. Firstly, such references may be nothing more than literary devices of symbolism and foreshadowing. The Chinese ghost motif in Effi Briest, for example, serves a number of useful functions - which are illuminated by Grawe¹⁸¹ - and is hardly a "blemish" or "piece of bric-à-brac left over by 'poetic realism,'" as Stern contends.¹⁸² The question as to whether or not the ghost actually exists, however, is irrelevant. For at no point are we given any evidence to suppose that this spirit - if it exists - can exert supernatural power over events which unfold in the story. Rather, the circumstances of the Chinese servant's death merely prefigure these events. In a more general way, the mythical motif of sacrifice also foreshadows the outcome of the novel, as well as serving to emphasize its theme.

Secondly, Fontane's use of myth and apparent supernaturalism in conjunction with what Riechel terms the "psychological-realistic," could well be his mode of symbolically representing elements of the subconscious - such as guilt - and their influence upon a character's behaviour. Confirmation of this thesis is provided by Fontane himself: "Nicht immer, aber oft...es besteht ein

geheimnisvoller Zusammenhang zwischen unserer Schuld und dem, was wir 'unglücklichen Zufall' nennen."¹⁸³ Essentially, Fontane perceived a predominantly unconscious connection between guilt and self-sabotage. In a similar vein, Nef draws our attention to the fact that a character's downfall is often caused by a "weak link," or personality flaw, which may govern their behaviour more than they are aware of, or wish it to do: "So erscheinen die Figuren Fontanes, wo Zufälle eine wesentliche Rolle spielen, doch primär nicht den Manifestationen einer unbegreiflichen Macht oder Ordnung, vielmehr menschlichen Unzulänglichkeiten ausgesetzt."¹⁸⁴

That mixed motivations comprised of unconscious impulses and personality faults do, in fact, impel a number of Fontane's compromiser characters towards their "fate," is evident upon careful scrutiny of the novels. Already in the first chapter of Effi Briest, this theme finds expression through the remarks of Pastor Niemeyer's daughter, Hulda: "'Man soll sein Schicksal nicht versuchen...'"(IV,11). Effi's fatal flaw is her need for "'Zerstreuung, immer was Neues'" - a trait which renders her vulnerable to anyone who appears to offer even momentary relief from boredom, regardless of the possible longterm consequences: "'Was ich nicht aushalten kann, ist Langeweile'"(IV,32). Shortly before her death, in response to a remark by her mother - "'Eigentlich, verzeihe mir,...dass ich das jetzt noch sage,

eigentlich hast du doch euer Leid heraufbeschworen'" - Effi acknowledges that she did, indeed, bring her troubles upon herself: "'Ja, Mama. Und traurig, dass es so ist'"(IV,293). Effi's self-sabotage - particularly, her retention of Crampas' letters - may be regarded as a manifestation of her unconscious guilt, which was demonstrated earlier to have arisen in connection with uninhibited self-expression in her youth.

Another compromiser character who is driven to destruction by guilt is Cécile. Her sense of culpability associated with the death of Oberstleutnant von Dzialinski and with her former socially unacceptable liaison with the princes, is relentless. Like Effi, who is plagued by the impression of a shadow which follows her everywhere (IV,222), Cécile is unable to rid from her memory the image of the dead officer (II,306). And although she is aware that her vanity renders her susceptible to attention, she cannot overcome this weakness, which is in itself a source of guilt:

'...wenn ich auch durch all mein Leben hin in Eitelkeit befangen geblieben bin und der Huldigungen nicht entbehren kann, die meiner Eitelkeit Nahrung geben, so will ich doch...ich will es, dass diesen Huldigungen eine bestimmte Grenze gegeben werde. Das habe ich geschworen..., und ich will diesen Schwur halten, und wenn ich darüber sterben sollte.' (II,291-292)

Despite the fact that Cécile also tells Gordon: "'Ich habe

Schuld genug gesehen'"(II,291), she has nevertheless encouraged his advances, if only by virtue of not rejecting them: "Gordon aber nahm ihre lässig herabhängende Hand und hielt und küsste sie, was sie geschehen liess"(II,238). Cécile's failure to confess this measure of responsibility to St. Arnaud when he specifically queries her about it (II,308), precipitates the very catastrophe which she has lived in fear of, yet might easily have prevented by speaking up at the appropriate moment. Her reluctance to forgive herself for those events in the past over which she realistically had no control, as well as her excessively harsh view of her own human frailty, leads Cécile to pursue a semblance of mastery over her fate - tragically, through self-destruction.

A third, and more blatant, illustration of a compromiser character who provokes "fate" is provided by van der Straaten. His case is a clear depiction of the aphorism that "the certainty of misery tends to be preferred over the misery of uncertainty." Like Cécile, van der Straaten has in the past transgressed society's code of moral conduct, which he admits to his wife: "'...ich habe keine Recht, dir Moral zu predigen. Was liegt nicht alles hinter mir...'"(II,99). Moreover, it would appear that Heth, "'das Stiefkind'"(II,72), might be the offspring of one such transgression. Van der Straaten's

guilt causes him to live "in der abergläubischen Furcht, in seinem Glücke von einem vernichtenden Schlage bedroht zu sein"(II,86). He is convinced that Melanie will be unfaithful: "'Es musste so kommen, musste nach dem van der Straatenschen Hausgesetz...'" (II,99). Yet, had the Commercial Councillor possessed "mehr Aufmerksamkeit und weniger Eigenliebe"(II,86), he would have recognized the danger posed by the very man whom, on his own initiative, he had invited into his home: "Doch auch hierwiederum stand er im Bann einer vorgefassten Meinung, und zwar eines künstlich konstruierten Rubehn, der mit dem wirklichen eine ganz oberflächliche Verwandtschaft, aber in der Tat auch nur diese hatte"(II,86). Indeed, Garland's perceptive judgment of Effi Briest might be applied just as well to the other novels under consideration: "We look back on a work in which men and women, not intending harm, destroy their happiness and wreck their lives."¹⁸⁵

To summarize, the fatalism encountered among the compromiser characters may - at first glance - seem attributable to economic reasons, social milieu or even destiny. Closer examination, however, reveals the considerable degree to which specific characters create the very situations they erroneously believe have been imposed upon them. It must be conceded that social class and other

circumstances unquestionably do play a role in determining, to a certain extent, the demands which are placed upon each character, as well as the options which are available to him or her. The compromisers' sense of helplessness does not, however, derive primarily from any external force. Rather, it results from their own passivity, indecision and excessive accommodation to the wishes of others - all of which arise in response to an inability to resolve the inner conflict between their individual desires and the expectations of society.

A corollary of the compromiser characters' passivity in their everyday lives is the burden of tremendous frustration from which they seek escape in fantasy. Through a flight into the realm of imagination with its unlimited possibilities - all of which can be achieved immediately and without effort - the compromisers compensate for their often unrealistic expectations, which have been thwarted in the real world. In contrast to their usual sense of having no control over what happens to them, these characters can feel omnipotent in fantasy and experience the fulfillment of desires which society, or the natural limitations of reality, deny them.

Admittedly, some efforts to constructively channel imagination can be observed in a few of the compromiser characters. Gieshübler, "'der Mann der Ästhetik'"(IV,91), and

Marietta Trippelli, for instance, both express imagination in the positive form of creativity through their music. In addition, Effi - during her banishment (IV,267) - pursues painting. Imagination also confers upon several compromisers an appreciation of the beauty in Nature. For the most part, however, their imagination finds negative expression through such avenues as reverie, illusions, deception and disappointment.

The female compromiser characters are especially prone to substitute daydreaming for action - perhaps because, in Fontane's day, there were fewer real options for women than there were for men. Innstetten, for example, observes that Effi derives considerable gratification in this manner: "Er wusste, dass es nichts Schöneres für sie gab, als so sorglos in einer weichen Stimmung hinträumen zu können..."(IV,216). This tendency is also exhibited by Cécile, who is described as "'träumerisch und märchenhaft'"(II,283). Furthermore, the reading material selected by both of these women suggests a desire for greater freedom than they enjoy in reality. Cécile's choice, for instance, is entitled Ehrenström, ein Lebensbild, oder die separatistische Bewegung in der Uckermark (II,169). Similarly, Effi requests James Fenimore Cooper's The Spy (IV,198), a tale of the American Revolution.

Other novels Effi desires - namely, Walter Scott's

Ivanhoe and Quentin Durward (IV,198) - reveal an attachment to the past, or nostalgia, which is typical of compromisers. Unwilling to live fully in the present, compromisers cling to the past, which they appear to idealize in memory. Cécile's recollection of the princes to whom she was a mistress, is one such example: "'Ich will der Stelle wenigstens nahe sein, wo die ruhen, die in reichem Masse mir das gaben, was mir die Welt verweigerte: Liebe und Freundschaft und um der Liebe willen auch Achtung...'"(II,316).

Another factor which motivates escape through fantasy is boredom.¹⁸⁶ This results from the stalemate between the compromisers' own desires and the expectations society places upon them. Wilhelm Münch has described boredom as "eine Art Stillstand des inneren Lebens"¹⁸⁷ and Stern observes that boredom indicates a feeling of deprivation.¹⁸⁸ Koc suggests that this deprivation may originate in "a discrepancy between expectation and fulfillment."¹⁸⁹ In this context, Koc is indebted to Völker, who "refers to the Kantian idea that boredom is sensed in the 'empty' time between experiences and can be seen as a sort of disenchantment."¹⁹⁰ A good example of this phenomenon is observed by the narrator in Effi: "So gut es ihr ging,...so kam ihr doch gleich nachher zum Bewusstsein, was ihr fehlte"(IV,89). Moreover, the sense that reality is not

enough, that it somehow falls short of the ideal, encourages a certain emotional detachment in the compromiser characters. Ohl remarks upon "eine distanzierte, oft geheimnisvoll wirkende Kühle" in the figures of Effi and Cécile, for example.¹⁹¹ A typical expression of such emotional detachment, which may serve as a defence against further disappointment, is provided by Cécile: "'...ich nehme das Leben, auch jetzt noch, am liebsten als ein Bilderbuch, um darin zu blättern'"(II,291).

The static quality of the compromisers' existence is sometimes perceived as a sort of imprisonment, especially by the married female characters. During her marriage, the narrator states regarding Effi: "Es brach wieder über sie herein, und sie fühlte, dass sie wie eine Gefangene sei und nicht mehr heraus könne"(IV,169). Effi's mother conveys a similar sentiment to Briest: "'Mir gegenüber hast's du immer bestritten, immer bestritten, dass die Frau in einer Zwangslage sei'"(IV,42). This disillusionment with marriage is not, however, confined to the aristocratic women, as Reuter¹⁹² and Mittelman¹⁹³ would have us believe. For it is also discernible in women of the lower classes such as Frau Dörr. Furthermore - apart from the figure of Herr Dörr, who remains "wie vernarrt in seine Frau"(II,342) - it is apparent that for the male compromiser characters, too, romance is eroded by reality, as Botho's experience with

Käthe illustrates: "Das war nun drei Jahre....Aber es war doch keine rechte Freude gewesen. Ein Bonbon, nicht viel mehr. Und wer kann von Süßigkeiten leben!"(II,458).

Another manifestation of the compromisers' sense of deprivation is their Sehnsucht. This yearning has been variously interpreted by a number of Fontane critics. Frye defines it as a "yearning for other-worldly peace."¹⁹⁴ And Stern regards it as the "longing for love,"¹⁹⁵ especially in the case of Effi. Yet, Grages views Effi's yearning as "ihr Hang zum Aparten, zum Abenteuer, zum Wechsel, zu Zerstreungen und zum Reichtum."¹⁹⁶ Frye asserts that it is the female characters, in particular, who are prone to such longing,¹⁹⁷ but we also note it in some of the men. Botho's dream of living what he believes is the simple and natural life of the working class characters constitutes one example. An additional feature of the Sehnsucht motif is its thematic link with another motif common to the compromisers - namely, anxiety. This connection is substantiated by the following remarks from Effi: "'Ich habe solche Sehnsucht und...ich habe solche Angst'"(IV,74). Given that the anxiety of the compromisers is, at least to a certain extent, a response to the conflict they feel between their own wishes and those of society, we may then interpret this yearning as a wish for resolution of the conflict and for a respite from the inner tension it causes.

The compromisers' tendency toward wishful thinking, of which their Sehnsucht is one expression, distinguishes them from the conformists, whose thinking processes could be described as basically empirical in nature. At times, the influence of imagination upon the compromisers' thinking renders them vulnerable to illusions, or mistaken perceptions, and even to delusions, or mistaken convictions. An example illustrative of the former condition is Effi's impression of hearing music or voices on the night of the sleigh ride - an assertion which is denied by her travelling companion, Sidonie: "'Das sind Sinnestäuschungen...'" (IV,157).

More treacherous than illusions, however, are the compromisers' delusions, which impair their judgment - often with serious consequences. In short, these characters are inclined to believe that things are the way they would like them to be, rather than the way they actually are. This reluctance to face reality can reveal itself in the persistence of fixed ideas, despite evidence which contradicts them. Dörffel notices this trait in Gordon, whom he describes as, "'fixer Ideen fähig'"(II,258). Van der Straaten displays the same characteristic and Old Briest - after the divorce of Effi and Innstetten - still believes: "'Eigentlich war es doch ein Musterpaar'"(IV,290).

Another mistaken conviction to which the compromisers

are prone is that of thinking they need not adapt themselves to the natural limitations of the material world. A typical example of this feature can be observed in Botho, who consistently lives far beyond his means. In particular, the Baron's taste for luxurious furnishings (II,346) reminds us of Effi: "Nur das Eleganteste gefiel ihr, und wenn sie das Beste nicht haben konnte, so verzichtete sie auf das Zweitbeste, weil ihr dies Zweite nun nichts mehr bedeutete"(IV,24). The fact that the bride to be also mixes up the prices of her trousseau items, only serves to confirm her mother's astute remark: "'Effi...lebt in ihren Vorstellungen und Träumen...'"(IV,23).

Johnson also draws our attention to what she terms "Effi's compulsive intermixing of fantasy and reality."¹⁹⁸ Yet, Effi is not the only character who experiences difficulty separating fact from fantasy. For although Frau Dörr is aware of the potential dangers of imagination: "'Immer wenn das Einbilden anfängt, fängt auch das Schlimme an'"(II,321), it is nevertheless apparent - from references to her and her husband's dwelling as "'ein Schloss'" - that she lives in a fantasy world: "...in unerbittlich heller Beleuchtung daliegend, sah man nur zu deutlich, dass der ganze...Bau nichts als ein jämmerlicher Holzkasten war..."(II,322). To be sure, Frau Dörr's escape from reality into a dream world may be facilitated, not

only by her imagination, but also by liberal use of Kirschwasser. Other compromiser characters such as Isabeau and Briest could likewise be dependent upon alcohol as a means of blurring reality.

Another form of delusory thinking indulged in by the compromisers is that of holding unrealistic, idealistic expectations. In effect, this tendency restricts the characters' perception of those realistic options which are available, and inevitably leads to frustration and disappointment. Botho, whose taste in art, too, as Reeve notes, "tends towards idealism rather than realism,"¹⁹⁹ provides us with a metaphorical expression of this inclination. Looking over a field, the Baron exclaims: "'Aber sieh nur, die reine Wiese nichts als Gras und keine Blume. Nicht eine.'" Lene, who is not a compromiser, disputes his assertion: "'Doch. Die Hülle und Fülle. Du siehst nur keine, weil du zu anspruchsvoll bist'"(II,377).

An area in which the compromiser characters are particularly vulnerable to idealism, and hence, disappointment, is that of love relationships. Generally, their response to this disenchantment takes one of two forms - namely, either a search for the ideal partner, or an emotional detachment from their current partner. The former reaction has already been discussed in connection with sensation-seeking. The Briest marriage, which Johnson has

termed "the epitome of matrimonial resignation,"²⁰⁰ illustrates the latter condition. Luise phrases the problem rather pointedly: "'Jeder quält seine Frau. Und Kunstenthusiasmus ist noch lange nicht das Schlimmste'"(IV,37). Before Effi's marriage, Frau von Briest attempts to prepare her daughter for what she believes will be unavoidable disillusionment: "'Die Wirklichkeit ist anders, und oft ist es gut, dass es statt Licht und Schimmer ein Dunkel gibt'"(IV,31). Even greater indifference toward romance is revealed, however, by Pauline Pittelkow, who informs Stine: "'...Liebschaft is nich viel, Liebschaft is eigentlich gar nichts'"(II,520).

The active fantasy life of the compromiser characters, which serves to ameliorate romantic as well as other types of disappointment they encounter in real life, creates within them a state of inner division. Their outward "token conformity," as Johnson observes, reflects an essential duplicity.²⁰¹ In a letter to Georg Friedländer, dated 3 October 1898, Fontane described this phenomenon as he experienced it himself: "Ich habe das Leben immer genommen, wie ich's fand und mich ihm unterwarf. Das heisst nach aussen hin; in meinem Gemüte nicht."²⁰² "Diese Gespaltenheit der Person," which has also been examined by Wölfel,²⁰³ is betrayed perhaps most clearly by Effi's monologue in Chapter Twenty-Four (IV,219). Although she knows that she is guilty

of adultery, rather than feeling guilt as a result of this transgression of society's moral code, Effi feels only shame over her deceitfulness and fear of exposure. She is distraught at possessing neither what she conceives of as "'die rechte Reue,'" nor "'die rechte Scham.'" In an attempt to understand her predicament, Effi recalls the admonition which Pastor Niemeyer had given her many years ago:

'...auf ein richtiges Gefühl, darauf käme es an, und wenn man das habe, dann könne einem das Schlimmste nicht passieren, und wenn man es nicht habe, dann sei man in einer ewigen Gefahr, und das was man den Teufel nenne, das habe dann eine sichere Macht über uns.'

Ester argues persuasively that the "proper feeling" to which Niemeyer had referred, is "das Einssein mit sich selber."²⁰⁴ An appropriate English equivalent for this critic's terminology is the expression "wholeness of being," which conveys a sense of equilibrium, harmony and sincerity, in addition to integrity. It is this wholeness of being which the compromisers sacrifice due to the threat of disapproval from others, if they were to communicate and openly act in accordance with their personal convictions. Inasmuch as their sense of inner reality and that of their outer reality are at variance, dissembling becomes a way of life for these characters.

Returning to the case of Effi, this character recognizes that her duplicity exerts a staggering influence

upon all of her relationships, including the most superficial social contacts: "'...lügen ist so gemein, und nun habe ich doch immer lügen müssen, vor ihm und vor aller Welt, im grossen und im kleinen....'"(IV,219). Even more disturbing, however, is the ease with which she slipped into this falsity: "'So kam es, dass sie sich, von Natur frei und offen, in ein verstecktes Komödienspiel mehr und mehr hineinlebte. Mitunter erschrak sie, wie leicht es ihr wurde'"(IV,169). Lynd explains that there is "a particularly deep shame in deceiving other persons into believing something about oneself that is not true."²⁰⁵ And, in fact, this interpretation corresponds with Effi's own appraisal of the central problem: "'Ich schäme mich bloss von wegen dem ewigen Lug und Trug...'"(IV,219). Effi is ashamed not only of her duplicity, however, but also of her failure to live up to her idealized self-image: "'...immer war es mein Stolz, dass ich nicht lügen könne und auch nicht zu lügen brauche...'"(IV,219). This shame associated with the feeling of having fallen short of their ideal, encourages more dissembling by compromisers in the hope that, through fantasy, the discrepancy between the real and the ideal can be reduced, or even eliminated. However, such a response merely undermines further the compromiser character's already precarious sense of identity. Garland notes, for instance, that Botho "cannot decide which is his true

identity" - the role he plays at the club, or the one he plays with Lene.²⁰⁶ Reeve echoes this judgment with his assertion that Botho is "the most blatant example of self-deception."²⁰⁷ Moreover, the necessity of deceiving others, which the compromisers feel, condemns them - as van der Straaten's case illustrates - to a life of emotional isolation: "War er doch ohnehin, aller Freundschaft unerachtet, ohne Freund und Vertrauten..."(II,14).

Unfortunately, as deception and fantasy come more and more to replace purposeful action in the daily life of compromiser characters, the discrepancy between reality and dreams only becomes increasingly apparent. Their refusal to adopt more realistic expectations of themselves, as well as of others, is betrayed by cynicism, envy and resentment. Unlike the conformists, who are not critical toward society, the compromisers perceive evidence of its hypocrisy - that is, the difference between social values and social behaviour. As Briest informs his wife: "'...die 'Gesellschaft,' wenn sie nur will, kann auch ein Auge zudrücken'"(IV,277). Yet, the compromisers themselves are not altogether without hypocrisy either. Sometimes, the compromisers' disappointment reveals itself through envy toward others who appear to be better off. As one character comments upon the figure of St. Arnaud, who had to abandon a promising military career after deciding to marry a woman

with an unfortunate past: "'Jetzt ist er verbittert, befiehlt, was er früher vergöttert hat, und sitzt auf der Bank, wo die Spötter sitzen'"(II,277).

The compromisers' inner division - created by their awareness of the inherent conflict between the individual and society, then aggravated by their tendency toward flights of fancy - ultimately leads them to a state of resignation. For the purpose of our discussion, resignation may be understood not as reconciliation, which connotes harmonious adaptation, but rather as the surrender of all hope for a satisfactory resolution of the fundamental conflict.

Numerous interpretations concerning Fontane's theme of resignation have been proposed. Moltmann-Wendel, for instance, declares: "Im Hintergrund der Resignation steht ohne Zweifel die Prädestinationslehre."²⁰⁸ Yet, as Müller-Seidel reminds us, resignation was a pervasive philosophy in the nineteenth-century²⁰⁹ and, therefore, is not necessarily a reflection of Fontane's Calvinist background. Another interpretation is advanced by Harrigan, who asserts that the "resignation of the female characters is a symptom of the retribution demanded by society from women of all classes" and, moreover, that this resignation is "qualitatively different" from that required of men.²¹⁰ Harrigan fails to specify, however, the exact manner in

which resignation differs in men and in women. To confuse the matter further, Kienbaum's view of resignation as "ein existentielles Erkennen der menschlichen Ohnmacht gegenüber dem allmächtige Gesetz des Kollektivs"²¹¹ is diametrically opposed to Rychner's contention that the resigned characters stand "im Verhältnis des Goldenen Schnitts, der ein Verhältnis vollendeter Harmonie ist."²¹² The fact, which Martini points out, that Fontane depicts an extraordinary number of suicides in his prose works,²¹³ casts doubt upon Rychner's claim.

The most comprehensive study on the topic of resignation, and the one most compatible with the point of view adopted by this enquiry, is that of Richter. "Die Resignation wurde in den Romanen Fontanes zur bestimmenden Lebensantwort," comments Richter. "Als Hinnahme unlösbarer Konflikte und Widersprüche tritt sie in Erscheinung."²¹⁴ One hallmark of resignation on the part of compromisers is restriction, or what Richter terms, "eine zugestandene Einschränkung des Lebens."²¹⁵ This aspect is well illustrated by Frau Dörr. "She is the victim of a doubly ironic pun," asserts Field. "Her name suggests 'desiccated, withered', yet she is a woman of 'stately' proportions and the wife of a gardener."²¹⁶ Yet, while Frau Dörr's name does offer these ironic contrasts, it may, on the other hand, accurately reflect the condition of her inner being. For she conveys

"neben dem Eindruck des Gütigen und Zuverlässigen, zugleich den einer besonderen Beschränktheit"(II,320). Davidson interprets "Beschränktheit" as referring to Frau Dörr's "intellectual, emotional and social limitations."²¹⁷ While this may in fact be the case, it could also have been Fontane's aim to call our attention to a more general sense of restriction, or inhibition, of this character's personality.

Another indicator of resignation in the compromisers is a detached attitude of stoic endurance in the face of adversity and disappointment. As Wandel points out, the majority of Fontane's characters are "Helden im Leiden, im stillen Ertragen, aber keine im Handeln."²¹⁸ Passive suffering as a facet of resignation is also evident in the withdrawal from active participation in society, which is typical of so many compromiser characters. This behaviour appears to be motivated - as revealed, for example, in the case of Waldemar - by a desire to avoid friction: "'...ich wünsche Auseinandersetzungen zu vermeiden'"(II,558). Common also, is the readiness to settle for much less than the character had originally hoped. We observe this attitude of compromise in Botho's sentiment toward Käthe: "'Sie dalbert, nun ja, aber eine dalbrige junge Frau ist immer noch besser als keine'"(II,458). Similarly, van der Straaten's "Verlangen nach Ausgleich um jeden Preis" (II,101) as

Melanie prepares to desert him, is revealed by his pathetic plea to her: "'...in diesem Augenblick erscheint dir auch das wenige, was ich fordere, noch als zu viel....ein Minimum ist mir genug'"(II,98). This renunciation of personal fulfillment in life is central to the concept of resignation.²¹⁹

In effect, the compromisers hope that the sacrifice of their individual desires will bring them peace from the conflict between self and society. This observation is substantiated by the narrator's remarks concerning Waldemar: "...wenn Ergebung auch nicht das absolut Beste, nicht der Friede selbst war, so war es doch das, was dem Frieden am nächsten kam"(II,548). Only a semblance of serenity, however, and not genuine equilibrium, is achieved in this manner.

For a few of the compromiser characters, even resignation does not sufficiently allay their feelings of conflict and guilt. In the words of Waldemar: "'Es gibt oft nur ein Mittel, alles wieder in Ordnung zu bringen'"(II,558) - and that means is suicide. This motif in Fontane's prose works has been variously interpreted by a number of critics. Robinson's judgment of suicide as "a form of moral cowardice"²²⁰ is challenged by Lowe's view that Fontane portrays it as "a deed of despair rather than of cowardice."²²¹ Frye supports the latter view with his observation that "...Fontane's clergymen, when confronted

with suicide, adopt a compassionate attitude."²²² Ernst emphasizes the role which death can serve as "Sühne für die Schuld" and notes that Fontane's characters themselves refer to death as: "'Befreiung', 'Ruhe', 'Versöhnung', 'Zuflucht', [und] 'Erlösung'."²²³

Reuter, in his analysis of Cécile, also recognizes guilt as a motivation for suicide: "Der freiwillige Tod bleibt Cécile als einziger Ausweg aus einem Los, für das sie in ergreifender 'Demut,' in rührender Unwissenheit und Unbeholfenheit...bei sich selbst die Schuld gesucht hat."²²⁴ In contrast, Mende regards the suicide of Cécile not so much as evidence of her self-condemnation, but rather as an expression of unconscious hostility toward society: "Im Suizid wird (unbewusst) die verhasste Gesellschaft mitgetötet...."²²⁵ Both critics' interpretations may, in fact, be simultaneously valid. For Koester has observed that whenever one of Fontane's characters commits suicide, the act "is depicted as an organic reaction of particular personality components subjected to a particular set of circumstances."²²⁶ In short, a specific character's suicide is comprehensible only when viewed within the context of that individual's personality and relationship to society.

This interrelation of the individual and society is quite apparent in the figures of Effi, Cécile and Waldemar. It is interesting to note that Effi's death, as we have

seen, is linked with sacrificial motifs. And insofar as she deliberately exacerbates the disease process - by subjecting herself to chills and fatigue (IV,292) - her demise may be regarded essentially as suicide. This interpretation is corroborated by Sontag's research into nineteenth-century portrayals of tuberculosis: "TB was represented as the prototypical passive death. Often it was a kind of suicide."²²⁷ Cécile and Waldemar also choose to end their lives in a passive fashion - namely, by drug overdoses. Too passive in their social behaviour, these three characters - rather than offering effective resistance - submit to acting out the role of a scapegoat.

Notable also in the portrayals of Waldemar and Cécile are sacrificial, and even biblical, motifs. The palm branches laid upon the young count's coffin, for example, and the altarpiece above it which depicts the prodigal son in his banishment (II,561-562), bear out this assertion. Koester draws our attention to the proliferation of death motifs in Cécile which foreshadow the novel's outcome.²²⁸ In the case of Cécile, her insistence that she and Gordon - who, in a sense, "commits suicide" - ride the only two donkeys in a corral full of horses (II,208) suggests an allusion to Christ, persecution and sacrificial death. Of special interest in this context, is Frye's observation that with the portrayal of the subsequent excursion through

Todtenrode, "...Fontane subtly segregates the only two characters...who are destined to die."²²⁹ Their loneliness and isolation from society are also well illustrated in this way. Moreover, this theme of isolation and death is reinforced both in Cécile (II,257) and in Effi Briest (IV,23) by references to Böcklin's painting, "Insel der Seligen."

One death motif which links both Cécile and Stine is that of the sunset - which, according to Frye, "signals a release from reality's problems and pressures."²³⁰ More specifically, we may interpret Waldemar's affinity for sunsets as the author's mode of representing the hero as a Christ-figure. Also, the image of Waldemar's favorite trees with the dead branches (II,555) recalls the common use by Italian Renaissance painters of a dead tree to symbolize the crucifixion.²³¹ In Cécile, the heroine regards as "'eine Vorbedeutung'" - or perhaps "'eine Warnung'" - her vision of Gordon in which both the setting sun and trees are fused: "'Und als ich auf sah, sah ich, dass es die niedergehende Sonne war, deren Glut durch eine drüben am andern Ufer stehende Blutbuche fiel. Und in der Glut stand Gordon und war wie davon übergossen'"(II,260).

In addition to their passivity, factors which also contribute to the eventual death or suicide of these characters are their emotional, as well as social,

isolation. Waldemar, for instance, remarks that he has always stood alone - even in his family (II,549) - and laments: "'...so hab' ich denn durch viele Jahre hingelebt, ohne recht zu wissen, was Herz und Liebe sei'"(II,552). Contrary to Koester's assertion that Fontane's suicidal characters "do not foresee that they will kill themselves,"²³² Waldemar, for one, has anticipated this action: "'Schlafpulver! Ja, ich wusste, dass eure Stunde kommen würde (II,559). Es ist ein Ersparnis aus alten Zeiten her, und mein Vorgefühl war richtig, als ich mir's damals sammelte'"(II,557). Koester also contends that "[t]he immediate cause of Waldemar's suicide is...a misjudgment of another person,...Stine, whose refusal of marriage he had not expected."²³³ This critic overlooks, however, the significant parallel between the young count's rejection by Stine and the loss, which he sustained in childhood, of his mother through death. She was, in all probability, the only person ever to communicate some measure of affection for him and the symbolic repetition of this loss proves too much for him.

Similarly, it is curious to note that Gordon bears a striking resemblance to Cécile's father (II,303,282). Indeed, the heroine appears unconsciously to have fallen in love with her deceased father in the person of the engineer. Despite Koester's opposing view,²³⁴ Cécile may, in fact,

perceive Gordon's jealous nature quite accurately. Certainly, through encouraging his attentions, she creates the justification for her own death, perhaps in an unacknowledged quest to reunite with her lost parent. That Gordon's death by duel constitutes another repetition for Cécile - namely, of the incident concerning Dzialinski - is quite evident.

It is, however, Hofprediger Dörffel who shares the essential key to understanding Cécile's suicide: "'Der Ausdruck ihrer Züge war der Ausdruck derer, die dieser Zeitlichkeit müde sind'"(II,316). Her letter to this pastor, "'das Beichtgeheimnis eines demütigen Herzens'"(II,316), conveys sentiments remarkably akin to the last utterances of Effi (IV,293-294) and of Waldemar (II,557-559). Frustrated in their desire for love and in their need for a sense of social acceptance and belonging, these characters who choose to end their lives appear to do so because without these attainments life possesses no meaning for them. As Effi concludes: "'...es hat nicht viel zu bedeuten, wenn man von der Tafel etwas früher abgerufen wird'"(IV,293). Those resigned compromiser characters who are, however, able to maintain intimate and social ties - regardless of how unsatisfactory these may seem to them - emerge as capable at least of surviving, although they may live, in the words of Thoreau, "lives of quiet desperation." Surprisingly, the

compromisers who do commit suicide - so anxious and fearful as they were in life - face death with remarkable calm. Perhaps Milton has given us the most profound insight in this regard, as he phrased it in Paradise Regained: "For where no hope is left, is left no fear." Indeed, Waldemar's entreaty to Stine in his suicide note confirms this very suspicion: "'...vor allem verzichte nicht auf Hoffnung und Glück, weil ich darauf verzichtete'"(II,559).

e. Summary

This chapter has explored the constellation of features shared by those characters who respond in a spirit of compromise to the conflict between the individual and society. The majority of Fontane's characters, in fact, belong to this compromiser type, which is so named because its members tend - albeit with reluctance - to adapt to societal expectations, despite their awareness that society's values are not compatible with their own. Although these characters are predominantly submissive toward others due to their inappropriate feelings of humility, their behaviour is, however, punctuated by episodes of willful defiance of social norms. Alternatively, for a few compromisers, eccentricity is an established way of life.

Although most compromisers are middle-aged, some are

young adults, or are elderly. The distribution of gender is approximately equal. However, some compromisers reveal a sexual ambiguity of appearance and behaviour. Physical disfigurement is frequently encountered and poor health - which, paradoxically, offers a number of benefits - is also a feature. In general, these characters possess nervous constitutions and suffer from a high degree of anxiety, as well as from specific fears. Emotionally labile, most compromisers experience alternating moods of euphoria and despondency. Unable to tolerate boredom, they crave stimulation and constant diversion, which are sometimes sought through dangerous means. Drawn to the exotic and fond of travel, the compromisers' restless yearning for some indefinable sustenance leads them into what are often unconventional activities, which provoke the censure of society.

The attitude of compromise is reflected in these characters' resigned acceptance of conditions which fall short of their idealistic expectations. They are inclined to live more in fantasy than in reality which, at best, the compromisers perceive in a highly distorted fashion. Resentment, cynicism and envy also form, however, a part of the picture, since these characters are fatalistic and feel helpless to alter their situation. They have suffered severe disappointment - particularly, in romantic involvements -

and are especially sensitive to rejection by others, whether actual or merely anticipated. Compromisers are troubled by feelings of insecurity and inferiority because they can find their way neither to self-acceptance, nor to acceptance by society. Fearful of others, these characters attempt to conceal their true selves - as do the conformists - behind masks and role-playing. Their inner division generates considerable guilt and shame over the failure to meet either social expectations, or their personal aspirations. Due to this ambivalence, as well as to their essentially passive natures, the compromisers are readily manipulated by others and even, in some cases, are thrust into the role of a scapegoat. Tragically, a few compromiser characters, when the restriction of their social and emotional connections becomes acute, seek peace from the torment of guilt and conflict through death.

III. The Courageous Type

"'Man muss allem ins Gesicht sehen und sich nichts weismachen lassen, und vor allem sich selber nichts weismachen.'" (II,346)

- Lene

a. Profile of the courageous type

The most outstanding characteristic of the courageous type is a concern with honesty toward oneself and toward others. Possessing a high degree of self-insight, this type has a strong sense of identity and places personal values above those of society. Nevertheless, the courageous characters are able to establish harmonious relations with society despite their unconventional lifestyles. Integrity - namely, the courage to act consistently in accordance with personal convictions - is one feature of these characters which encourages society's tolerance of them. Another feature is the willingness to accept responsibility for the natural consequences of one's actions, rather than trying to affix blame outside of oneself. They do not defy society's

standards out of mere willfulness just for the sake of rebellion. On the contrary, by acting autonomously in accordance with personal conviction, he or she actually challenges rather than opposes tradition and the status quo.

The personality of the courageous type is one in which reason and emotion are harmoniously balanced. A high degree of purposeful activity, initiative and self-reliance are also displayed. This type lives in the present and realistically accepts the world as it is. In relationships, the courageous type reveals an equal measure of regard for self and other. A co-operative, rather than a competitive attitude is especially evident in the romantic relationships with this character type, which tend to be very rewarding. The healthy vitality of the courageous type is reflected in a high level of personal growth and fulfillment of the self's potential. This type is self-confident and fundamentally optimistic in outlook.

When faced with conflict between individual inclination and social expectation, the courageous type adopts a pragmatic approach and frequently displays considerable creativity in problem-solving. Rather than seeing only the options of conformity or defiance, this type perceives a range of possible options in response to instances of conflict. The courageous type chooses an option which will lead to the most desirable consequences, fully

aware that while no perfect solution to conflict between self and society exists, a reasonable balance between the demands of both can be achieved.

b. Selection of characters and the nature of their conflicts

The four courageous characters to be discussed in this chapter include: Melanie and Rubehn from L'Adultera along with Lene and Gideon from Irrungen, Wirrungen. Melanie's situation of conflict begins with the temptation to commit adultery and leads to a decision over whether to divorce her husband and abandon her children. Rubehn, as the one who provokes Melanie's situation, is faced with the conflict of whether to initiate an affair with a married woman. Lene's conflict is twofold: firstly, whether as a working class woman to pursue a liaison with an aristocrat which she realizes can hold no future, and secondly, whether to reveal her romantic past to a subsequent suitor. Gideon, as that suitor, must decide whether or not to marry a woman who has a past. Moreover, he has also been faced with a decision over whether to remain with orthodox religion, or to establish a sect of his own.

c. General features of the courageous characters

Generally speaking, critics recognize in Fontane's characters only two modes of response to the conflict between the individual and society. Gellhaus, for instance, asserts in commenting upon Fontane's narrative works: "Hier ordnet sich das Individuum den bestehenden Verhältnissen unter, oder, wenn es die durchbrochen hat, trägt es die Folgen seines Tuns."²³⁵ Certainly, most Fontane scholars deny that any of the author's characters are portrayed as capable of exercising free will. "The will of the individual," declares one such critic, "is bound by the will of society."²³⁶ A similarly pessimistic conclusion is arrived at by Friedrich, who contends: "Die Frage nach dem Glück, wo es möglich ist und wie es errungen werden kann, bleibt ohne Antwort."²³⁷

Yet, as Mittelman points out, resignation is not the only solution to conflict between the individual and society which we find illustrated in Fontane's novels. She observes that the author also portrays "die Möglichkeiten positiven Handelns und...einen Spielraum der Freiheit."²³⁸ Confirmation of Mittelman's view is provided by an excerpt from the novelist's correspondence, wherein he states: "Der freie Mensch aber...kann tun, was er will und muss nur die sogenannten 'natürlichen Konsequenzen,'...entschlossen und

tapfer auf sich nehmen."²³⁹ This quotation suggests that, in Fontane's view, the freedom of an individual within society is commensurate with the individual's degree of willingness to accept responsibility for personal choices and for the consequences of them. Such willingness demands courage - the courage to choose between resignation and a new direction.

The four characters to be examined in this chapter are portrayed by Fontane as possessing this particular brand of courage. Not to be confused with an outward display of physical bravery, the courage of these characters may be defined as a spiritual strength which enables them to withstand and to overcome conflict between themselves and society. Webster's Third New International Dictionary offers as a synonym for courage the word "spirit" - a term which suggests "a quality of temperament,...an ability to hold one's own, fight for one's principles, or keep up one's morale when opposed, interfered with, or checked." This definition aptly describes the fundamental stance exhibited by the courageous characters toward the basic conflict. Essentially, the courage of these characters is the courage to be their true selves, despite social pressure to relinquish their individuality.

Among the constellation of attributes which distinguishes the courageous character type from Fontane's other fictional portraits, we note that another prominent

feature is concern with authenticity - namely, honesty with oneself and sincerity toward others. By contrast, we observe that the conformists and the compromisers betray both a moderate degree of self-deception, as well as habitual dissimulation in their contacts with others. Gideon Francke - whom Lene eventually marries - succinctly expresses the fundamental values shared by the courageous characters: "'Auf die Wahrheit kommt es an, und auf die Zuverlässigkeit kommt es an und auf die Ehrlichkeit'"(II,444-445). The genuineness of these convictions sets them apart from the superficial, outer-directed values, such as preoccupation with recognition and social reputation, typical of the conformists. Moreover, the steadfastness with which the courageous characters adhere to their values distinguishes them from the compromisers, who tend toward not only hypocrisy, but also vacillation and passivity caused by inner conflict.

Given the importance of honesty to the courageous type, it comes as no surprise that Gideon - described by the compromiser, Botho, as "'ein Mann von Freimut und untadeliger Gesinnung'"(II,441) - should be attracted to Frau Nimptsch's adopted daughter, of whom Botho declares: "...die Lene lügt nicht und bisse eher die Zunge ab, als dass sie flunkerte'"(II,443). In fact, as Lene explains to her foster mother, it is precisely because of the factory

foreman's upright character that she wishes to marry him: "Ich hab' ihm geantwortet, dass ich ihn nehmen wolle, weil ich ihn für einen ehrlichen und zuverlässigen Mann hielte..."(II,433). Determined that no deception shall exist between them as a couple, Lene decides to inform Gideon of her previous romantic involvements (II,433) - a disclosure which the latter, despite his strict religiosity, is able to accept. For he believes that transgression of the sixth commandment may be pardoned, as it represents weakness merely of the flesh. However, transgression of the seventh commandment - inasmuch as it reveals weakness of the spirit - is unforgivable, in Gideon's view (II,444). Thus Gideon resolves his instance of the basic conflict - namely, whether to marry a woman with a past - in a manner compatible with his own personal values, not those of society. He does not marry her out of mere defiance of society's values, however, as we observed in the compromiser, St.Arnaud.

In terms of the preceeding analysis, it is doubtful as to whether what Davidson terms "the unbridgeable social chasm"²⁴⁰ between Lene, as a member of the working class, and Botho, as an aristocrat, is actually responsible for the dissolution of their relationship - a view which Richter, for instance, also maintains.²⁴¹ Even if Fontane had portrayed Lene and Botho as members of the same social

class, they would still have lacked the fundamental bond which exists between Lene and Gideon by virtue of their shared values.

The honesty of the courageous characters is evident not only in their dealings with others, but also in relation to their inner selves. They are depicted as endeavouring to achieve and maintain a high degree of self-knowledge. Reeve observes in Lene, for instance, what he terms "superior self-awareness"²⁴² - a feature which contrasts with the self-deception so typical of the conformist and especially, the compromiser characters. By way of illustration, Lene's dream of her parting from Botho serves not merely to foreshadow the couple's actual separation. In addition, it reveals this courageous character as one who is finely attuned to her emotional life: "'...es geht zu End'....Ich hab' es freilich nur geträumt....Aber warum hab' ich es geträumt? Weil es mir den ganzen Tag vor der Seele steht'"(II,399).

We also note a high degree of self-awareness in the figure of Melanie van der Straaten. Although she occupies the position of advantage in her first marriage, this character is portrayed as conscious of being discontented. In the words of the narrator: "...sie dominierte nur, weil sie sich zu zwingen verstand; aber dieses Zwanges los und ledig zu sein, blieb doch ihr Wunsch, ihr beständiges,

stilles Verlangen"(II,42). As Johnson suggests, Melanie's "sense of spiritual confinement" is well represented by the image of her pet cockatoo - "der eigentliche Tyrann des Hauses"(II,17) - imprisoned within its cage.²⁴³

When the opportunity to free herself from the constraints of an unhappy marriage presents itself in the person of Rubehn, Melanie's sense of dissatisfaction changes to discord as she struggles to clarify her "personal priorities."²⁴⁴ Unlike some of the compromiser characters who are portrayed by Fontane as actually taking pleasure in deception - Herr Dörr and his practical jokes with "potted" flowers constitute one such example - Melanie derives no gratification from the duplicity toward her husband and friends which is necessitated by her extra-marital affair. On the contrary, because deceit is foreign to her nature Melanie suffers considerably during this period. As the narrator explains: "Sie lag leidend und abgehärmt, uneins mit sich und der Welt, auf dem Sofa..."(II,91). The essential conflict which confronts Melanie is that of choosing between the socially acceptable path of remaining married to van der Straaten - even though she does not love him - or, risking social ostracism by pursuing self-fulfillment in a new marriage to the man she does love. Ultimately, Melanie's fear of social censure is overwhelmed by her abhorrence of deception. As she informs her first husband:

'Ich kann das kleine Gefühl nicht länger ertragen, das an aller Lüge haftet; ich will wieder klare Verhältnisse sehen....Ich will wieder in Frieden mit mir selber leben, und wenn nicht in Frieden, so doch wenigstens ohne Zwiespalt und zweierlei Gesicht.' (II,101-102)

It is only when Melanie acts in accordance with her own wish that she regains a sense of being at one with herself. The foregoing discussion serves to illustrate Fontane's depiction in the courageous characters of a link between integrity - or, wholeness of being - and loyalty to oneself. Upon taking leave of van der Straaten, Melanie declares that only one remedy will alleviate her discontent: "'...ein ganz neues Leben und in ihm das was das erste vermissen liess: Treue'"(II,102). In this instance, Melanie is not referring to her infidelity. Rather, she is motivated by what she describes as "'das Gesetz ins Herz geschrieben'" or, alternatively, as "'mein eigenes selbstisches Verlangen'"(II,101,102). Melanie recognizes that the "law written in her heart" happens to correspond with society's law which also demands that she be separated from the husband to whom she has been unfaithful (II,102). Acting upon her own desire does not, however, constitute conformity to the dictates of society. For Melanie is portrayed as remaining at odds with a society which disapproves of adulterous wives - especially those who abandon their children without so much as a final farewell (II,103). In

the words of Rees: "Second only to a lady's feelings for her husband were those for her children....for a lady not to 'love' her children made her a monster."²⁴⁵ Thus society is far from being appeased by Melanie's decision to divorce and would rather see her ostracized, than happy in a second marriage to Rubehn.

As Mittelman observes, Melanie - in her decision to divorce - places "die Treue zur eigenen Wesensmitte über alles, die Selbstverantwortung über die Verantwortung, die das Individuum gegenüber der Gesellschaft hat, das Gesetz, das ihr 'ins Herz geschrieben'...., über das Gesetz der Gesellschaft."²⁴⁶ It is this hierarchy of values in which the self has priority over society that distinguishes the courageous response to the fundamental conflict from the responses of the conformist and compromiser characters - both of whom either willingly, or reluctantly, place society's desires before their own.

This loyalty to self revealed by the courageous characters may be viewed as a positive form of egocentricity, inasmuch as it permits them to maintain their integrity and to defend their best interest in situations of conflict. The concept which Gellhaus terms "die innere Wahrhaftigkeit" also has application here. "Dem eigenen Wesen treu bleiben," asserts this critic, "ist nach Fontane der Grundzug der Wahrhaftigkeit. Wahrhaftigkeit aber kann

keiner haben," explains Gellhaus, "der nicht den Schwerpunkt seines Lebens in seinem eigenen Selbst hat."²⁴⁷ By contrast, the confused priorities of the compromisers subject them to a chronic state of inner division. Their divided loyalty between self and society renders them incapable of consistently pursuing their own desires. The conformists, on the other hand, do possess what could be termed a pseudo-integrity and are usually able to maintain their equilibrium. They achieve this, however, by automatically according society's expectations first priority - a choice which necessitates continuous denial of their personal wishes.

Essentially, the conformist and compromiser characters have their "center of gravity" outside of themselves, a feature which their excessive accommodation to the demands of society betrays. Alienated from their personal needs and desires, these characters are portrayed as dependent upon the conventional values of society to guide their conduct. By contrast, the courageous characters are centered within themselves and, therefore, better able to differentiate their own desires from those of society. The needs of their inner self serve to direct the actions of these characters, thereby creating a sense of autonomy which the conformists and compromisers lack. Despite the fact that acting upon personal inclination provokes social disapproval, the

self-esteem which accompanies self-assertion is experienced by the courageous characters as rewarding in itself. As the narrator explains concerning Melanie's crucial decision to divorce van der Straaten: "Das Geschehene, das wusste sie, war ihre Verurteilung vor der Welt, war ihre Demütigung, aber es war doch auch zugleich ihr Stolz, dies Einsetzen ihrer Existenz, dies rückhaltlose Bekenntnis ihrer Neigung"(II,100).

In his analysis of L'Adultera, Müller-Seidel interprets the choice between personal and societal values as one between being an original, or a copy. "Dieser Gegensatz von Typus und Individualität, von Kopie und Original," contends this scholar, "ist das zentrale Motiv der Erzählung, ihr punctum saliens, um das sich alles dreht...."²⁴⁸

Müller-Seidel points out that the theme finds metaphorical expression through van der Straaten's penchant for collecting reproductions of famous paintings, in contrast to Melanie's satisfaction with a single portrait of herself.

Not commented upon by this critic is a similar motif which can be observed in Irrungen, Wirrungen. Here, Botho - who, like van der Straaten, is a compromiser - forms a parallel figure to the commercial councillor. Lacking the financial acumen of the businessman, however, Botho's costly expenditures on paintings - including a Rubens copy - only serve to place him deeply into debt (II,346-47). With

respect to Lene with whom Botho has an affair, her inability to understand the English titles of two paintings which grace the walls of her and Botho's room at Hankel's Ablage illuminates the educational and cultural gulf which separates the couple. Another picture, entitled "Si jeunesse savait," offends Lene's fine sensibility (II,386). She spontaneously identifies, however, with the sight of a maid polishing kitchenware: "Lene war wie benommen von dem Bild" (II,389). In a sense, this reflection of herself which Lene perceives in the vision of the maid - "die hübsche Person, die sich, so schien es, in ihrer Arbeit gar nicht genugtun konnte"(II,389) - may be viewed as a counterpart to Melanie's self-portrait (II,17). Notable in both images is the backdrop provided by natural scenery, a feature which suggests the typically ingenuous quality associated with the courageous characters. The fact that these figures are attracted to images of themselves points not so much to vanity, as it does to the strong sense of personal identity which they possess.

Another variation upon the dichotomy between personal values and society's values, or the theme of "Kopie und Original," is apparent in Gideon's decision to found his own religious sect, rather than remain with or simply reject orthodox religion. "Franke is so independent," declares Bance, "that no established religion suits him...."²⁴⁹

Garland's designation of Gideon as "something of a religious crank"²⁵⁰ is, however, a most unfair assessment of this character. For although he certainly does express himself in a rather forthright manner - one which, according to Grawe, resembles that of Old Testament prophets²⁵¹ - Franke's religious eccentricity and strong convictions are born not of mere defiance toward society's established religions, but of tolerance. As Gideon explains to Botho: "'Ich war lange drüben in den States,...man lernt drüben anders sehen und nicht immer durchs selbe Glas. Und lernt auch, dass es viele Heilswege gibt und....viele Wege, die zu Gott führen...'"(II,444). This perception of multiple options available to the individual is typical of the courageous type.

The conflict between the demands of society and personal inclination may appear, at first glance, to have no application in the case of Lene. As Botho describes her: "...sie hatte sich von Jugend an daran gewöhnt, nach ihren eigenen Entschlüssen zu handeln, ohne viel Rücksicht auf die Menschen und jedenfalls ohne Furcht vor ihrem Urteil'"(II,442). Although she is depicted as having no fear of society's judgment, nevertheless, Lene does not escape the disapproval of others - especially, where her morality is concerned. We learn that she has been the subject of malicious gossip and the absence of a Kranz does not pass

unnoticed at her wedding. Even Frau Nimptsch appears critical of her foster daughter's romantic history, for she attempts to dissuade Lene from disclosing it to Gideon (II,425-426). Yet, this young woman's affairs prior to marriage were serious relationships with men for whom she had considerable affection. Unlike the other mistresses of Botho's fellow officers, Lene is not depicted as being motivated by the desire for financial gain and, for that matter, she is not propelled exclusively by sexual desire either. Her reaction to the suggestive lithograph found in the hotel room at Hankels Ablage serves to dispel any suspicion in the reader's mind as to the basis of Lene's conduct. In the words of the narrator: "Ihre feine Sinnlichkeit fühlte sich von dem Lüsternen in dem Bilde wie von einer Verzerrung ihres eigenen Gefühls beleidigt..."(II,386). The fact that the same picture is found in the Dörr household may be taken to indicate a significant contrast between Lene's nature and that of the vain and acquisitive Frau Dörr, who was also at one time the mistress of an aristocrat. A parallel exists, however, between Lene and Melanie in that the latter finds the "ardent" Madonnas of Murillo - which the earthy van der Straaten adores (II,32-33) - frankly offensive. By making it clear that these two courageous characters are neither fortune hunters, nor wanton seductresses the author enhances

reader sympathy towards them. In Fontane's day, such a portrayal would have served to mitigate - though certainly not to eliminate - reader disapproval of departure from conventional standards of morality illustrated through these heroines.

Some mention should finally be made of the specific context in which the fourth courageous character, Rubehn, experiences conflict between self and society. Firstly, as the eldest son of a Jewish Frankfurt banker, Rubehn is an outsider figure in the novel's setting of Protestant Berlin. Like Gideon, he also has travelled extensively not only in America, but in France and England, too. Indeed, van der Straaten partly bases his decision to have Rubehn as a live-in trainee upon the assumption that the latter needs to relearn "'die Sitte dieses Landes...weil er sie draussen halb vergessen hat'"(II,18). This invitation represents in the financier's own words "'ein besonderer Vertrauensakt'" (II,19) - one which Rubehn eventually betrays by choosing to become Melanie's illicit lover. Once having taken this irrevocable step, which is certainly a victory of personal inclination over the mores of society, he is faced with another decisive conflict - namely, whether to continue the affair with his patron's wife, or to declare publicly his love for Melanie by marrying her. Unfortunately, both options entail conflict in that each is liable to provoke

social censure.

Certainly, Rubehn is acutely aware of the profound repercussions associated with his ultimate decision to wed. After a meeting with his beloved, the narrator comments: "Er sah ihr nach, und ein Gefühl von Schreck und ungeheurer Verantwortlichkeit über ein durch ihn gestörtes Glück überkam ihn und erfüllte plötzlich sein ganzes Herz. Was soll werden?" (II,90). Yet, in the manner typical of courageous characters, Rubehn acknowledges that he possesses free will and must accept the consequences of exercising it. Moreover, he recognizes that this applies to other individuals as well. Although Rubehn definitely carries a certain degree of responsibility as far as his relationship with Melanie is concerned, he realizes that he does not bear the entire burden alone: "'Ich bin nicht der Narr, der von Engeln spricht. Sie war keiner und ist keiner'" (II,90). This insight not only bolsters his own spirit, but enables Rubehn to encourage Melanie, too, until she feels strong enough to confront van der Straaten with her decision: "'Es hat eben alles seine natürliche Konsequenz, und die, die hier spricht, die scheidet uns'" (II,101). As Müller-Seidel declares: "Der Ausbruch der Melanie van der Straaten ist der Ausbruch aus einer Gesellschaft, die nur noch Rollen, Typen und Kopien zu kennen scheint...."²⁵² With its open windows, the carriage in which she departs symbolizes her escape from this

confinement. A contrasting image to that of the caged bird - which represents Melanie's former life with van der Straaten - the coach takes her over a bridge into a new dimension of living with Rubehn.

Melanie's decision is, of course, irrevocable - yet, as we expect of courageous characters, she does not torment herself with regret: "'...ich tät' es wieder, alles, alles. Und ich will es nicht anders, als es ist'"(II,93). In contrast to the compromisers who tend to place blame for their situation upon other individuals or upon circumstances in society, the courageous type accepts responsibility where appropriate, but acknowledges that in some cases, as Lene informs Botho, no one is to blame (II,399). Whereas the conformists attempt to exercise too much control over events and - at the opposite end of the spectrum - the compromisers perceive themselves as helpless to alter their predicament, the courageous characters assume a realistic measure of control over their lives by choosing their attitude and response toward a given situation.

It should be mentioned at this point that both of the courageous couples choose a religious ceremony to commemorate their marriage, rather than simply a legal ceremony. Unlike the compromiser character Frau Dörr, however, they are not portrayed as motivated to do so out of a desire to prevent gossip (II,321). And certainly, they are

not merely adapting to social convention either. The author's selection of church weddings for these characters may be taken to symbolize the spiritual bond which unites the partners of each couple. Moreover, the willingness of clerics to perform the religious ceremonies - even with the knowledge in Melanie's case, for instance, that she is an adulteress and pregnant with her lover's child - suggests that in Fontane's view while society may condemn the actions of these figures, their love for one another overrides their moral transgressions in the eyes of the Divine.

In contrast to another compromiser character such as Botho for whom marriage serves as an external means of imposing a semblance of order upon a confused emotional life - "'Ordnung ist Ehe'"(II,406) - the courageous couples do not need the institution of marriage for this purpose. Their sense of order springs from within because they are at one with themselves as a result of living in accord with their personal values. Awareness of this connection is revealed by Melanie in her remarks to van der Straaten as she embarks upon a life of greater personal fulfillment with her second husband: "'Es soll Ordnung in mein Leben kommen, Ordnung und Einheit'"(II,102).

Unlike the superficial appearance of order associated with the conformist characters who rely upon social prescripts to direct their lives, the order of which Melanie

speaks represents a genuine reconciliation of the fundamental conflict between the individual and society, as portrayed by Fontane. Like Red Riding Hood, with whom Melanie is linked by virtue of her maiden name, de Caperoux (= Rotkäppchen), she follows her natural impulse unheeding of the warnings offered by others. While it is by no means smooth sailing for Melanie and Rubehn, their story - like that of Red Riding Hood - comes to a happy conclusion and they are eventually reintegrated socially, albeit at a lower class level. "Doch die Versöhnung mit der Gesellschaft wird hier nicht erreicht durch Selbstaufgabe," as Mittelman points out, "sondern unter Beibehaltung des individuellen Rechts."²⁵³

Although Fontane admitted that the notorious case of Frau Ravené upon which he based the story of L'Adultera was exceptional in its positive outcome,²⁵⁴ he did acknowledge that conflict between the individual and society need not necessarily end in resignation. And, in Irrungen, Wirrungen he presents a slight variation upon this theme through his portrayal of another courageous couple, Lene and Gideon. Despite Lene's moral transgressions - which, in this instance, occur prior to matrimony rather than during it - her marriage, to quote Garland, "has the promise of a longer and serener duration than most of the marriages...in Fontane's novels."²⁵⁵ This probability negates

Müller-Seidel's contention that reconciliation between social order and personal inclination remains in the novel "ein Traum, eine realitätsferne Idee, eine Illusion."²⁵⁶ Admittedly, these remarks may have bearing upon the lot of some compromiser characters in the work. It would be incorrect, however, to regard such a pessimistic proclamation as synonymous with Fontane's ultimate view of the matter. For through his depiction of the courageous characters, the author demonstrates that individuals and society can achieve reconciliation - namely, the restoration of harmonious relations which are free of resentment and resignation.

The ability of the courageous characters to sustain harmonious relations with society despite their at times unconventional behaviour may be due, in part, to some qualities of temperament and personality which distinguish them from both the conformist and compromiser groups. One such feature is an apparently innate capacity for maintaining a balance between the powers of reason, or intellect, and emotion. As previously established, the conformists are noted for their emotional inhibition and excessive reliance upon reason. By contrast, most of the compromisers are marked by an extreme emotional lability and incapacity to predict the logical consequences of their impulsive actions. The courageous figures, however, are -

like Lene - "'vernünftig und leidenschaftlich zugleich'"(II,455). These characters are portrayed as being guided, but not governed, by feeling which they trust over principles, or rules of conduct. As Melanie explains to Riekchen: "'...ich habe nie begriffen, wie man Grundsätze haben kann oder Prinzipien....Ich hab' immer nur getan, was ich wollte, was mir gefiel, wie mir gerade zumute war'"(II,120). Yet, the courageous characters do not become victims of erratic moods and impulses in the manner to which compromiser characters are prone. Although members of the former group are spontaneous in their emotional expression - as Bormann comments upon Lene: "'...sie lebt im Moment...'"²⁵⁷ - they do not live for the moment as do the compromisers, who impulsively seek the distraction of sensation in order to relieve moods of boredom or melancholy. Also in contrast to the compromiser type, whose temporal orientation is actually towards the past, the courageous type is fully engaged with the present - a feature to which, for example, Melanie's conviction in regard to happiness testifies: "'Hier ist es, oder nirgends'"(II,134).

Vital emotional natures similar to those of the female courageous characters are also found in the male courageous characters. Sometimes, this feature is revealed by heightened intuitiveness - a faculty which is independent of

reason. Rubehn, for example, instantly perceives the unfortunate outcome of Melanie's reunion with her two daughters: "'Wie lief es ab? Ich fürchte nicht gut. Ich lese so was aus deinen Augen. Und ich hatt' auch eine Ahnung davon, gleich heute früh...'"(II,127). Unlike Innstetten, who as a conformist character is depicted as being wary of the irrational and inclined to dismiss his intuitive perceptions, Rubehn has developed his intuition and trusts it as a valuable source of information in dealing with the world. While intuition is not entirely absent among the compromiser characters, it is of little assistance to them. For this group is dominated to such an extent by the power of imagination that the ability of its members to distinguish fact from fantasy is seriously impaired. As the narrator observes regarding van der Straaten: "In seiner Scharfsicht oft übersichtlich und Dinge sehend, die gar nicht da waren, übersah er ebenso oft andere, die klar zutage lagen"(II,86).

The emotional development of the male courageous characters is also expressed through their nurturing qualities. One of the factors which influences Lene in her choice of Gideon as a husband, for instance, is his willingness to care for both her and Frau Nimptsch (II,433). Moreover, Gideon's empathy for the latter as she approaches death takes precedence over his religious scruples against

gambling and, therefore, he plays cards with her daily in the knowledge that the old woman derives great comfort from this activity (II,424). So, too, Rubehn's competence in providing emotional support is appreciated by Melanie during the couple's stormy period of social readjustment. The depth of feeling revealed by this nurturing aspect is further underscored in Rubehn's case by his demonstrated capacity for profound emotional attachment. This character appears surprised himself at the intensity of his feelings for Melanie: "'Und ich liebe sie, viel, viel mehr, als ich geglaubt habe, viel, viel mehr, als ich je geglaubt hätte, dass ich lieben könnte'"(II,90). Contrary to Ernst's opinion,²⁵⁸ love is not lacking in Fontane's fictional world, but it is certainly rare and, at times, manifests itself in unexpected forms. However, even with Gideon - a character of whom we see very little - it is unequivocally his compassionate and loving disposition which permits him to forgive Lene's past liaisons. By contrast, a conformist character such as Gryczinski warns his wife that dalliances will not be excused, since his tolerance of such socially unacceptable behaviour on her part would imperil the Major's career. The genuineness of Gideon's forgiveness is all the more evident, too, when viewed alongside the display of magnanimity exhibited towards Melanie by her compromiser husband, van der Straaten - the falsity of which is readily

apparent to the heroine, as well as to the reader (II,97-102).

The richly developed emotional nature of the courageous characters - a feature which contrasts with both the emotional inhibition of the conformists and the shallow emotional lability of the compromisers - does not interfere with their capacity for rational, realistic thinking. For the courageous characters are portrayed as being capable of accurately assessing their situation within society and, moreover, of accepting it - even though it falls short of the ideal. By way of example, Rubehn is fully aware of the difficult days which lie ahead as he and Melanie begin their new life together (II,90). She, too, has realistic expectations of society's reaction:

'Das wird ein gross' Gerede geben, und die Tugendhaften und Selbstgerechten werden es mir nicht verzeihen. Aber die Welt besteht nicht aus lauter Tugendhaften und Selbstgerechten, sie besteht auch aus Menschen, die Menschliches menschlich ansehen.' (II,101-102)

Despite foreknowledge of the logical consequences of their actions, the couple retains hope for the future: "Und dann bauten sie Luftschlösser und träumten und hatten sie lachende Zukunft um sich her." Yet, they do not become lost in dreams - as the compromisers tend to - merely wishing that things could be different: "Aber auch wirkliche Pläne wurden laut..."(II,92). Unlike the conformists, however, who

are also able to set realistic goals and implement practical measures to achieve them, the courageous characters do not live for the future. An example of this latter trait is furnished by Lene who demonstrates a capacity to enjoy the present undiminished by her awareness of what the future will bring. As she tells Botho at the end of their affair: "'Ich hab' es so kommen sehn, von Anfang an, und so geschieht nur, was muss'"(II,408). Sharing with Melanie and Rubehn their capability for distinguishing reality from fantasy, Lene is able to let go of the past - remembering it fondly, but not held back by it. In her own words: "'Wenn man schön geträumt hat, so muss man Gott dafür danken und darf nicht klagen, dass der Traum aufhört und die Wirklichkeit wieder anfängt'"(II,408).

The sense of gratitude expressed here by Lene is another hallmark of the courageous character type. These characters are thankful for what is, rather than resentful - as the compromisers generally are - over what cannot be. Fundamentally, this contrast is one between realistic and idealistic expectations, as illustrated metaphorically through the scene in which Lene and Botho are depicted in a meadow at Hankels Ablage. The Baron would like to present Lene with a nosegay, but protests: "'...sieh nur, die reine Wiese, nichts als Gras und keine Blume. Nicht eine.'" His perfectionistic demands are exposed, however, by Lene's

response: "'Doch. Die Hülle und Fülle. Du siehst nur keine, weil du zu anspruchsvoll bist'"(II,377). The bouquet which Lene happily proceeds to assemble contains "eine Menge Brauchbares und Unbrauchbares" - a fitting metaphor of her readiness to accept all that life has to offer.

An important difference to be aware of between this attitude of acceptance typical of the courageous characters and the resignation of the compromisers is that the latter is accompanied by passivity and often withdrawal from social involvement, whereas the former encourages ongoing activity in the social sphere. One significant area of such activity is employment. Each of the courageous characters works, or takes up work during the course of the novel. Their reward in doing so is, however, more than merely financial. Work assists these characters in creating a sense of identity and it affirms their self-worth. Lene is portrayed, for example, as deriving considerable pride from the fact that she is self-supporting (II,443). For Gideon, a wide range of varied work experience both at home and abroad has served as a vehicle for personal development. So, too, Melanie finds expression and fulfillment of her talents in giving lessons after the collapse of Rubehn's financial empire makes it necessary for each partner to work. Reuter observes that such activity on Melanie's part is "ungleich stärker und bewusster als die ihrer adligen Schwestern."²⁵⁹ And as

Rees²⁶⁰ and Gorham²⁶¹ note, employment in particular represented a "demotion" for a lady. It is difficult to share Mittelman's view, however, that Melanie's enterprising spirit "sich nur aus dem Einfluss der bürgerlichen Mentalität ihres Mannes erklären lässt."²⁶² Although idleness is often associated with Fontane's aristocratic characters, we nevertheless encounter a few among them - such as Innstetten and Gryczinski - who are driven careerists even in the absence of financial need. Thus Melanie's high level of activity as an aristocrat can hardly be explicable solely as the result of previous association with a middle class husband. Inasmuch as Lene, a working class figure, also demonstrates a degree of initiative and an aptitude for creative problem-solving which - given the novel's setting in the late nineteenth century - are exceptional for her gender, we are encouraged to seek an explanation independent of social class.

The question arises as to whether this ability to deal actively with life is portrayed by Fontane as arising at least in part from a given biological temperament. Pascal observes that Lene, for example, is both "vigorous" and "self-reliant."²⁶³ Indeed, it would be difficult to imagine a self-reliant character who was not also healthy and energetic. In sharp contrast to the apathy typical of so many compromiser characters, we notice in the courageous

characters a vital force which is variously described as "etwas Entschlossenes"(II,375), "ein trotziger Stolz" (II,124) or simply, "'Selbstbewusstsein'"(II,66). While this force certainly resembles determination, it possesses an additional dimension insofar as it is linked with an optimistic nature. Lene's temperament, for instance, is termed "'heiter und...beinahe ausgelassen'"(II,442). A similar reference is made to the "heitren Ruhe"(II,119) afforded by Rubehn's presence. That this buoyant quality of disposition is a factor influencing how the courageous characters respond to the basic conflict between self and society is clearly stated by the narrator in the case of Melanie:

Was sich ihr notwendig entgegenstellen musste, das übersah sie nicht, und die Furcht, der Rubehn Ausdruck gegeben hatte, war auch ihre Furcht. Aber sie war doch andererseits sanguinischen Gemüts genug, um der Hoffnung zu leben, sie werd' es überwinden. (II,113).

The foregoing quotation recalls our definition of courage at the outset of this chapter as a quality of spirit - "an ability to hold one's own, fight for one's principles, or keep up one's morale when opposed, interfered with, or checked." In particular, we note that the attribute of courage - as it is illustrated here through the figure of Melanie - is not necessarily an absence of fear concerning society's reaction. Rather, it is the confidence to act

despite warranted apprehension. Although defined as a quality of spiritual strength, the courage displayed by this group of characters may in some measure owe its existence to their healthy and resilient physical constitutions. For it does require energy to assert the self - especially, in opposition to society. By contrast, a melancholic temperament combined with the diminished, or erratic, nervous energy of the compromiser type may largely account for what at first glance appears to be passivity due to weakness of character. As Botho wistfully laments: "'Es liegt nicht in mir, die Welt herauszufordern und ihr und ihren Vorurteilen öffentlich den Krieg zu erklären...'"(II,404).

The vitality, independence, initiative and high level of activity associated with the courageous type are traits which could be perceived as "masculine" in the female characters. Yet, their femininity is never in doubt, for as Garland declares concerning Melanie: "She emerges as what the end of the nineteenth century called the 'New Woman', but without aggressiveness or angularities. Her maturity entails no loss of femininity and charm."²⁶⁴ A suggestion of even greater freedom ahead for the next generation of women is conveyed by the image of Melanie's daughter, Heth, pedalling her velocipede with unrestrained enjoyment (II,76).²⁶⁵ Mittelmann believes this trend toward freedom

from society's restrictive definitions of those qualities and behaviour appropriate for women is most pronounced in Fontane's working class characters such as Lene, regarding whom she states:

Selbständigkeit und Tüchtigkeit,
Verantwortungsbewusstsein und Lebensernst,
Eigenschaften, die dem gesellschaftlichen
Idealbild von der Frau völlig entgegengesetzt
waren, werden...als durchaus vereinbar mit dem
Konzept der Weiblichkeit gezeigt...."266

Harrigan contends, however, that "female autonomy" and "emancipation" are ultimately achieved only by "a woman who needs nothing from a man."²⁶⁷ In short, she appears to regard the normal dependency need for a mate as incompatible with freedom and femininity. But can we agree with Harrigan? It would appear that she has failed to distinguish between the natural, healthy dependency needs for companionship and a mate, as opposed to expressions of unhealthy dependency such as desire for approval, passivity or undue reliance upon direction from others - traits which are present in both the conformist as well as the compromiser characters.

Perhaps the real strength and freedom of the female courageous characters lies not so much in the development of those features which permit them to be self-reliant, as it does in their willingness to remain emotionally vulnerable in relationships - or more precisely, in their capacity for balancing these contradictory aspects of human nature. As

Croner succinctly observes of Melanie, for instance:

"...Zartgefühl und Mut sind in ihr vereinigt."²⁶⁸ "Eine solche mehrseitige Orientierung," comments Richter concerning Lene, "bewahrt den Menschen vor jeder Einseitigkeit."²⁶⁹

The same holds true for the male courageous characters who also acquire added strength and freedom from restrictive gender stereotypes by allowing themselves to express their needs to give and receive emotional nurturance in relationships, instead of suppressing these needs in order to fall in with society's concept of masculinity - a practice with potentially tragic repercussions as we observe in the case of the conformist, Innstetten. Thus Fontane shows us that emancipation is not reserved for his female characters, but is a reward for the men, too, if they do not neglect the "feminine" side of their being. It is the one-sidedness of both the conformist and compromiser characters whose excessive reliance upon reason and tendency toward emotionalism, respectively, prevent them from achieving the relaxed state of equilibrium and absence of inner conflict associated with the courageous type.

The courageous characters' attainment of autonomy and freedom from conventional sex roles is portrayed as contributing to their happiness in love relationships. Evaluating the marriage of Melanie and Rubehn, for instance,

Mittelmann asserts: "Es wird gezeigt, dass die Übernahme einer aktiven Rolle in der Ehe durch die Frau aus einer Ehe eine bedeutungsvolle Verbindung machen kann."²⁷⁰ It should be noted, however, that Melanie's initiative and willingness to take employment, though it meant her "demotion" as a lady, would have been of little avail had Rubehn not been sufficiently secure in his masculinity to agree upon this solution. Essentially, the marriages of the courageous characters are distinguished by this sort of co-operation between the partners, rather than by competitive power struggles. Neither partner is depicted as having a need to dominate, nor as feeling overshadowed by the other - situations frequently portrayed, however, in the marriages of conformist and compromiser characters. The female courageous characters are of special interest here in that they do not view marriage (apart from Melanie's first, unhappy marriage) as the "'Zwangslage'" which Frau von Briest holds it to be (IV,42). Moreover, Frau Dörr's concept of conjugal duty as "'ein Jammer'" (II,329) is likewise foreign to the experience of these characters in whom a healthy erotic adjustment is apparent. Mende observes in Melanie, for example, "einen Anspruch auf genuine Leidenschaftlichkeit, den sie bei van der Straaten nicht einlösen kann."²⁷¹

Each of the courageous characters perceives his or

her marital partner as an individual of equal worth - no more, and no less. Garland discerns this horizontal perspective in the marriage of Lene and Gideon, a union which he terms "an honest contract based on mutual regard and respect."²⁷² And Mittelmann identifies in the marriage of Melanie and Rubehn what may be a prerequisite for such respect - namely, similarity between the partners. "Indem die Gleichheit zwischen den Ehepartnern hergestellt wird," she states, "wächst auch der Respekt und die Zuneigung und das tiefe Band, das nie zwischen Ungleichen bestehen kann."²⁷³ This view is consistent with that of Sasse, who observes that it is not "complementary character traits but mutual understanding" which is illustrated in Fontane's novels as being "the key to marital happiness."²⁷⁴ It is certainly evident that the compromiser character van der Straaten's mockery of this need for mutual understanding is a significant factor in the breakdown of his marriage to Melanie (II,60). But perhaps the secret of the success of the courageous characters' marriages is best summed up by Fontane himself:

Die Ehe, zu mindestens das Glück derselben, beruht nicht auf der Ergänzung, sondern auf dem gegenseitigen Verständnis. Mann und Frau müssen nicht Gegensätze, sondern Abstufungen, ihre Temperamente müssen verwandt, ihre Ideale die selben sein.²⁷⁵

d. Summary

To summarize the concepts presented in this chapter, we have identified from the given selection of Fontane's novels a few characters in whom a unique pattern of response to the basic conflict between self and society is illustrated. These characters have been designated as courageous because they reveal a quality of spiritual strength which facilitates their quest for self-determination and self-realization within a society which pressures individuals either to conform automatically to its standards, or to compromise their personal values. Other prominent features of the courageous characters include their high degree of honesty with themselves and others, a strong sense of identity, integrity - or wholeness of being rather than inner division - as well as initiative and the willingness to accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions. In contrast to the essentially dependent stance of both the conformist and compromiser types, the courageous characters are autonomous in that they conduct themselves in ways based upon their needs and desires as individuals. It is also characteristic of these figures that they are portrayed as healthy and optimistic, in addition to being skilled at balancing the opposing forces of intellect and emotion. Spontaneous and engaged in the present, the

courageous characters are active and remain involved with society despite their unconventional lifestyles - a factor which prevents the victimization observed in many of the socially withdrawn and, hence, isolated compromisers. In short, the courageous types succeed where others fail in achieving a harmonious - albeit imperfect - relationship with society in which the self is not sacrificed. A microcosm of this achievement is discernible in their marriages insofar as these unions are distinguished by co-operation and mutual respect. Ultimately, the reconciliation of conflict between the individual and society is shown by Fontane as resting upon the maintenance of an equal regard for self and others. In the words of Hofprediger Dörffel:

'...in unserer Demut vor den Menschen können wir mehr tun als nötig....Damit sprech' ich dem Hochmüte nicht das Wort....Aber zwischen Hochmut und Demut steht ein drittes, dem das Leben gehört, und das ist einfach der Mut.' (II,259).

Conclusion

In the foregoing chapters, we have examined how characters from a selection of Theodor Fontane's contemporary Berlin novels respond to instances of conflict between the individual and society. The aim was to demonstrate that character response to the conflict is a function of personality, rather than of gender, or of social class. Further, it was postulated that three personality types can be identified among the characters and that the members of each type respond in the same manner to the fundamental conflict. The three character types described were designated by the terms conformist, compromiser and courageous. Individual characters were identified as belonging to one of these types by a constellation of significant features which they shared with the basic personality profile of the type which was provided at the outset of each chapter. Common features were discovered in the areas of values, goals, interpersonal relationships, social behaviour, self-image and sometimes physical attributes. Moreover, the response of each character to one or more specific episodes of conflict between self and society was examined and was shown to correspond to the response postulated as being associated with that type.

In brief, the conformist characters responded to the basic conflict by recognizing only one acceptable option - namely, conformity with the prevailing social conventions. The compromiser characters, on the other hand, saw in addition to the option of conformity a second option of rebellion against society's norms. The compromisers experienced guilt, however, when they asserted their will in opposition to social conventions. They endeavoured to atone by relinquishing the quest for personal fulfillment, reluctantly yielding instead to the demands of society. As opposed to the conformists and the compromisers, the courageous characters perceived multiple options available to them in society - each with its respective advantages and disadvantages. Also, they possessed a resilient, persevering spirit which enabled them to hold their ground in the face of social disapproval.

Found to be of particular significance among the constellation of features associated with each type was the aspect of self-image vis-à-vis others in society. Neither the conformists nor the compromisers are portrayed as feeling truly equal to others. Whereas the latter experience an acute sense of inferiority, the former cultivate a sense of superiority. In contrast to both of these types, the attitude of the courageous characters toward themselves and others is one of equal regard - that is, they are depicted

as feeling equal in worth to others in society. This outlook plays a crucial role in the courageous characters' ability to achieve a reconciliation of their personal desires and the demands of society.

In addition to the similarities revealed by characters belonging to the same type, it is equally instructive to observe the distinct dissimilarities between the constellations of features exhibited by the members of each different character type. In short, a considerable body of evidence supports the hypothesis that character response to the fundamental conflict is portrayed by Fontane as being a concomitant of a certain personality type. Contrary to views advanced by previous scholarship, neither gender nor social class were discovered to be factors which correlated with a character's response to conflict between the individual and society.

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that no value judgments of the three character types and of their modes of response to the conflict are intended. The values and personality traits associated with each type are neither "good" nor "bad," neither superior nor inferior. Likewise, the different modes of response merely represent different options in dealing with the basic conflict. Fontane's message is that no one right way to respond to the conflict exists, no solution or formula which would work for every

character under all circumstances. The relationship between the individual and society is portrayed as a highly complex one. The characters cannot escape situations of conflict which arise from the fact that they are both individual and social beings. As readers, we cannot fully appreciate Fontane's character portraits without giving careful consideration to so vital an aspect of their conception.

Notes

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- ² Barbara E. Kienbaum, "Die Frauengestalten in Theodor Fontanes Berliner Romanen: Rolle und Funktion in der Darstellung des Konflikts zwischen Individuum und Gesellschaft," Diss., Michigan State University, 1978; Rosemary Park, "Theodor Fontane's Unheroic Heroes," The Germanic Review, Vol.14, No.1 (1939), pp. 32-44.
- ³ Hanni Mittelman, Die Utopie des weiblichen Glücks in den Romanen Theodor Fontanes (Bern: Peter Lang, 1980), p. 12.
- ⁴ Henry Garland, The Berlin Novels of Theodor Fontane (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 246.
- ⁵ Richard Brinkmann and Waltraud Wiethölter, eds., Dichter über ihre Dichtungen. Theodor Fontane, II (München: Heimeran, 1973), p. 474f.
- ⁶ Brinkmann, p. 469.
- ⁷ Brinkmann, p. 382f.
- ⁸ Brinkmann, p. 425f.
- ⁹ Theodor Fontane, Sämtliche Werke, II, ed. Walter Keitel (München: Hanser, 1962), p. 259. All subsequent citations derive from this edition and are hereafter indicated in the text by volume and page number within parentheses.
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- ¹¹ Fritz Martini, Deutsche Literatur im bürgerlichen

Realismus. 1848-1898 (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1981⁴), p. 781.

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¹³ G.W. Field, "The Case for Käthe in Fontane's Irrungen, Wirrungen," Analecta Helvetica et Germanica. Eine Festschrift zu Ehren von Hermann Boeschstein, eds. A. Arnold et al (Bonn: Bouvier, 1979), p. 269.

¹⁴ Kurt Wölfel, "'Man ist nicht bloss ein einzelner Mensch.' Zum Figurenentwurf in Fontanes Gesellschaftsromanen," Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie, 82 (1963), p. 160.

¹⁵ For the most comprehensive study on the use of language in Fontane's prose works, see Ingrid Mittenzwei, Die Sprache als Thema: Untersuchungen zu Fontanes Gesellschaftsromanen (Bad Homburg v.d.H., Berlin, Zürich: Verlag Dr. Max Gehlen, 1970).

¹⁶ Martini, Realismus, p. 778.

¹⁷ Louise Bode, M.A. in a lecture entitled, "The Tibetan Book of the Dead: A Jungian Perspective," which was delivered on January 20, 1984 at the University of British Columbia.

¹⁸ For a concise discussion of the allusions to Wagner and Mozart in Fontane's novels, see Christian Grawe, Führer durch die Romane Theodor Fontanes. Ein Verzeichnis der darin auftauchenden Personen, Schauplätze und Kunstwerke (Frankfurt, Berlin, Wien: Ullstein, 1980), pp. 243-245.

¹⁹ Theodor Fontane, Effi Briest, trans. and ed. Douglas Parmée (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967), p. 10.

²⁰ H.R. Klieneberger, "Fontane and Trollope," Formen realistischer Erzählkunst. Festschrift for Charlotte Jolles in Honour of her 70th Birthday, eds. Jörg Thunecke and Eda Sagarra (Nottingham: Sherwood Press, 1979), p. 430.

²¹ Grawe, p. 98.

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²⁴ Alan Bance, Theodor Fontane: The Major Novels (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 59.

²⁵ Koc, p. 25.

²⁶ Koc, p. 33.

²⁷ Parmée, p. 14.

²⁸ Richard J. Evans, The Feminist Movement in Germany 1894-1933 (London: Sage, 1976), p. 6.

²⁹ Joachim Ernst, "Gesetz und Schuld im Werk Fontanes," Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte, III (1951), p. 228.

³⁰ Leslie L. Miller, "Fontane's Effi Briest. Innstetten's Decision: In Defence of the Gentleman," German Studies Review, 4 (1981), p. 391.

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³³ Field, Käthe, p. 272.

³⁴ Cf Grawe, pp. 61-62 and p. 211.

³⁵ Miller, pp. 399-400.

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⁴⁰ Koc, p. 66.

⁴¹ Garland, p. 175.

⁴² Kurt Schober, Theodor Fontane: In Freiheit dienen

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⁴⁵ Helen Merrell Lynd, On Shame and the Search for Identity (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1958), p. 252.

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⁵⁰ Müller-Seidel, Romankunst, p. 359.

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⁵³ Müller-Seidel, Romankunst, p. 180.

⁵⁴ Guido Vincenz, Fontanes Welt. Eine Interpretation des "Stechlin" (Zürich: Verlag Zürich, 1966), p. 35.

⁵⁵ Miller, pp. 394-395.

⁵⁶ Christiane Wandel, Die typische Menschendarstellung in Theodor Fontanes Erzählungen (Weida: Thomas & Hubert, 1938), p. 55.

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- 108 Mende, p. 199.
- 109 Rycroft, p. 94..
- 110 Cf Mende, p. 198. Mende is indebted in this context to Barbara Ehrenreich, Deidre English, Zur Krankheit gezwungen. Eine schichtenspezifische Untersuchung der Krankheitsideologie als Instrument zur Unterdrückung der Frau im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert am Beispiel der USA (München: n.p., 1976), p. 16.
- 111 Peter-Klaus Schuster, Theodor Fontane: "Effi Briest" - Ein Leben nach christlichen Bildern (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1978)
- 112 Bance, p. 67.
- 113 Kienbaum, p. 4.
- 114 Koc, p. 98. Koc is indebted in this context to Hamann and Jost Hermand, Epochen deutscher Kultur von 1870 bis zur Gegenwart, III (Frankfurt: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1977).
- 115 Koc, p. 98.
- 116 Grawe, p. 56.
- 117 Grawe, p. 64.
- 118 Hans Otto Horch, "Fontane und das kranke Jahrhundert. Theodor Fontanes Beziehungen zu den Kulturkritikern Friedrich Nietzsche, Max Nordau und Paola Mantegazza," Literatur und Theater im Wilhelminischen Zeitalter, eds. Hans-Peter Bayerdörfer, Karl Otto Conrady and Helmut Schanze (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1978), p. 21.
- 119 Horch, p. 21.
- 120 Koc, p. 94.

- 121 Koc, p. 81.
- 122 Koc, p. 84. Original source: Willy Hellpach, "Nervosität und Kultur," Kulturprobleme der Gegenwart, V, ed. Leo Berg (Berlin: Verlag von Johannes Röde, 1902), p. 12.
- 123 Koc, p. 98.
- 124 Johnson, p. 254.
- 125 James M. Ritchie, "Embarrassment, Ambiguity and Ambivalence in Fontane's Effi Briest," Formen realistischer Erzählkunst. Festschrift for Charlotte Jolles in Honour of her 70th Birthday, eds. Jörg Thunecke and Eda Sagarra (Nottingham: Sherwood, 1979), p. 567.
- 126 Grawe, p. 230.
- 127 Cf Koc, p. 178.
- 128 Evans, p. 23.
- 129 Wandel, p. 60.
- 130 Bance, p. 32.
- 131 Grawe interprets this textual reference differently: "Der Gordon in Schillers Wallenstein wird wiederholt assoziiert, der Mann, der nicht ins Schicksal einzugreifen wagt." Grawe, p. 148. It is difficult to agree with this interpretation, however, or to view Schiller's Gordon as anything but a humane voice of reason and compassion.
- 132 Mittelman, p. 53.
- 133 Bance, p. 30.
- 134 Koc, p. 178.
- 135 Gail Cunningham, The New Woman and the Victorian Novel (London: Macmillan, 1978), p. 29.
- 136 Park, p. 32.
- 137 Mende, p. 190.
- 138 Garland, p. 90.
- 139 Bance, p. 93.

- 140 Grawe, p. 148.
- 141 Garland, p. 87.
- 142 For a more comprehensive treatment of Fontane's adult characters who persist in the ways of childhood, see: Paul Irving Anderson, "Game-Motifs in Selected Works of Theodor Fontane. A Study of Literary and Psychological Structures in Late Writings of Theodor Fontane in Terms of Games and Play," Diss., Indiana University, 1974.
- 143 Grawe, pp. 77-78.
- 144 Gunter H. Hertling, Theodor Fontanes "Stine:" Eine entzauberte Zauberflöte? Zum Humanitätsgedanken am Ausklang zweier Jahrhunderte (Bern: Peter Lang, 1982).
- 145 Reuter, II, p. 682.
- 146 Reuter, II, p. 680.
- 147 Martini, Realismus, p. 781.
- 148 Müller-Seidel, Romankunst, p. 279.
- 149 Müller-Seidel, Romankunst, p. 279.
- 150 Johnson, p. 33.
- 151 Grawe, p. 235.
- 152 Mende, p. 197.
- 153 22.viii.1895 Briefe an seine Frau, Vol. II (Berlin: Friedrich Fontane, 1905), p. 316.
- 154 Parmée, p. 9.
- 155 Grawe, p. 57.
- 156 Rycroft, p. 39.
- 157 Heinz Schlaffer, "Das Schicksalsmodell in Fontanes Romanwerk. Konstanz und Auflösung," Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift, Vol.16, No.4 (1966), p. 394.
- 158 Park, p. 1. Park's contention that all of Fontane's male characters are vacillating, "unheroic heroes" constitutes an over-generalization, however. Likewise, her assertion that all of his female characters are decisive and

action-oriented is clearly not the case.

159 Garland, p. 84.

160 Garland, p. 178.

161 Park, p. 41.

162 Park, p. 36.

163 Park, p. 35.

164 Park, p. 43.

165 Bance, p. 66.

166 Grawe, p. 166.

167 Kienbaum, p. 15.

168 Reuter, II, p. 680.

169 Fritz Martini, "Theodor Fontanes Romane," Zeitschrift für Deutschkunde, XLIX (1935), p. 519.

170 Walther Killy, "Fontane: Irrungen, Wirrungen," Wirklichkeit und Kunstcharakter. Neun Romane des 19. Jahrhunderts, ed. Walther Killy (München: C.H. Beck, 1963), p. 209.

171 Martini, Realismus, p. 779.

172 Müller-Seidel, Romankunst, p. 370.

173 Cf Richter, p. 27 for additional discussion of characters who interpret events as "signs."

174 Gottfried Krickler, Theodor Fontane. Von seiner Art und epischer Technik (Berlin: n.p., 1912), p. 35.

175 Cf Müller-Seidel, Romankunst, p. 370 in connection with Effi Briest: "Auf keinen Fall ist es das Schicksal der Schicksalstragödie oder etwas dieser Art...."

176 Garland, p. 97.

177 Müller-Seidel, Romankunst, p. 177.

178 Walter Müller-Seidel, "Fontanes Effi Briest. Zur Tradition des Eheromans," Wissenschaft als Dialog

(Stuttgart: Reclam, 1969), p. 47.

179 Donald C. Riechel, "Effi Briest and the Calendar of Fate," Germanic Review, 48 (1973), p. 200.

180 Riechel, p. 209.

181 Grawe, pp. 62-63.

182 Joseph Peter Stern, "Realism and Tolerance: Theodor Fontane," Re-interpretations: Seven Studies in Nineteenth-Century German Literature (London: Thames and Hudson, 1964), p. 319.

183 Theodor Fontane, Plaudereien über Theater (n.p.: n.p., 1926), p. 206.

184 Ernst Nef, "Der Zufall und die 'Menschenordnung' im Spätwerk Theodor Fontanes," Der Zufall in der Erzählkunst, ed. Ernst Nef (Bern: Francke, 1970), p. 94.

185 Garland, p. 207.

186 Cf Koc, pp. 146-188 for his discussion of boredom as a motif in the works of Fontane and Keyserling.

187 Wilhelm Münch, "Über die Langeweile," Westermanns illustrierte deutsche Monatshefte, 85 (1898-99), p. 198.

188 Stern, p. 319.

189 Koc, p. 148.

190 Koc, p. 148. See also: Ludwig Völker, Langeweile. Untersuchungen zur Vorgeschichte eines literarischen Motivs (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1975), p. 9.

191 Hubert Ohl, "Melusine als Mythos bei Theodor Fontane," Mythos und Mythologie in der Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts, ed. Helmut Koopmann (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1979), pp. 294-295.

192 Reuter, II, p. 687.

193 Mittelmann, p. 33.

194 Lawrence O. Frye, "The Unreal in Fontane's Novels," Germanic Review 37 (1962), p. 113.

195 Stern, p. 317.

- 196 Lotte Grages, Frauengestaltung bei Theodor Fontane (Heppenheim: G. Otto, 1931), p. 23.
- 197 Frye, p. 113.
- 198 Johnson, p. 275.
- 199 W.C. Reeve, "Die alte Waschfrau: A Nineteenth-Century Literary Motif," Seminar, 20 (1984), p. 103.
- 200 Johnson, p. 267.
- 201 Johnson, p. 301.
- 202 Theodor Fontane, Briefe an Georg Friedländer, ed. Kurt Schreinert (Heidelberg: Friedländer, 1954), p. 235.
- 203 Wölfel, p. 156.
- 204 Hans Ester, Der selbstverständliche Geistliche. Untersuchungen zu Gestaltung und Funktion des Geistlichen im Erzählwerk Theodor Fontanes (Leiden: Universitaire Pers Leiden, 1975), p. 106.
- 205 Lynd, p. 31.
- 206 Garland, p. 111.
- 207 Reeve, p. 104.
- 208 Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel, Hoffnung - jenseits von Glaube und Skepsis. Theodor Fontane und die bürgerliche Welt (München: Kaiser-Verlag, 1964), p. 15.
- 209 Müller-Seidel, Romankunst, p. 270.
- 210 Harrigan, p. 119.
- 211 Kienbaum, p. 2.
- 212 Max Rychner, Welt im Wort. Literarische Aufsätze (Zürich: Manesse, 1949), p. 259.
- 213 Martini, Realismus, p. 750.
- 214 Richter, p. 91.
- 215 Richter, p. 91.

216 G.W. Field, ed., Theodor Fontane. Irrungen, Wirrungen (London: Macmillan, 1967), p. xxvi.

217 Judith A. Davidson, "Stattlich, gütig and beschränkt: The Function of Frau Dörr in Fontane's Irrungen, Wirrungen," Seminar, 18 (1982), p. 158.

218 Wandel, p. 15.

219 Cf Richter, p. 92.

220 A.R. Robinson, Theodor Fontane. An Introduction to the Man and his Work (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1976), p. 199.

221 Theodore L. Lowe, "The Problems of Love and Marriage in the Novels of Theodor Fontane," Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1955, p. xiv.

222 Frye, p. 38.

223 Ernst, p. 228.

224 Reuter, II, p. 680.

225 Mende, p. 200. In this context, Mende is drawing upon psychoanalytic theory: "Freud, Abraham, Bernfeld u.a. haben ihn [den Suizid] psychodynamisch als Aggressionshandlung interpretiert, die gegen einen anderen Menschen oder gegen ein anderes Objekt gerichtet ist, mit dem früher eine Identifikation bestanden hat, das unbewusst gehasst und im Akt der Selbsttötung mitgetötet wird." Mende, p. 199.

226 Rudolf Koester, "Death by Miscalculation: Some Notes on Suicide in Fontane's Prose," German Life and Letters, NS Vol.20, No.1 (1966), p. 39.

227 Sontag, p. 24.

228 Koester, pp. 35-36.

229 Frye, p. 35.

230 Frye, p. 112.

231 See, for example, Giovanni Bellini's "Agony in the Garden" and Vittore Carpaccio's "Meditation on the Passion."

232 Koester, p. 40.

- 233 Koester, p. 41.
- 234 Koester, p. 41.
- 235 Augusta Gellhaus, Sittliches Werten bei Fontane (Dren: Max Danielewski, 1932), p. 39.
- 236 John Richard Cary, "Antithesis as a Principle of Structure and Technique in the Novels of Theodor Fontane," Diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1954, p. 87.
- 237 Gerhard Friedrich, "Die Frage nach dem Glück in Fontanes Irrungen, Wirrungen," Der Deutschunterricht, 11 (1959), p. 86.
- 238 Mittelman, p. 113.
- 239 Briefe an seine Familie, Vol.II, ed. K.E.O. Fritsch (Berlin: Friedrich Fontane, 1905), p. 138.
- 240 Davidson, p. 161.
- 241 Richter, p. 19.
- 242 Reeve, p. 104.
- 243 Johnson, p. 25.
- 244 Johnson, p. 38.
- 245 Rees, p. 12.
- 246 Mittelman, p. 68.
- 247 Gellhaus, p. 40.
- 248 Müller-Seidel, Romankunst, p. 172.
- 249 Bance, p. 89.
- 250 Garland, p. 121.
- 251 Grawe, p. 85.
- 252 Müller-Seidel, Romankunst, p. 178.
- 253 Mittelman, p. 74.
- 254 Letter 111, 28 March, 1889. Schreinert, p. 105.

- 255 Garland, p. 121.
- 256 Müller-Seidel, Romankunst, p. 266.
- 257 Alexander von Bormann, "Glücksansspruch und Glücksverzicht: Zu einigen Frauengestalten Fontanes," Amsterdamer Beiträge zur Neueren Germanistik, 10 (1980), p. 218.
- 258 Ernst, p. 229.
- 259 Reuter, II, p. 687.
- 260 Rees, p. 96.
- 261 Gorham, p. 8.
- 262 Mittelman, p. 70.
- 263 Pascal, p. 190.
- 264 Garland, p. 61.
- 265 Cf Cunningham, p. 2: "Many young women pedalled their way to undreamt-of freedoms on the newly popular bicycle...."
- 266 Mittelman, p. 102.
- 267 Harrigan, p. 125.
- 268 Croner, p. 22.
- 269 Richter, pp. 37-38.
- 270 Mittelman, p. 72.
- 271 Mende, p. 194.
- 272 Garland, p. 121.
- 273 Mittelman, p. 72.
- 274 Sasse, pp. 16-17.
- 275 Ges.Werke, II (Berlin), p. 92.

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