THE IMAGE OF THE WOMAN IN THE WORKS OF INGEBORG BACHMANN

by

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We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

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ABSTRACT

The female characters play a dominant part in Ingeborg Bachmann's prose writings. This study attempts first to determine the existence of a coherent image of the female in Bachmann's narrative prose and then to analyze it.

In contrast with much of contemporary literature, Bachmann's females show so many "traditional" contours of behaviour and mentality that the question of a conventional sex-specific image arises with the attendant question as to its purpose. An analysis of these characteristics reveals that Bachmann's image of the woman deserves the appellation "sex-specific" but that these "traditional" characteristics are infused with new values: the values of individualism, of a specifically female identity and of a new and particularly intense personal freedom. Thus emotionalism, irrationality and vanity are components of a new form of personal development and expression that is less restricting and more self-oriented than the "traditional" image which many critics have assumed they represent.

This interpretation provides the key to the solution of a second critical problem in Bachmann's fiction: the female-male antithesis. This antithesis often assumes violent dimensions such as in the theme of the "sick male" or the "victimized" female. Bachmann depicts the "female" characteristics in marked contrast to those of the male and lends them moral significance in an antithetical world of male versus
female, whereby the female and her values are assigned a morally higher position. Here the emotionalism, irrationality and non-utilitarian thinking of the female stand in contrast and are deemed superior to the calculated behaviour, rational thought and efficiency of the male. The image of the male is extended to represent the technological, rational and inhumane aspect of modern society. Thus, Bachmann's image at times transcends the male-female issues and points to problems of a universal nature: the reaction of the individual against ever increasing stric­tures laid down by administrative, economic and social structures of modern industrialized societies.

Finally, the theme of personal freedom underlies all the personal conflicts, motivations and aspirations of Bachmann's heroines. It finds expression in the most extreme form of longing for a state of being entirely lacking in any form of limitation whatsoever: the Grenzübertritt. The failure of Bachmann's females in marriage and family life, their unsatisfactory relationships with the opposite sex, are all seen to have their roots in the incompatibility of social commitment with this urge for personal freedom.

Bachmann does not solve the dilemma but tried instead to give poetic form to these goals and values and to sustain the hope for the ultimate attainment of the Grenzübertritt.
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PREFACE

First, a statement about the intent of this study. The aim is to examine and to evaluate the image of the woman in the writings of Ingeborg Bachmann. Special emphasis will be given to the following questions:

Do the various heroines incorporate common concepts, ideas and attitudes toward life and reality? If so, what are they and do they allow one to generalize and to speak of the female image in Bachmann's works?

Is this image a "traditional" or "modern" one; is it a sex-specific image?¹

Do autobiographical elements in Bachmann's fiction warrant investigation? Can their use in this study be justified?

If a coherent image can be established, then what end or purpose was it meant to serve?

Does Bachmann envisage a new role for women and, if so, how is this role to be defined?

The investigation, it is hoped, will contribute some new insights about a facet of Bachmann's work which has up to now received little attention.

Several difficulties arose during the conceptual phase of this study. The first of these was: which methods were to be used in the realization of the aims of this thesis? Would it be permissible to generalize from the analyses of several individual characters? Would not the result be
a computer-like statistical stereotype, derived from various collected data? And what were the alternative methods for realizing the aims of this study? However, one of Ingeborg Bachmann's own remarks on literature:

Es gibt in der Kunst keinen Fortschritt in der Horizontale, sondern nur das immer neue Aufreißen einer Vertikale. . . .

helped to influence the author's decision to select a method of comparison and of inductive argumentation. Recurring problems, themes and conflicts manifesting themselves in different individual human situations seemed to justify a search for common trends and themes. Bachmann continues in the same lecture on literature:

Und doch ist nur Richtung, die durchgehende Manifestation einer Problemkonstante, eine unverwechselbare Wortwelt, Gestaltenwelt und Konfliktwelt imstande, uns zu veranlassen, einen Dichter als unausweichlich zu sehen.3

Many critics have chosen to apply this view to her own works.4 A generalized Frauenbild may therefore be well justified. Especially the figure of Undine in Undine geht appears in itself already as a compound female image. The selection of the main female characters posed another difficulty. Obviously, the elder Frau Jordan in Das Gebell did not quite fit the general pattern of the other Bachmann women. This was not felt, however, to be a valid reason to exclude her. On the contrary, interesting and additional points could be added to the Bachmann image of women by an analysis of her story. H. Pausch saw the work even as a "kontrapunktische Erzählung", which did demonstrate the effects of social pressures from which other women tried to free themselves.5 The following method of selection was finally chosen: women that dominated a novel, story or radio play as well as those who functioned in important secondary roles
were classed as "main figures"; women playing only minor parts such as Mrs. Brown in Die Zikaden were classed as "secondary figures" and seldom used for the study; lastly, females representing very insignificant parts in extent or in depth such as the Passantin in Ein Geschäft mit Träumen or similar figures appearing in Bachmann's poetry were classed as peripheral figures and not used for the purpose of this study as their substance was thought too small to justify valid statements.

One additional problem became evident during the investigative stage of this study. That was the existence in the secondary literature of a fairly widespread stereotype of Ingeborg Bachmann. She was the great poetess but not much else. This fixed image has produced quite extensive literature on her poetry and less regard of her prose writings which this writer feels to be unjustified. Furthermore, many of the publications, that did concern themselves with her prose, do so from a biased point of view, which considers her lyric talent a handicap to her success as a writer of prose.
PART I. INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

GENERAL REMARKS

A. The Image of the Woman

Why is the image of the woman in the literature of a particular society worthy of analysis? First of all it can show a conception held by a society or group within the society, or, at the very least, an image which is strongly modified by society's norms. It usually portrays characteristics and environmental conditions actually found to exist or presumed to exist as moral codes. Secondly, it yields information about trends or developments, about changing social and moral codes, and about attempts to change and to influence social consciousness. This is particularly the case with the "Frauenliteratur" in the latter part of the twentieth century which has aroused much discussion, controversy and even polemics. Thirdly, it may help to answer the widely discussed question whether form, criteria, description and viewpoints in the literary creation of a woman character differ according to the writer's sex.

The following study hopes to throw new light on a specific contribution to this theme: namely to advance some thoughts and conclusions about the image of the woman developed by Bachmann in her prose fiction. It is an image of woman which is of special
interest, being one of the few in the literature of either Germany or Austria which has been created by a woman.

B. Previous Research

Studies on the image of the woman in literature are still in their initial phase. Few studies have been done in the past but their number is increasing. Most of these approach the topic from a sociological viewpoint. As far as the particular situation of Bachmann is concerned, the image of the woman has never received any special attention. Although Bachmann's heroines have been discussed in various interpretations of her stories, plays or novels, the topics so far have been determined by theme, genre, and interpretative approaches that put little emphasis on the social profile of Bachmann's characters. The larger specialized studies to date have preferred to deal with such typical Bachmann topics as "the new language", Grenzübertritt, or the outsider. Examples are:


Within these concepts the specifically "female" issues have been limited to the themes of love or Grenzübertritt. There has been scant recognition of the detailed attention which Bachmann expends on the development of her female characters.
C. Present Thesis

1. The Problem

   a) Introduction to the problem

      In the light of the above, it was considered defensible to devote a dissertation exclusively to a study of the image of the woman in Bachmann's works.

      Firstly, because of the topic's literary, social and political relevance, the growing discussion about the position, goals, rights and obligations of woman in western societies, the search for new definitions of the female's social identity, and last but not least, the controversy created by the varied, even contradictory programmes of liberationist and feminist groups, provided the topic with additional pertinence.

      Secondly, Bachmann's characters appeared to promise more of interest and relevance for such an undertaking than those of other contemporary writers in German. Not only did the choice of a woman writer as the source of the image to be examined seem a justifiable one, but Bachmann appeared to have displayed unique intellectual as well as emotional qualities in her development of woman characters and to have dealt with issues that are of special interest to us today. Furthermore, the literary quality of the authoress is felt to be significant and is widely accepted as such. Likewise, there appears to be agreement that the authoress is rather moderate in her views and balanced in her conclusions. The poetess is a German-language writer who transcends the national and cultural boundaries of the various German-speaking countries — the cosmopolitan nature of Bachmann's life and writings lending her statements a more universal substance and appeal. Also, Bachmann appeared
to be fascinated and moved by the female character and its concerns; certainly, the woman occupies a central position in her literary work. Furthermore, it is the development and substance of the image itself that intrigues. There appears to exist no simplifying consistency but a multiplicity in the images of the various heroines who display tensions, conflicts, goals and paths of development in very individual ways.

The question therefore arose: what kind of image of the woman is it that Bachmann offers and what is its meaning and its contribution to the topic "woman in our world today"?

b) Statement of the problem

The problem then assumed the following contours: What is the nature of the image of the woman in Bachmann's works? May one go so far as to speak of "one general image"? Of what elements is this image composed? To what extent has it been determined by Bachmann's biography? Does it contain "traditional" and/or modern feminist elements in its make-up? After determining the kind of image, one would enquire about its meaning. What does this image convey? What, if any, is its symbolic content? Does it carry a message, does it illustrate a thesis about modern woman? If so, what are its arguments and conclusions? Noting the important position the male appeared to play opposite the female in her works, an investigation and analysis of the male-female relationship seemed to promise a major contribution to the understanding of the Bachmann image of the woman. Therefore, the following directions were mapped out: What image - if one at all - does the male convey in Bachmann's works? Is it a counter-image to the female, and if so, what
purpose does it serve? What is the nature of the male-female relation­ship? And again, what is its meaning?

2. Design of Thesis

The main body of the thesis is divided into a section of textual analysis - Chapters II-V; followed by a section of discussion and inter­pretation - Chapters VI-IX. The approach was as follows: During the investigative phase, the collection of data and some generalization and evaluation of the same were given prominence. After determining which characters deserved analysis, a systematic investigation and collection of data on the fourteen heroines was begun: Firstly, the determination of their "outer" (social and environmental) characteristics was followed by the investigation of the "inner" (psychic and behavioural) character­istics.

Next, an investigation of the roles of the female characters was thought to add important information on Bachmann's ideas regarding a woman's place in society. The major "traditional" female social roles of mother, wife, lover, and housewife as well as an important contemporary one - the woman as professional - were included. Added, too, was the "outsider role" as this was thought to be a concept that played an impor­tant part in Bachmann's image of the woman.

Since not only a literary figure's psychic make-up and social position is significant, but also because epic literature as well as dramatic uses the interactions of its figures to reveal character, it was thought essential to study the actions of Bachmann's woman characters. Four fields of interaction were selected for this purpose, two of which
interaction with children and with men) were "traditional" ones; the other two (interaction with woman and society) were again suggested by Bachmann's intensive development of these facets.

The last of the investigative chapters was devoted to the various motivating agents behind these actions and to defining the patterns of development in Bachmann's heroines. The lines of inquiry were divided into inner and outer motivating agents with those defined as inner occupying the larger part of the chapter in accordance with what was felt to be their dominance in Bachmann's presentation. The section on development did not need extensive subdivision as it soon became clear that as far as the development was concerned it was possible to generalize in one or only a few basic patterns of development.

Part two of the thesis begins with discussion of four major questions of importance for the interpretation of Bachmann's image of the female: Firstly, the very striking "traditional" aspect of Bachmann's heroines that was noted in the previous chapters is discussed. Secondly, the value of a biographical interpretation, which appears so tempting in the case of Bachmann, is argued. The third theme - sex-specific versus the allgemein menschliche interpretation of the image of the woman - was chosen because of great importance which Bachmann seems to attach to a sex-specific juxtaposition of the male and female ways of thinking and acting. Lastly, the social versus the individual theme was chosen because of the great emphasis and value which Bachmann's heroines place on individuality.

The two following chapters - VII and VIII - have been devoted to analysis and interpretation of the image and each deals with one of two
central themes that emerged during the study: the theme of freedom and the male-female antithesis. An attempt at a formulation of the purpose of the image of the female in Bachmann's fiction is made in Chapter IX followed by a summary chapter evaluating major interpretations. Chapter XI, finally, is devoted to a comprehensive interpretation focusing on the Todesarten novels.

3. Major Conclusions

Analysis of the data collected on Bachmann's female protagonists appeared to indicate certain patterns throughout her fiction.

The first conclusion reached was that Bachmann's women - and her male characters as well - were outfitted with most of the so-called "typical sex-specific" attributes of their "traditional" social roles. The author's female characters are, on the whole, vain and affectionate; they act irrationally and emotionally. In contrast, her male characters are most often dominant, have professional and technical interests; they act logically and unemotionally.

However, it was also noted that these images were not outdated or conservative clichés as some critics have implied, but, rather, images of a highly symbolic character and serving very specific functions in Bachmann's vision of the human condition. Both - men and women - were found to be representative of two conflicting views of the world, the male representing the world of efficiency, of pragmatism, of rationality, of utilitarianism, of restraint in every sphere of life, of order, purpose and firmness. It soon became obvious that Bachmann - without disqualifying the many achievements brought about by this way of perceiving and dealing
with reality - saw in it a great danger and threat to the individual and his or her inner and emotional life. The male, therefore, appeared frequently in her fiction as the symbolic "murderer" or at least as a psychically retarding or inhibiting factor for the female. Various essay fragments of Bachmann contributed additional insights such as the argument that exploitation of human work is a result of the trend toward efficiency and utilitarianism, thus adding another social dimension to the image of the male. On the other hand, it was noted that the image of the woman in Bachmann's fiction stood for emotional development, for the experience and development of the inner and individual realms of personality; for non-determination and non-fixation of the personality, for limitless expansion into the spheres of emotion.

The theme of freedom was found to permeate all of Bachmann's female images and has been given much attention in this study. It was, therefore, offered as a second major conclusion that almost all of the conflicts of Bachmann's women are based, at least partially, on the search and longing for personal freedom.

In conclusion, the thesis tries to show that Bachmann's characterization of the female was determined neither by "traditional" role clichés nor feminist polemics but represented an image - what we called an anti-Eve image - that offers paths to salvation for men and women. It is an image that ascribes new and deeper meanings to "typically female" characteristics and behaviour - an image that must have appeared even to Bachmann to be somewhat unattainable and which, therefore, seeks to gather and reflect ultimate goals and values rather than to function in a pedagogic mode.
PART II. INVESTIGATION OF THE IMAGE OF THE 
WOMAN IN THE WORKS OF INGEBORG BACHMANN

CHAPTER II

THE FEMALE CHARACTERS

A. Selection of Characters

In order to be able to give a complex definition of the image 
of the woman in the works of Ingeborg Bachmann, one must first of all 
examine the various aspects of the major female characters that appear 
there. The following fourteen women have been selected as major charac­
ters and will be considered collectively:

the narrator (Ich) in Malina
Jennifer in Der gute Gott von Manhattan
Undine in Undine geht
Charlotte, in Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha
Mara in Alles
Hanna in Simultan
Nadja in Probleme Probleme
Beatrix in Ihr glücklichen Augen
Miranda in Drei Wege zum See
Elisabeth in Ein Wildermuth
Gerda in Das Gebell
"die alte Frau Jordan", in Der Fall Franz
Franziska
Franza in Der Fall Franz

They will be studied in the context of their age, their stage-of-life, 
their educational background, their social and professional status, and 
their marital and familial state. Beside these social-environmental 
data, some psychological traits, such as vanity, spontaneity, non-
intellectual behaviour, and intuition, will be examined. The resulting
picture should add some new insights into Ingeborg Bachmann's concept of the female.

B. Social and Environmental Characteristics

1. Age and Life-Stage

With regard to the first point of this investigation, that of age, it is interesting to note that all leading women - with the exception of the elder Frau Jordan - are within the younger mid-age range of approximately twenty to forty years. This is a very significant age range, since it centres on the thirtieth year, a most important turning point in human life in Bachmann's fiction. Although the exact ages are given directly or may be determined indirectly in only seven instances, the approximate age for the other female characters may be closely estimated on the basis of the detailed and often intimate picture of the heroine's behaviour, interests, thoughts, and emotional problems.

Character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The narrator (Ich) in Malina</td>
<td>ca. 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer in Der gute Gott von Manhattan</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undine in Undine geht</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte in Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha</td>
<td>mature woman (middle age)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mara in Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha</td>
<td>mature woman (middle age)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanna in Alles</td>
<td>early twenties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadja in Simultan</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatrix in Probleme Probleme</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miranda in Ihr glücklichen Augen</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elisabeth in Drei Wege zum See</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerda in Ein Wildermuth</td>
<td>younger woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;die alte Frau Jordan&quot; in Das Gebell</td>
<td>49 (but appears &quot;as if in her late thirties&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franziska in Das Gebell</td>
<td>younger woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franza in Der Fall Franza</td>
<td>young woman</td>
</tr>
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What does this observation contribute to our knowledge of Ingeborg Bachmann's image of woman? First of all that this image is a limited
one, limited as far as the full range of a human life is concerned. Experiences, such as girlhood memories, the complex sensations of growing up, the problems of aging, the confrontation with old age, and death, are rarely felt by Bachmann's female characters. Secondly, it might show that the authoress tends to attach so much importance to mid-life experiences that she devotes herself almost exclusively to them, only occasionally letting her women reflect on past experiences of their early stage of life. The narrator in Malina and Franza in Der Fall Franza are examples. One of the major themes in this context is the theme of love and its function in relations with the opposite sex or one's own sex (Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha). This emphasis on a limited range of emotional experiences may also explain why age seems for Bachmann to be a function of emotional or psychic development rather than one of physical time. Elisabeth recalls in Drei Wege zum See: "Zweiundzwanzig Jahre Unterschied. Sie hätte also auch seine Mutter sein können, obwohl ihr dieser Gedanke noch nie gekommen war und auch jetzt für sie ganz fremd war. Es war jedenfalls bedeutungslos, und nur die Rechnung war richtig."¹⁴

2. Educational Background

A further component of Bachmann's image of the woman can be obtained by analyzing the educational background of the heroines in her writings. Although hints about a post-secondary education - mostly of university type - can be found for at least six of the fourteen women studied,¹⁵ Bachmann's women are not typically from academe. With the exception of Jennifer, who studies political science and the first-person narrator in Malina, who began the study of law but left university
before its completion, their training lies in fields which are "traditionally" acceptable for the female; e.g. Charlotte in music, the narrator in Malina in writing, Nadja in linguistics, Elisabeth in journalism and portrait photography (without formal schooling). We can say that Bachmann's women are educated but dislike formal education: Mara hates the academy, Jennifer studies but "wants to see the world", the narrator in Malina mocks dry university lectures and breaks off her studies several times.

Here the Bachmann image of the woman takes on sharper contours. All of the few full or part-time occupational activities of the leading characters are within the range of creative or artistic activities or professions. No "emancipated" careers materialize even in the few cases of a prerequisite training as in the case of the narrator in Malina, who does not intend to work in the judiciary, or in Franza's case, who never does finish her medical training.

Alongside this rejection of arid academic pursuits and affirmation of the creative activities, there emerges a second point of similarity among Bachmann's leading female characters. The social backgrounds of Bachmann's heroines all fall within the upper and lower limits of the middle class. The only exception to this again being the elder Frau Jordan, whose background resembles most nearly that of the lower working class, but who is soon to become a governess to a wealthy family; moreover, she, of all Bachmann's women, attaches great importance to social status. Furthermore, all leading women betray in diction as well as in thought a high level of intelligence. Hanna, Franziska, and
Beatrix with no formal education, show extensive psychological insight and understanding in dealing with others: e.g. Hanna with Fipps, Franziska with the elder Frau Jordan, and Beatrix with Erich. Gerda tells stories with wit, charm, and esprit. The first-person narrator in *Malina* would seem to be a recognized authoress, Charlotte gives concerts, and Elisabeth works with a world-famous art photographer. Even Miranda, on whose background Bachmann is rather silent, attends the *Musikverein* and Sunday concerts regularly.

In sum, the conclusion may be justified that the educational background - whether specifically mentioned or not, formal or informal - seems to place Bachmann's women largely in the category of intelligent, more or less leisured women often with servants. Although some participate actively in creative activities, there are no "working women" of lower social standing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The narrator in <em>Malina</em></td>
<td><em>Gymnasium</em>, university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>studies political sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undine</td>
<td>advanced educational background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>studied music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mara</td>
<td>studies at an academy, probably music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanna</td>
<td>good educational background, no details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadja</td>
<td>has &quot;many diplomas&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatrix</td>
<td>&quot;refused to take formal education&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miranda</td>
<td>no details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elisabeth</td>
<td>&quot;gifted and intelligent&quot;, no college but self educated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerda</td>
<td>no details but &quot;good background&quot;, artistically inclined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;die alte Frau Jordan&quot;</td>
<td>little education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franziska</td>
<td>no details, of good background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franza</td>
<td>medical education, not completed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Social Status and Profession

The middle class background and professional activities of Bachmann's women have already been noted. The investigation of the economic status of her heroines also reveals a narrowly conventional picture of the middle to upper-middle class Central European. None of her women lives below the poverty line, although some, especially the elder Frau Jordan, are not too well off. Very few actually work for their living; Nadja does so, and at times Elisabeth. At least six live off their husband's income, two have other independent sources of income, no specific source of income is indicated for the rest. More than half of Bachmann's major women characters are well off, most can afford to travel extensively, only two - the elder Frau Jordan and Beatrix - have financial problems, still both cannot really be called poor. Once again, one gains the impression, that most Bachmann heroines exist within the middle or upper-middle class. The frequently reappearing socialite names such as the Jordans, the Altenwyls, Goldmanns, Mandels even v. Karajan, the recurring background of international hotels and spas, the atmosphere of a society of leisure, e.g. the Wolfgangsee, Italian beach resorts, Cafe Sacher in Vienna, support this impression.

The second point, that of profession, has been dealt with to some extent under the heading of education. Only two of all the leading female characters - Nadja and Elisabeth - are professionals. Of the rest, no occupation outside housework is noted or, as in the case of Charlotte and the first-person narrator in Malina, it is a creative or artistic occupation whose main raison d'être is self-realization.
is also worth noting, that the reader meets the few "working women" only during their leisure time, on vacations but rarely "on the job", although some - especially Nadja - speak extensively about their work. Once more it seems that a rather "traditional" image of the women gains shape. The lack of occupational or professional activities among Bachmann's women might certainly indicate the acceptance of a "traditional" male-orientated view of the world on the part of the authoress. This is notably different from the female characters of such contemporary West-German writers as Karin Struck, Ruth Rehmann, Gabriele Wohmann, not to mention such East-German writers as Christa Wolf or Irmtraud Morgner.

Liberation through work - one may conclude - is not a Bachmann theme; her heroines try to achieve self-realization by other means.

4. Marital and Familial Status

All of Bachmann's leading women characters are either single or are partners in defective marriages. Eight of the fourteen women studied here are single. Among these eight is one elderly widow - the elder Frau Jordan - the rest seem to lead a rather unconventional life; six have had more than one heterosexual love affair, some, such as Undine and Elisabeth, have had several. Nearly all the single and several of the married women might even be labelled promiscuous. Some of the single women were either "nearly" married, or were once unhappily married. Elisabeth was married to a homosexual. Most have personality problems in adjusting to permanent relationships. All the women still married in the stories or novels have marriages that
are severely damaged. There are no happy marriages. A. Weber has noted this phenomenon. He draws different conclusions from ours, however,29 when he comments:


What conclusions may one draw from the above? (The biographical aspect of this - perhaps the most important point - will be discussed later in a larger context).31 Firstly, Ingeborg Bachmann's women see marriage as an infringement on personal freedom and independence. Undine, Nadja, Elisabeth, Mara and Charlotte express this point clearly. However, since these women must go on searching for love - Undine: "war ich verurteilt zu lieben" - for absolute love, they are in a dilemma, as they must search for this love outside the institution of marriage or, in marrying, sacrifice their freedom and independence. This problem is further complicated, since Ingeborg Bachmann seems to see marriage, with its formal strictures, also as a hindrance to the achievement of absolute love. Charlotte reflects on her marriage:

Wie immer eine Ehe auch geführt wird - sie kann nicht willkürlich geführt werden, nicht erfinderisch, kann keine Neuerung, Änderung vertragen, weil Ehe eingehen schon heißt, in ihre Form eingehen.32
A third characteristic that Bachmann's women have in common in respect to their marital status, is one of psychology. Bachmann's heroines are emotionally unstable as far as love is concerned and in this sense, too, may be seen as exhibiting "traditional" and romantic female traits.

They are driven by emotions and most of the time are disappointed by "mediocre" and selfish men. They despise or pity most men as weaklings, who are not able to operate at "higher" levels of human interaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>character</th>
<th>single</th>
<th>married</th>
<th>widowed</th>
<th>divorced</th>
<th>adultery</th>
<th>negative</th>
<th>unhappy</th>
<th>experiences with opp. sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>narrator in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malina</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undine</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lesbian</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mara</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lesbian</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanna</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadja</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatrix</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miranda</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elisabeth</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerda</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;die alte Frau Jordan&quot;</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franziska</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franza</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chart seems to indicate that negative experiences with the opposite sex and unhappiness caused by broken marriages or unsatisfactory love relationships are typical of Bachmann's heroines.

C. Psychic and Behavioural Characteristics

In the second part of this chapter an analysis will be attempted of the behavioural characteristics of Ingeborg Bachmann's women and of
their attitude toward the norms of female social roles. The following catalogue of male and female characteristics quoted by I. Plenge as "typical" sex-specific characteristics have been used as a point of departure:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>male</th>
<th>versus</th>
<th>female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>denkend - rational</td>
<td>schön - beautiful</td>
<td>körperbezogen - body-conscious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>logisch - logical</td>
<td>eitel - vain</td>
<td>schmuckliebend - love of self-adornment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sachgerichtet - objective</td>
<td></td>
<td>anmutig - graceful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produktiv - productive</td>
<td></td>
<td>charmant - charming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>schöpferisch - creative</td>
<td></td>
<td>gefühlshaft - emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>geistig - intellectual</td>
<td></td>
<td>sensibel - sensitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hingabe- und liebesfähig -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>devoted and loving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>zärtlich - tender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>umsorgend und hegend - caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and protective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Vanity

Der Tag wird kommen, an dem die Frauen rotgoldene Augen haben, rotgoldenes Haar, und die Poesie ihres Geschlechts wird wiedererschaffen werden . . .

It appears, that Ingeborg Bachmann's heroines conform well to "traditional" role and behaviour expectations. They try to be beautiful, care for externals such as hairstyle, cosmetics, dresses and attractive appearance. Indeed, for Ingeborg Bachmann's characters these things represent part of the essence of womanhood.

The figure of Beatrix in Probleme Probleme illustrates this point well: " . . . und die einzigen Ausgaben, die ihr allerdings wichtiger waren als alles andere, wichtiger als Essen auch, waren die für den Friseur und für ihre Kosmetika." The coiffure salon of René is
"the only place in the world" where she feels right at home. And the narrator recalls: "Noch ehe sie sich bei Frau Yvonne anmeldete, blickte sie schon um sich, in alle Spiegel, sie fand sich wieder und fand ihr wirkliches Zuhause." At the same beauty parlor, Beatrix has a nervous breakdown, because she is dissatisfied with the beautician's handiwork. In short, Beatrix is the very representative of that type of female, whose image is presently being attacked by many contemporary female writers as socially enforced and not representative of true female identity. A juxtaposition of the following two quotations, one from Bachmann's Probleme Probleme the other from a critical study on supposedly sex-specific behaviour will illustrate this point:

Laut würde sie aber heute einmal zu Erich etwas anderes sagen: Ich bin manchmal richtig in mich vernarrt.

Der Frau ist es dagegen gestattet, ihren Körper lustvoll zu pflegen, was oft in einen übertriebenen Narzissmus ausartet. Von der kosmetischen Industrie ständig angestachelt, macht sie aus jedem Make-up fast eine kultische Handlung. Ihre Schönheit erweist sich sogar nicht selten als "Attrappe", weil der Mann vom Äußeren auf das Innere schließt und hinter einer "schönen Larve" einen edlen Charakter vermutet.

Although Nadja does wear jeans and an ill-fitting blouse during her trip with Frankel, the reader is told, that her real identity matches the Vogue or Glamour designs, that she appeared, "damals im Hilton, mit den falschen Wimpern, einer dekorativen Stola und einer leicht abgewinkelten Hand für Handküsse, . . ." The reader meets many of Bachmann's women, repairing their make-up before a date, applying eyeshadow and, often, false eyelashes. The narrator in Malina confesses:


Ingeborg Bachmann's women are "feminine", conforming in all the above mentioned ways to "traditional" role behaviour of women: vain in respect to their beauty and always conscious of physical appearance. In other respects, however, they do not conform, as will be demonstrated later. They are not little Noras. These are not role characteristics from or to which they are trying to escape, as some critics have suggested. It should also be noted, that there are moral values or value judgements attached to, and qualities inferred, from these characteristics and modes of behaviour. Vanity is an essential substance of the women portrayed by Ingeborg Bachmann. Furthermore, we observe that these sex-role behaviour traits appears to be more intense during periods of happiness.

To sum up: Ingeborg Bachmann's women show many of the "traditional" female characteristics of which vanity is thought to be a very
typical and important one. In this respect, Bachmann's heroines would seem to be very feminine in the "traditional" sense. This image of the female is very much in contrast to the one presented by many contemporary female authors. Moreover, this is the very image many contemporary, socially engaged authoresses attack strongly as role behaviour enforced on women by a male dominated society and its economic system.  

2. Emotionalism

Even more characteristic of Bachmann's women than physical vanity is emotionalism (enthusiasm, spontaneous action, sensibility). Frau Novak's statement on the narrator's horoscope in Malina is classic in its formulation: "...das Männliche und das Weibliche, der Verstand und das Gefühl, die Produktivität und die Selbstzerstörung treten auf eine merkwürdige Weise hervor." And the narrator compares herself to Malina thus: "Dieses Gleichgewicht, dieser Gleichmut, der in ihm ist, wird mich noch zur Verzweiflung treiben, weil ich in allen Situationen reagiere, mich an jedem Gefühlssaufbruch beteiligen lasse und die Verluste erleide, die Malina unbeteiligt zur Kenntnis nimmt." The whole of the first chapter of Malina "Glücklich mit Ivan" is just such an illustration of a very extreme emotionalism. The word glücklich appears eighteen times in the three pages 58-60. Helmut Heißenbüttel, for instance, bases his whole interpretation of Malina on the emotional issue, but without the sex-specific component. He sees Malina as a psychological description of Innenwelt:

Es heißt, daß alles, was geschildert wird, nicht als etwas geschildert wird, was von der Erzählerin sinnlich wahrgenommen worden ist, sondern als etwas, das Bild geworden ist für die Regungen einer Seele, für Emotionen, für die emotionale
Vermittlung von Welt und für die Reibungen und Konflikte, weil die ganz auf sich selbst konzentrierte Emotionalität nicht Genüge findet an dem, woran sie sich entzündet, weil sie ihren selbst herrlichen Anspruch nicht befriedigen kann.

Diese Geschichte des inneren, des emotionalen Konflikts wird in drei Stufen erzählt. Kapitel 1, "Glücklich mit Ivan" hat die Form einer Liebesgeschichte; Kapitel 2, "Der dritte Mann", rekapituliert einen Vaterkomplex; Kapitel 3, "Von letzten Dingen", führt ins emotionale Verstummen, in den, so könnte man sagen, Seelentod ... Was Ingeborg Bachmann erzählt, ist in einer neuen Version das, was sie einst im Hörspiel vom "Guten Gott von Manhattan" zu sagen versuchte. Der gute Gott war dort ein guter Gott, weil er die, die von Emotionalität beherrscht wurden, aus dem Konflikt mit dem realen Leben entrißkt. Der Tod der Liebenden war in der Hingabe an die Emotionalität selbst begründet.51

Here, the fact that Jan does not die, that he becomes rückfällig, also seems to lend support to the view that this characteristic, too, is essentially sex-specific. This view is supported - in a different context - by H. G. Funke, who writes in the series Interpretationen zum Deutschunterricht:

Nicht der Mann, sondern die Frau ist genügend vorbereitet, das Notwendige zu tun, um ihre Person auszulöschen für den Übertritt in eine andere Existenz ... Die Aktivität geht von Jennifer aus, sie ist die Fordernde, der Mann bleibt passiv. Das Motiv der stärkeren Position klingt an und bestätigt sich am Schluß, wenn Jennifers Kräfte über die des Mannes hinauswachsen und sie in der Spur ihres endlos gewordenen Gefühls bis ans Ende aller Tage (66) geht.52

With few exceptions, it is the female in Ingeborg Bachmann's works, who is able to experience and give expression to emotion. Even more important, she is the one who is able to induce emotion in the male.53

Very few men in Bachmann's fiction are capable of sharing emotion; they have to be led by a woman to this experience. Undine in Undine geht, perhaps, is - in this respect - the most impressive of all of Bachmann's heroines. Here, emotion fuses clearly with such key aspects
Indeed, Bachmann's view of emotion shows traces of Romanticism: the destructiveness of passionate love - including the destruction of one's self which is associated with extreme Romantic emotion as early as the legend of Tristan and Isolde. Since it is the nature of passionate love - of Eros - to consume itself with desire, with yearning for the infinite, final consummation can be found only in death, the ultimate reunion with the infinite. The radio-play Der gute Gott von Manhattan is Bachmann's treatment of this theme. Also, one may detect points of analogy between the yearning of passionate love for the infinite and Bachmann's Grenzübertritt. The demonic element of Romantic emotion appears to reveal itself in the characterization of Wanda, one of the secondary female characters in Ein Wildermuth:

... ein Geschlecht von dunkelhaarigen blassen Frauen mit trüben großem Blick, kurzsichtigen Augen, fast ohne Sprache, ... Wie an das Starren eines düsteren ernsten Raubvogels erinnere ich mich an ihr Starren und wie an etwas fürchterlich Feierliches, als unsere Augen nicht mehr weiter konnten und wir miteinander weggingen, ohne ein Wort, ohne uns zu berühren. ... Als wir ihr Zimmer erreicht hatten, war ich fast bewußtlos.

It seems clear that Ingeborg Bachmann sees emotion as a positive human characteristic, despite its occasioning unhappiness or suffering for the subject. The description of Fipps' parents in Alles as two "petrified people" carries negative connotations. Furthermore, Bachmann, like the
Romantics, finds emotion to be a means of self-realization coining her own term Grenzübertritt also for the condition of having reached the absolute state of emotion. Yet Bachmann realizes at the same time the necessity of "ordered emotion" - as the good god expresses it in Der gute Gott von Manhattan - of emotion without extremes in order for man to continue as a social being. Bachmann considers this, however, to be an inferior condition to that of Grenzübertritt.

Lastly, cruelty as one extreme form of emotionalism should be considered. Here we find only one indication of the "traditional" view that women are cruel: the hope of the narrator's father in Malina, "... Melanie werde auch an Grausamkeit einmal alle anderen Frauen übertreffen." However, the analysis of the texts does not support a hypothesis that cruelty is an essential element in the emotional make-up of Bachmann's heroines. On the contrary, there seem to be distinctly masochistic traits at work in their interaction with men. This is in line with the views of those who emphasize the masochistic element of female sexuality as a counterpart to "male sadism".

3. Irrationality

A third major quality of the women portrayed by Bachmann is a frequent irrational, illogical and anti-intellectual manner of reasoning and behaving. Thus, many of Bachmann's women frequently act irrationally and their thought processes do not conform to the male standards of logic. Here again - as on previous occasions - one finds "traditional" and "typical" female characteristics which their protagonists proclaim to be superior to, and more real than those of the male.
Gerda for instance has her own concept of truth which in the view of her husband, Judge Wildermuth, conflicts with every rule of reason and logic. She calls these constantly shifting versions and interpretations of her experiences and thoughts a "different and higher truth":


Wie wahr! Wie wahr!60

Similarly, Undine accuses men of using a utilitarian and hypocritical type of logic, which she calls inferior to her own:


It is the female who, by her "irrationality", can lead men - some chosen few - to this higher level of understanding, can teach them to apply their male logic in a new context. There would seem to be an echo of the Ewig-Weibliche present here as well as the paradox of timelessness within time and of eternal life within mortal existence. This paradox is resolved at this point by Undine when she recalls:

This topic - the female reasoning - re-emerges in the discussions between Ivan and the narrator in *Malina*. Ivan accuses the narrator of the overuse of Beispielsätze and teaches her to avoid them. 63 Ivan on the other hand, uses - according to the narrator - Lehrsätze; both of these terms appear to fall into specific categories and seem to reinforce the issue, "male" rationalism and pure, theoretical logic versus the "female", reality orientated, intuitive way of thinking. The narrator in *Malina* reflects on this point:

Kopfsätze haben wir viele, haufenweise, wie die Telefonsätze, wie die Schachsätze, wie die Sätze über das ganze Leben. Es fehlen uns noch viele Satzgruppen, über Gefühle haben wir noch keinen einzigen Satz, weil Ivan keinen ausspricht, weil ich es nicht wage, den ersten Satz dieser Art zu machen, doch ich denke nach über diese ferne fehlende Satzgruppe, trotz aller guten Sätze, die wir schon machen können. 64

Ivan sees the narrator's head as a "Kopf voller Salat und Bohnen und Erbsen, . . ." 65 he, too, seems to hold the "traditional" view of female irrationalism and confusion of thought. It should also be noted, that the narrator loses constantly in chess games with Ivan. This is of significance, if one considers chess to be a test of abstract reasoning-power. Parts of Bruno Schärer's interpretation of the story *Alles* appear to support this antithesis in Bachmann's works:

Summing up, it is certainly no coincidence, that the female in Bachmann's works always thinks, argues, reasons and acts along certain lines which are antithetical to those of her male protagonist. It is usually an emotional, and frequently a seemingly irrational way of thinking, that arrives, however, in the end at a better understanding of life. Also, on some occasions, the women are able to induce this "higher" form of perception in their male partners.67

That this aspect of the image of the female is also a basic point in Ingeborg Bachmann's thinking appears to be supported by a quote from her article on Ludwig Wittgenstein "Zu einem Kapital der jüngsten Philosophiegeschichte":

Ihr analytisches Werkzeug, die Logik, erfuhr schon gegen Ende des vergangenen Jahrhunderts eine tiefgreifende Umgestaltung durch die Verwendung von Symbolen nach Analogie der Mathematik. . . . Die Mathematik war als Zweig der Logik entdeckt. "Die Logik der Welt, die die Sätze der Logik in den Tautologien zeigen, zeigt die Mathematik in den Gleichungen" (6.22), formuliert Wittgenstein. Verstehen wir es richtig: Wie die Zahlen in der Mathematik nicht Gegenstände unserer Erfahrungswelt bedeuten und die Geometrie nicht den wirklichen Raum beschreibt, so beschreiben die Symbole der Logik nicht die Gegenstände und deren Beziehungen. Wir ordnen sie, wenn wir denken, ihnen nur zu. Der Neopositivismus nimmt also einerseits am Empirismus, anderseits an Kant eine empfindliche Korrektur vor: Die Gesetze der Logik sind zwar a priori, aber ihre Aussagen sind zugleich leer und nichtssagend; das heißt also, daß auch Kants These, sie seien synthetisch, unhaltbar ist. Die einzigen Sätze, die sinnvoll sind und etwas besagen, sind Erfahrungssätze, . . . 68

If we try to correlate the Sätze der Logik with what has been developed in this study as Bachmann's view of "male thinking", then the Erfahrungssätze based on the sensual experience would represent the female ways of expressing truth.69
CHAPTER III
THE SOCIAL ROLES

This study of Bachmann's major female characters will now focus on another aspect of that complex image, namely the various roles that these women assume. Six female roles, two of which are relatively "untraditional", have been selected as representative for these women. They show Bachmann's heroines as mothers, wives, lovers, housewives, professionals and as outsiders.

A. The Role of the Mother

The mother-role - popularly respected as the most important and ancient role of all - has recently been subjected to critical re-examinations. An excerpt from Ethel M. Albert's "The Unmothered Woman" is representative:

. . . The notion that women are fit for nothing but motherhood, . . . all this and the rest that goes with it sounds oddly familiar. A moment's thought will tell us that the radical Freudian model of the female, far from being the latest thing in science, is a faithful replica of an ancient, patriarchal tradition. Extending from Asia to Europe and part of Africa and exported to the New World, it is a time-honored attitude that dishonours women, no matter what they do or do not do.

However, this trend within the field of sociology does not find an extensive echo in German literature. True, here one rarely finds the Mütterchen type as in the poem "Mein Mütterchen" by Albert Sixtus:

28
Mütterchen hat viel zu tun,
darf nicht rasten, darf nicht ruh'n:
kochen, backen, waschen, flicken,
putzen, scheuern, nähen und stricken,
spät am Abend, früh am Morgen,
immer schaffen, immer sorgen.
Mütterchen, du bist mein Stern, 72
Mütterchen, ich helf' dir gern.

But despite the tendency to find a new role for women there exists
a mother image 73 - even in the writings of writers suggesting a new
role for women - that is presented mostly without the polemic and
intensity which pervades many non-fiction tracts on the subject
today. In light of this, the peculiar treatment given to the
mother-role by Bachman is even more remarkable. There are very
few mothers among her women: Hanna in Alles and the elder Frau
Jordan in Das Gebell. It seems worth noting that none of Bachmann's
heroines seem to have had a close relationship with their mothers -
the parental relationships, positive and negative, which occupy them
are with father-figures. Many Bachmann heroines, however, do express
their opinions on motherhood, and in so doing create a somewhat
ambivalent image.

Undine in Undine geht formulates the most negative opinion
on the subject. She feels that motherhood depends on the will of
men, that children are produced to create a life-purpose for the
parents and also for sentimental reasons, and that motherhood is
one of the poor substitutes of a mediocre existence for a free and
fulfilled life. There also seems to be an undertone of contempt,
even of frustration and envy, present:

Ja, dazu nehmt ihr euch die Frauen auch, damit sie Kinder
kriegen, da werdet ihr mild, wenn sie furchtsam und
glücklich herumgehen mit den Kindern in ihrem Leib. Oder ihr verbietet euren Frauen, Kinder zu haben, wollt ungestört sein . . . Ihr Betrüger und ihr Betrogenen. Versucht das nicht mit mir. Mit mir nicht.74

Although the whole story is a sustained indictment of men, Undine certainly includes all women who do not share her views in this criticism. Here, children and motherhood appear to be detrimental to the freedom and independence of women. A more sophisticated criticism of the mother-child relationship seems to be expressed in Das Gebell.75 The elder Frau Jordan favours memories of her foster-child Kiki over her own son. Neither relationship depicts the happiness of motherhood since the child she loves is not her own and her relationship with her own son affords her no real satisfaction. A. Weber, besides suggesting self-deception on the part of the elder Frau Jordan, comments:

Sie liebt Leo nicht, sie fürchtet ihn, . . . und doch schuftet sie für seinen Aufstieg. Selbstbestätigung? Befriedigung ihrer Wünsche im Kind? Unterwerfung? Liebesentzug und Mißtrauen stehen zwischen Mutter und Sohn.76

The only other mother-figure among Bachmann's women, Hanna, is just as defective as the elder Frau Jordan. Although Hanna appears to be a good mother in the conventional sense, her motherhood becomes a tragedy not only because of the accidental death of her son Fipps, but also because of his evilness: "Denn das Böse, wie wir es nennen, steckte in dem Kind wie eine Eiterquelle."77

The most positive representation of a "mother-child" image is the narrator in Malina:

. . . Ivan ist mit Béla ins Bad gegangen, András strampelt und will zuerst herunter von mir, dann küßt er mich plötzlich auf die Nase, ich kusse András auf die Nase, wir reiben unsere Nasen aneinander, ich möchte, daß es nie aufhört, daß András nicht genug bekommt, wie ich nicht genug bekomme vom
But here, again, it is a relationship with a strange child. Furthermore, some of this mother-love seems to be motivated by the fact that Béla and András are the children of Ivan, with whom she is desperately in love.

In conclusion, it may be stated that the mother-image is not a dominant characteristic of Bachmann's heroines. Where it does exist, it shows defects, just as the marriages of her heroines have been seen to do. These leading female characters have, in general, no genuine interest in children. Except for Hanna in *Alles*, none of the younger women is a mother. It would seem that here, too, they are too selfish. It would also seem that motherhood—because of its close ties with family life and the male—would, in Bachmann's terms of reference, inhibit personal development and independence.  

B. The Wife-Role

Some ground in this context has been covered already in Chapter II. Somewhat more prominent than the mother-role is that of the wife. Not counting widows and divorcees, one finds six married women among the fourteen characters who form the basis of this investigation. They are the narrator in *Malina*, Charlotte, Hanna, Franza, Gerda, and Franziska. But let us start the discussion of this role with a rather outspoken statement by the narrator in "Unter Mör dern und Irren" on married women:

> ... daß die Frauen jetzt zu Hause die Betten aufschlugen und sich zur Ruhe begaben, weil sie mit der Nacht nichts anzufangen wüßten. Barfuß oder in Pantoffeln, mit aufgebundenen Haaren und müden Gesichtern gingen die Frauen zu Hause herum, drehten den Gashahn ab und sahen furchtvoll unter das Bett und in die Kasten, besänftigten mit zerstreuten Worten die Kinder oder setzen sich verdrossen ans Radio, um
This image of the wife is not far from Undine's judgement of wives as beings whose suppression and exploitation are of their own making. In addition, this quotation seems to indicate a murder by thought that corresponds to the male's murderous action and behaviour toward the female discussed below under the heading "the female as victim".

Of all Bachmann's women by far the most developed wife-role is that of the narrator in Malina. It exhibits both "traditional" and emancipated behaviour. Among the "traditional" role behaviours one finds the following characteristics well developed:

1. Dependence

The narrator depends on Malina not only to provide the household finances - though she does get a small allowance for her own use - but also to manage them:

... ich müßte Malina bitten um das Geld, ihn anrufen. ...
aber zu guter Letzt ist das Kuvert aufgetaucht, es steckt unübersehbar im Großen Duden, ... Nie vergißt er etwas, ...
... Im rechten Moment liegen die Kuverts in der Küche für Lina, auf dem Schreibtisch für Fräulein Jellinek, in der alten Kassette in meinem Schlafzimmer finden sich ein paar Scheine für den Friseur und alle paar Monate ein paar größere Scheine für Schuhe und Wäsche und Kleider. ... Ich
weiß nicht, auch wenn manchmal kein Geld mehr im Haus ist, wie Malina es immer fertigbringt, uns beide durch diese teuren Zeiten zu bringen, die Miete wird von ihm pünktlich bezahlt, meistens auch Licht, Wasser, Telefon und Autoversicherung, .

Without Malina she forgets to feed the cat, to pay the secretary her full wages, lets household stocks dwindle. Malina is expected to solve difficult problems for her and to give advice. During the narrator's trip to the Wolfgangsee, Malina has to rescue her from an embarrassing situation.

2. Respect for Husband

Another "traditional" role characteristic of a wife is an exaggerated respect for her husband. Critics have noted a patriarchal element in the Malina-narrator relationship. "Er ist die Inkarnation der Vater-Sehnsucht, er hat die Strenge und Vollkommenheit des Wunsch-Vaters, den man gleichwohl nicht erträgt," writes G. Blöcker in his observations on Malina. Malina sets the rules for the topics of conversation, which the narrator accepts (p. 131). He is credited by the narrator with a superior ability of comprehension (p. 128), and is called upon to provide support and direction (p. 129). Although there are signs of rebellion, the narrator appears to display a rib-of-Adam mentality toward Malina during most of the novel.

3. Good Housekeeping

The housekeeper part of the "traditional" wife-role appears to be quite prominent throughout the novel. Although the narrator has the help of a maid and a secretary, she performs typical household chores: setting and clearing the table (p. 350), provides varied and appetizing dishes (p. 82), does her own sewing (p. 48).
In contrast, there are some "emancipated" elements present in the wife-role of the narrator:

1. Professionalism and Intellectualism

These are contemporary trends hitherto not found to be part of the "traditional" image of the wife. The narrator engages her own secretary, she handles - albeit in a not very businesslike fashion - a large correspondence, and deals with reporters (pp. 48-90, 70ff., p. 89). She attends public lectures (p. 78), reads extensively (p. 94), and owns a large library from which cookbooks are noticeably absent (p. 81). In addition, as mentioned above, she is a professional writer.

2. Independence

Proof of the psychological complexity of Bachmann's female characters is once again given by such contrasting qualities within one person as dependence and independence. Such a modernized two-soul concept is typical of Bachmann's heroines. In Malina the narrator takes the initiative in seeking relationships with men-friends. She keeps her lover openly and meets him in Malina's apartment. She travels alone and shows, during one part of the novel, a supremely uncommitted attitude toward Malina. Other examples are Charlotte in Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha and Elisabeth in Drei Wege zum See.

3. Lack of Family-Orientation

Like other Bachmann wives, the narrator in Malina lacks any interest in family. She is not a part of an extended family and, having no children of her own; one can hardly speak even of a family-nucleus.
From this analysis of the figure of the narrator in *Malina*, two facts seem to materialize concerning the wife-role: firstly, the composite nature of the female image, incorporating "traditional" and emancipated qualities which we have observed elsewhere, emerges here, too. Secondly, the oppressive and limiting nature of any social contract or obligation, here of a man-wife relationship, has been once again developed. The role of the wife is portrayed in this work not in the emotional rhetoric of Undine or of the narrator of *Unter Mör dern und Irren*, but by a more sophisticated depiction of character.

H. Heissenbüttel concludes from similar observations: "Im absoluten Herrschaftsanspruch der emotionalisierten Subjektivität ist die Integration in den gesellschaftlichen Zusammenhang unmöglich geworden." Similar, if not so extensively developed, elements make up the wife-image of the other married characters: Gerda, Hanna, Franza, Franziska, and Charlotte. The sacrificial nature of the wife-role, however, is somewhat less psychologized than in *Malina* or *Der Fall Franza*, both parts of the cycle of novels with the indicative title *Todesarten*. Also the means of solving this dilemma are different. The continued ambivalence of Bachmann's female role-creations, as far as the family is concerned, has been criticized by A. Weber in "Didaktische Perspektiven zum Werk Ingeborg Bachmanns", as follows:

Allerdings fehlt der Sinn für die Funktion der Ehe, der Familie, der Kinder - was offenbar zu den Konventionen gehört - es fehlt deren adäquate Darstellung, ja auch Problematisierung.

However, his claim of one-sidedness in Bachmann's presentation of this topic would not seem to be relevant as the authoress does not share his system of values.
C. The Role of the Lover

Within the role-configurations of Bachmann's women the one most frequently and extensively developed is that of the lover. Nearly all of Bachmann's women appear in this role. A study of Bachmann's women in the role of lover yields five characteristics which, in varying combinations, make up her image of woman-as-lover. Firstly, Bachmann's heroines can be highly emotional lovers trying to experience limitless passion. They are vehement lovers with extreme sensual intensity, showing in this respect, too, a kinship with their counterparts in German Romantic Literature. Jennifer exclaims in *Der gute Gott von Manhattan*: "Könnt ich mehr tun, mich aufreißen für dich und in deinen Besitz übergehen, mit jeder Faser und wie es sein soll: mit Haut und mit Haar." And a short time later she whispers to the good God:

Ich liebe. Und ich bin außer mir. Ich brenne bis in meine Eingeweide vor Liebe und verbrenne die Zeit zu Liebe, in der er hier sein wird und noch nicht hier ist. Ich bin gesamtmelt über den Augenblick hinaus bis in meinen letzten und liebe ihn.91

Undine uses an impressive metaphor to communicate her state of passion:

"Dann sind alle Wasser über die Ufer getreten, die Flüsse haben sich erhoben, die Seerosen sind gleich hundertweis erblüht und ertrunken, und das Meer war ein machtvoller Seufzer, es schlug, schlug und rannte und rollte gegen die Erde an, daß seine Lefzen trieften von weißem Schaum."92

Similar language may also be found in *Malina*. These lovers aim for a state of absolute passion and it is one of the few themes in Bachmann's literature that has been discussed extensively in the secondary literature. One of the more substantial contributions, that of Gunnilla Bergsten, conveys the main point and may stand as representative for the majority of studies on the topic:
Doch an die Liebe der beiden [Jennifer und Jan] darf kein normaler Maßstab angelegt werden, handelt es sich hier doch um das, was Ingeborg Bachmann an anderer Stelle "die unmögliche Liebe" nennt, - eine Liebe, die in sich selbst den Keim zum eigenen Untergang trägt, eine Liebe, die in ihrer Intensität und Feurigkeit nicht nur ein Loch in die "verkrustete Welt" brennt, sondern sich selbst aufzehren muß. Sie schließt, nach den Worten des guten Gottes, einen grenzübertretenden, einen anderen Zustand in sich. Sie mache nicht nur untauglich für das Leben, sondern sei schlechthin lebensfeindlich. Ihr fehle nicht nur die Zukunft, sondern jegliche Zeitdimension. Sie sei nicht auf Gemeinschaft und auf Fortpflanzung des Lebens ausgerichtet, sondern auf restlose Einschmelzung und Austilgung des Lebens.93

G. Bergsten, too, arrives at the conclusion that a normal marriage is impossible for this type of lover. Unlike us, however, she does not seem to trace the cause for this to the negative aspect of marriage (as we will), but to the destructive nature of absolute love. Secondly, one frequently finds an element of compulsion closely connected with this type of extreme emotional love. Bachmann's emotional lovers seem to be victims of an inescapable fate, which they recognize as pathological or destructive. In Der gute Gott von Manhattan it is the good God and his demons, the squirrels, that manipulate human life. Compulsion is certainly reflected by Jennifer's outcry: "Errette mich! . . . Errette mich! Von dir und von mir. Mach, daß wir uns nicht mehr bekämpfen und daß ich stiller werde zu dir."94 Similarly, one finds references to compulsion in Undine geht: "Ja. Ja. Wenn das Geständnis abgelegt war, war ich verurteilt zu lieben; wenn ich eines Tages freikam aus der Liebe, mußte ich zurück ins Wasser gehen, ..."95 Strangely enough, little mention has been made of this point in the secondary literature on Bachmann. Marianne Thalmann96 heads a section of an article on Das dreißigste Jahr with "Sie ist verurteilt zu lieben" without elaborating on the reasons for the situation. H. G. Funke, on the other
hand, seems to indicate thoughts along these lines in some of his remarks about the role of magic and enchantment in the play:


Lack of self controlled action and a feeling of subjugation to forces beyond one's control are ideas which seem congruent with the symbolism of the squirrels Billy and Frankie when they manipulate the wires of the puppets on their little stage in Central Park.

Thirdly, another prominent feature of Bachmann's female lovers is that of subjugation to the male which evidences more than a hint of masochism:

Jennifer:
Weil jeder sehen kann, daß ich bald ganz verloren sein werde, und fühlen kann, daß ich ohne Stolz bin und vergehe nach Erniedrigung; daß ich mich jetzt hinrichten liebe von dir oder wegwerfen wie ein Zeug nach jedem Spiel, das du ersinnst.98

A little later Jennifer exclaims:

Jennifer langsam, während sie sich auf die Knie wirft:
Oh, das ist wahr. Nie mehr.
Jan entsetzt:
Was tust du? Tu das nicht?!
Jennifer:

And in the scene Auf der Straße:
Jan:
   Ich sollte dich schlagen vor allen Leuten, schlagen werde
   ich dich . . .
Jennifer: 100

Similar remarks are made by the narrator in Malina: "Ich werde ein
Gnadengesuch schreiben, wie die Verurteilten, die keine Begnadigung zu
erwarten haben."101, or by Anna in Ein Geschäft mit Träumen: "Ich will
nichts, ich will nur zu Ihren Füßen sitzen dürfen, Ihre Sklavin sein,
Ihre Befehle erfüllen dürfen, . . ."102 This element of masochism, gen­
erally ignored by critics, was mentioned at least in passing by W.
Hädecke: ": . . eine Zigeunerin . . . kann aber aus Jennifers Hand nichts
lesen, der Hand, in die Jan (auf Jennifers Wunsch, auch wenn sie sich
darüber beklagt) seine Nägel geschlagen hat - vorausdeutendes, an die
Kreuzigung erinnerndes Zeichen, das nicht frei von Peinlichkeit ist,
zumal Jennifer es laut, fast masochistisch bejammert - und genießt."103

A fourth characteristic of Bachmann's lovers is that of the
"passive lover". This point, too, has been all but ignored by the secon­
dary literature. Where love or the lover is discussed in Bachmann
research, they have been discussed only within the framework of the emo­
tional lover along the lines discussed above. The passive lover, however,
would seem to be not only a frequent character, but also one of considerable
psychological significance. At least four of the fourteen female protag­
onists can be placed, fully or partially, in this category: Hanna, Nadja,
Elisabeth, and Beatrix. Some fall into both categories, that of the emo­
tional-active lover and that of the passive lover. What is meant here by
the term "passive lover"? It denotes the Bachmann heroine who engages
willingly in love making without emotional attachment toward the partner,
or even, with a feeling of repulsion toward the man. The following excerpts will illustrate the point:

Nadja:
Im Zimmer, als er sie umarmte, begann sie wieder zu zittern, wollte nicht, konnte nicht, sie fürchtete zu ersticken oder ihm unter den Händen wegzusterben, aber dann wollte sie es doch, es war besser, von ihm erstickt und vernichtet zu werden und damit alles zu vernichten, was in ihr unheilbar geworden war, sie kämpfte nicht mehr, ließ es mit sich geschehen, sie blieb fühllos liegen, drehte sich ohne ein Wort von ihm weg und schlief sofort ein.104

Elisabeth:
... sie sei völlig frigide, ... so konnten diese Männer doch nicht wissen, daß sie zu ihnen ging, wie man sich in einen Operationssaal begibt, um sich den Blinddarm herausnehmen zu lassen, nicht gerade beunruhigt, aber auch ohne Enthusiasmus, im Vertrauen darauf, daß ein erfahrener Chirurg, oder, in ihrem Fall, ein erfahrener Mann, mit einer solchen Kleinigkeit schon fertig würde.105

Beatrix:
... Beatrix fand diese Berührungen peinlich, sie war einfach zu alt dafür. ... seit sie erwachsen geworden war und sich heftig geweigert hatte, zu studieren oder in eine Ausbildung zu gehen, kam sie nie mehr auf die Idee, sich mit einem Mann einzulassen, und ihre Abneigung gegen diese grauenvolle Normalität, der sich alle unterwarfen, fiel zusammen mit der Entdeckung einer Perversion, ihres fetischistischen Schlafs.

... und Erich sagte ... sie sei eben eine demi-vierge.106

Lastly, many of Bachmann's lovers display a longing for safety and protection, which they seek from their partners. Jennifer's replies in the scene Im Freien are a case in point: "So bin ich geschützt. ... So bin ich gerettet. ... So bin ich geborgen."107 And Charlotte describes a similar feeling: "Danach hatte sie sich wieder geeinigt mit einem Mann auf Güte, Verliebtheit, Wohlwollen, Fürsorge, Anlehnung, Sicherheit, Schutz, Treue, allerlei Achtenswertes, das dann nicht nur im Entwurf steckenblieb, sondern sich auch leben ließ."108 However, she,
more than Jennifer, sees this as an anti-state to "Ekstase, Rausch Tiefe, Auslieferung, Genuß." 109

What then can be summarized about the image of the lover? First of all, with the exception of Charlotte's lesbianism, there are few emancipatory trends to be discerned. None of Bachmann's women want to play a dominant role in their love relationship with a male. On the contrary, as has been shown, even the extremely emotional lover, such as Jennifer or the narrator in Malina, reveals signs of submissiveness. The sole indication of a wish for such emancipation might be discerned in the longing for a permanent state of unlimited love and emotion. Secondly, Bachmann's lovers are either tragically "in love" or in unhappy retreat from failed roles as love-partners. 110 Examples of the first are Jennifer, the narrator in Malina, and, to some extent, Undine because of the inherent consequence of the attempt to attain an absolute love relationship, namely the destruction of one's self. Examples of the latter are all the other women once in love. Finally, the image of the lover seems to be less inherently contradictory than other role-images; it would seem to show only the development of various facets of one role.

D. The Role of the Housewife

The most frequently portrayed female social role in literature has been the role of the housewife. 111 A. W. Schlegel's parody on Schiller's "Würde der Frauen" provides a humorous description:

Ehret die Frauen! Sie stricken die Strümpfe,
Wollig und warm, zu durchwaten die Sänfte,
Flicken zerrissene Pantalons aus.
Kochen dem Mann die kräftigen Suppen,
Putzen den Kindern die niedlichen Puppen,
Halten mit mäßigem Wochengeld Haus.
Doch der Mann, der tölpelhafte,
Findt am Zarten nicht Geschmack,
How and to what extent does Ingeborg Bachmann develop the image of the homemaker? Among the many "traditional" concepts which make up the mosaic of her female characters, one finds the emphasis on the role of the housewife to be a minor one. Yet there is still more space given to this role than to that of the working women or the single mother. The reader meets the narrator in Malina, the elder Frau Jordan, Elisabeth, Charlotte, and Hanna at times in the role of the homemaker: the narrator in Malina keeps house for Malina, in part for her boy-friend, the elder Frau Jordan for herself, Elisabeth for her father (during those short periods when the reader meets her in this role), Charlotte keeps house for her husband, and Hanna for husband and child. Contrary to the "traditional" role presentations, however, these are, in the main, only part-time roles and, except for Hanna, the role of housewife is peripheral in its psychological importance as well as in its social consequences. The most significant aspect of the homemaking role still appears to lie in its limiting effect on Bachmann's women, providing an orderly life and check against emotional chaos:


The recalling of her duties as housewife serves Charlotte at a critical moment as protection against the growing emotional involvement with Mara.
A few pages later, the narrator of *Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha* tells us that Charlotte, after her marriage, "... lebte ... in der hellen Ordnung, die Franz gehörte, ..." The symbolic act of Mara's demolishing the living room has the consequence of freeing Charlotte's thoughts from the norms and obligations of a good housewife. It may be worth noting that when Bachmann's women lead married lives, they live in a clean and orderly home environment; when they live with a lover, they live in disorder and adhere to a daily schedule in which even the meals are irregular, at best. In *Malina* one even finds a last symbolic act of homemaking, the brewing of coffee by the narrator on Malina's request to "do something sensible", to be the trigger for the narrator's disintegration. Again the idea that the homemaker's role is a limitation of the free and full development of one's self finds support. Also, the coupling of order and purpose with the world of the male, sustained throughout Bachmann's work, re-emerges in the role conflicts of the homemaker. The extensive descriptions of the narrator's joyful preparation of meals for Ivan in *Malina* seem to indicate that it is not homemaking as such which is distasteful to Bachmann's women but rather its symbolic functions of obligation and duty together with its regulating effect on their free emotional life. This, too, distinguishes Bachmann's image of the women from the emancipated image of the female in the works of such contemporaries as Peter Handke, Christa Wolf, and Irmtraud Morgner.

F. The Role of the Professional

The career-woman is not a frequent Bachmann heroine. Only two, Nadja and Elisabeth, and, to an extent, Anna can be classified as full-time professionals. Although the text yields very little concrete
information illuminating their choice of roles, it may be noted that both Elisabeth and Nadja left their homes at a young age, had few or no emotional ties to their native environment, displayed a strong restlessness, a desire to "get away from it all", to find freedom, personal identity, and independence.

A close examination of these few cases, however, seems to indicate that — contrary to the opinion of many Bachmann critics — a professional career is not a positive act of self-realization but rather a reaction to a limiting environment, or simply an act of frustration:

Elisabeth:
Als sie nach Wien gegangen war und zu arbeiten anfing, hatte sie schon das Fernfieber gehabt, eine lebhafte Ungeduld, und sie arbeitete nur so viel und auch gut, weil sie hinarbeitete auf ein Wunder, das Wunder, weit wegzukommen, es war zuerst nicht einmal klar, was aus ihr werden sollte, ... ¹¹⁷

Sie hatte nichts Richtiges gelernt und dachte hie und da verzweifelt, doch auf die Universität gehen zu müssen, aber es war schon zu spät für sie ... Damals wurden zufällig die Weichen gestellt für ihr Leben, ... ¹¹⁸

Nadja:
... ich bin schon zu lange weg, mit neunzehn bin ich weg, ich spreche nie mehr deutsch, nur wenn es gebraucht wird, ... ¹¹⁹

... sie wurde hoch bezahlt, zu Hause hätte sie es nie ausgehalten mit ihrem Selbständigkeitsdrang, es ist eine so unglaublich anstrengende Arbeit, aber ich mag das eben trotzdem, nein, heiraten, nie, ... ¹²⁰

Bei ihr wäre es fast bis zu einer Heirat gekommen, aber kurz davor doch auseinandergegangen, und über das Warum hatte sie jahrelang nachgedacht, und nie kam sie auf den Grund, ... ¹²¹

The element of chance that frequently influences the careers of these women should also be mentioned, as it too militates against the thesis of emancipation. Lastly, a close look at the verbs and nouns used in
the relevant passages, concerning the careers, indicates a preponderance of negative connotations:

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<tr>
<th>Nouns</th>
<th>Adjectives</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ungeduld (p. 412)</td>
<td>grauenhaft (p. 286)</td>
<td>(umher) irren (p. 286)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unruhe (p. 412)</td>
<td>unglaublich</td>
<td>eingehen (p. 412)</td>
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<td>(Fern) fieber (p. 412)</td>
<td>anstrengend (p. 286)</td>
<td>verzweifelt (p. 412)</td>
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<td>oberflächliche Kenntnisse (p. 412)</td>
<td>nicht einmal</td>
<td>nichts Richtiges</td>
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<td>kein besonderes</td>
<td>klar (p. 412)</td>
<td>gelernt (p. 412)</td>
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<td>Talent (p. 412)</td>
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</table>

These indications and Nadja's thoughts on her identity: "... aber je weiter sie sich entfernte von ihrem Standplatz [her place of work], der wichtiger für sie war als für andere ein Zuhause und von dem ein Sich-Entfernen daher viel heikler ist, desto unsicherer fühlte sie sich. Sie war keine selbstsichere Erscheinung mehr in einer Halle, in einer Bar, entworfen von Vogue oder Glamour, ... fast nichts mehr deutete auf ihre Identität hin, ..." show work as an at best weak ego support and point to a negative image of the career-woman, a role that emerges as an unsatisfactory substitute for the traditional female social roles of mother and wife on the one hand, and fails to provide, because of its restrictive nature, the genuine freedom and possibility for the self-realization which Bachmann's women strive for on the other. The fact that - despite the occasional condemnation of married life - all career women are frequently occupied with speculative thoughts on love and marriage seems to support the view that the professional role is not a suitable solution to women's problems. The majority of Bachmann's career women appear to be frustrated lovers and would-be-wives - victims of a "traditional" role image and sexual prejudice. H. Pausch's interpretation of the professional role of Bachmann's heroines, which he sees as isolative, is based upon a different line of argument:
Sie [Bachmann] opponiert gegen die etablierten sittlichen Verhaltensweisen mit dem eigenwilligen Isolationsverhalten der Hauptfiguren ihrer Erzählungen gegenüber jeder Form der Gemeinschaft. Für die berühmte Fotografin Elisabeth in Drei Wege zum See und für die Dolmetscherin Nadja in Simultan ist die Isolation, das heißt der Schutz vor dem nivellierenden Zugriff der Gesellschaft, der Beruf in den sich beide zurückziehen.

**F. The Role of the Outsider**

Denn es sind noch immer die Schiffbrüchigen, die auf Inseln Zuflucht suchen.

One of the seemingly more "modern" elements making up Bachmann's image of the woman, is the theme of the Outsider. Not only do keywords such as Flight (e.g. Lieder auf der Flucht), Extraterritoriality, Exile, Isolation and Border People permeate all of Ingeborg Bachmann's writings, but nearly all of her female characters maintain outsider positions in one form or another. This role is one of the most complex of those which we shall be investigating.

Undine: remains deliberately outside the norms and conventions of established social behavior.

Miranda: destroys her glasses repeatedly to withdraw into an illusivive world and to distance herself from reality.

Beatrix: builds up her own dream-world and retires into a state of sleep and narcissism.

Elisabeth: feels that she - despite an apparently active life - exists in an "anti-world" and is losing, by degrees personal relationship to her environment.

Nadja: lives an uncommitted existence apart from any secure bonds, be it the interpersonal, the national or the linguistic realm.

Frau Jordan, too, appears in the role of the outsider:

"Mißtrauen und Nichtverstehen der Welt, Ausgeschlossensein und Einsamkeit, Hörschwäche und Senilität: . . ."\textsuperscript{130}

A search for the underlying causes of this tendency in Bachmann's female characters will reveal a number of similarities with those of other outsiders in contemporary literature.\textsuperscript{131} Firstly, there is the aspect of the \textit{Sprachkrise} problem which involves - among other things - the difficulty, even inability, to communicate with those close to them (Nadja, the elder Frau Jordan, Elisabeth).\textsuperscript{132} Secondly, we find a reaction or protest against established norms and values of society (Undine, Charlotte, Mara). Thirdly, there exists the inability to face "reality", to adjust to existing social conventions (Beatrix, Miranda, Jennifer). And fourthly, there is an inner drive for autonomy, a desire for self-realization and subjectivity which disallow social commitments, and, finally, egotism (Undine, Charlotte).\textsuperscript{133}

It is surprising that Bachmann research has contributed very little to this timely topic. One interesting interpretation on the outsider theme has been offered by Dieter Schlenstedt:

Konkret gefaßt, zeigt die Struktur der Erzählungen . . . den Zusammenbruch illusionärer Hoffnung: Das erworbbene Gut der Rebellion kann bei der Einkehr in die bürgerliche Weltordnung nicht - oder doch nur ahnungsweise - mitgebracht werden. Mit anderen Worten: Ingeborg Bachmann spiegelt das Dilemma des späten Nonkonformisten, dessen Unbehagen, dessen Flucht schließlich doch zu keiner wirklichen Erneuerung führt, sondern zum Verzicht oder zum Verrat seiner rebellischen Ideen. . . . Das erste wesentliche Moment der Geschichten ist also die Absonderung der Erzählergestalten aus ihrer Welt.\textsuperscript{134}
Here the author offers a negative view of Bachmann's outsiders that does not seem to be justified in the case of her female protagonists, especially in the light of the subsequent publication of *Malina* and *Simultan* in which a return to a bourgeois life is certainly not the rule. Granted, Bachmann's female outsiders do not achieve for more than brief periods — if at all — the absolute or near absolute state of existence most are aiming for. However, in no case do the female characters give up their striving and return to a "bourgeois" existence. On the contrary, they continue to hope and to search for a realization of their goals. The majority of Bachmann's female outsiders become increasingly self-reliant. It should be added, that Schlenstedt picks the male characters of *Alles*, and of *Das dreißigste Jahr*, as major proof for his point. This aspect of his interpretation would certainly be expanded by our analysis of the male, who, because of his pragmatic and rational nature, would surely fail in the attempt to renew the world in the sense that Bachmann conceives it.
CHAPTER IV
THE SOCIAL INTERACTION

Having examined the representative social roles which Bachmann assigns to her female protagonists and having tested these against more "traditional" roles, in this chapter we will try to determine the characteristic behaviour patterns of these women in interaction with children, women, men, and, finally, observations will be made on their interaction with society in general.

A. Social Interaction with Children

Several questions pose themselves in this context. For instance, how do Ingeborg Bachmann's women conform to sex-typed behaviour characteristics? In particular, what is the extent and quality of sex-typed behaviour performance toward children? 136

One may begin a discussion of this topic with any of several observations. Firstly, children quantitatively and qualitatively, play a small part in the objective as well as subjective life of Ingeborg Bachmann's heroines, the most extensively developed characters in this respect are Hanna, the elder Frau Jordan and the narrator in Malina. Secondly, the function and person of a child are not always identical; in some instances adult men and women, even a dog, have served as receivers for child-orientated responses. Mara is one example of a child substitute: "Nur viel älter kam sie [Charlotte] sich mit einmal vor, weil dieses Geschöpf vor ihr das Kind spielte, sich klein machte
und sie größer machte..." Also, many of the men in the lives of Bachmann's women are "gescheiterte Existenzen... die sie brauchten, als Halt..." , men who were looking for mother substitutes.

This should indicate that mother instincts of some of these women were re-channelled, because of the lack of children. Lastly, an examination of Bachmann's language describing children, seems to indicate that, in general, her child characters do have a negative image and that the effective response from their mothers is more often negative than not.

In the case of a woman's relationship to children other than her own, however, this negative image is not so totally sustained. Examples of this are Kiki, the child the elder Frau Jordan had to care for in her youth, and Béla and András, Ivan's children of whom the narrator in Malina is so fond. It should also be noted that Kiki appears to serve as a foil for Leo, the elder Frau Jordan's son.

A language chart of negative vocabulary on children:

Fipps Leo

gelbsüchtig, zerknittert (p. 141) (undankbar) (p. 375ff.)
Grimasse (p. 142) kompliziertes Kind (p. 375)
richtungslos blickende Augen (p. 142) spricht abfällig und boshaf t über
Wut (p. 144) (Verwandte) (p. 378)
dumpfer Kopf (p. 146) gemein (p. 389)
grausam (p. 145) (egoistisch) (p. 389)
Brut (p. 150) (kaltherzig) (p. 388)
das Böse... steckte in dem Kind
wie eine Eiterquelle (p. 150)

Béla + András

Lausbuben, Fratzen, Banditen, Wechselbälger (p. 144)
Zudringlichkeit (p. 131)
maulen (p. 133)
wütend (p. 133)
brüllen (p. 133)
zertrümmern (p. 145)
kratzen (Schallplatte) (p. 145)
Mistfratzen (p. 147)
This chart indicates that, despite some positive aspects, the negative points are by far in excess of these. It also appears that the negative image is much more severe in the female character's own child, as in Leo's or Fipps' case. Since the child-image in _Jugend in einer österreichischen Stadt_, dealing with an unspecified group of children, does not quite conform to these patterns, this could indicate a value judgement of Bachmann not so much about the child per se, but rather on the mother-child relationship.

Nevertheless, there seems to be no doubt that children do elicit some positive reactions as well as exert positive influences on Bachmann's women. Because of the birth of Fipps, Hanna gains a "second youth"; the narrator in _Malina_ seems to enjoy the obstructiveness and turbulence, that go with Ivan's children; Jennifer in _Der gute Gott von Manhattan_ sees children as a means of holding together a marriage; also, children do seem to improve the communicative level between Bachmann's women and their partners, such is the case with the narrator in _Malina_ and Ivan, the elder Frau Jordan und Franziska in _Das Gebell_, and Hanna and her husband in _Alles_. Yet, as stated before, the sum of the appearances of children adds up to a negative factor in the lives of Bachmann's female characters. Gerda, in _Ein Wildermuth_, has an abortion, Undine, in _Undine geht_, interprets children as a means by which men put women into bondage, the narrator of _Unter Mör dern und Irren_ sees children as part of the oppressive environment of a wife.

This conclusion is supported and complemented by the results of this study on the image of the mother in Chapter III.

Some women do display "typical" female and maternal reactions
toward the children: Hanna wants "eine ganze Brut"¹⁴⁵ and cares intensely for Fipps; the narrator in Malina shows much affection toward Béla and András; the elder Frau Jordan bestows maternal love on Kiki, and Elisabeth exhibits maternal instincts for her younger brother Robert; nevertheless, the general image of Ingeborg Bachmann's heroines is such that it does not allow one to speak of a child-orientated behaviour or a predominantly maternal nature. Rudiments of maternal instincts are often directed toward substitute objects such as men of weak character, younger brothers, and older or younger women. It seems that the defective child-mother relationship of Bachmann's women, too, has its root in the urge of Bachmann's female characters for independence and freedom. Directing one's maternal instincts toward strange children or substitute objects frees one from the binding social obligation that goes with the care of one's own child.

B. Social Interaction with Women

Even more insight into Bachmann's image of the woman should be provided by a study of the interaction between women. Three themes in this context have been found to yield very significant information. Firstly, the theme of competition and sexual rivalry, secondly, the lesbian theme, and thirdly, "non sexual" relationships, free of either of the above elements.

1. Sexual Competition and Rivalry

One of the most striking features of social interaction among females in Bachmann's works is the apparent lack of a sex-solidarity — perhaps with the exception of Franziska in Das Gebell. In this respect,
one can hardly speak of a "liberated" woman. Bachmann's heroines do compete for men: Stasi in *Ihr glücklichen Augen* snatches Miranda's beloved friend Josef. In the kafkaesque chapter "Der dritte Mann" in *Malina* the narrator and Melanie engage in sexual competition over the narrator's father. The erotic nature of this rivalry is clearly expressed by such symbols as the staff. But one detects not only sexual competition. In at least one instance, women are rivals for the possession of a child:

Du weißt also nicht, daß Mama und ich einander gehaßt haben, natürlich nur wegen Robert. Denn Mama konnte nicht verstehen, daß eine Sechzehnjährige, der sie schon dreimal alles gesagt hatte, was man Mädchen eben zu sagen hat, sie plötzlich anschrie und fragte, ob denn Robert überhaupt ihr Kind sei, er könne nämlich genauso gut ihres, Elisabeths Kind, sein.

Bachmann's principal females, indeed, frequently display a certain hostility toward each other. Stasi, for instance, reflects on her friend Miranda:

Dumme Gans, denkt Stasi, . . . Aber das ist doch sonnenklar diese raffinierte, schlampige, dumme, diese - Hier findet Stasi keine Worte mehr - sie hat ihm doch vollkommen in der Hand mit ihrer Hilflosigkeit, . . .

In this context, one should also mention the nasty gossip of the socialite women at the Wolfgangsee in *Malina* and Undine's contemptuous monologue on women who are not "of her own kind," (Menschenfrauen). May we not conclude, that these are traces of the "traditional" image of the woman?

2. The Lesbian Theme

At first sight, the instances of lesbianism may seem to militate against the suggestion made above. However, a closer look, especially
at the more intensively developed encounter of Charlotte and Mara in *Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha*, indicates motives other than feminine solidarity. Charlotte intends to make a role change at Mara's expense:

Sie [Charlotte] schätzte ihre Beute ab, und die war brauchbar, war gut. Sie hatte ihr Geschöpf gefunden.

Es war Schichtwechsel, und jetzt konnte sie die Welt übernehmen, ihren Gefährten benennen, die Rechte und Pflichten festsetzen, die alten Bilder ungültig machen und das erste neue entwerfen.'

She does not love Mara, but wants to create an anti-image of woman simultaneously in Mara and herself. Interestingly enough, Bachmann speaks in this context of old and fixed images of the woman, namely the images of the "Jägerin, der großen Hure, der Samariterin, des Lockvogels aus der Tiefe und der unter die Sterne Versetzten . . ." It happens, also, that in both lesbian incidents one woman uses the other as an object or substitute, not as another female individual. With "Da alle Männer aus Wien verschwunden sind," the narrator in *Malina* justifies her relationship with the young girl. For Charlotte, on the other hand, Mara is material for making a new kind of woman: "Darum wünsche ich ein Gegenbild, und ich wünsche, es selbst zu errichten." Lastly, it seems that Bachmann attaches a stigma - or accepts the stigma attached by society - to this type of relationship. The title of the story, *Ein Weg nach Gomorrah*, indicates this and Mrs. Breitner's disappointed statement that she had considered the first-person narrator in *Malina* to be a saint underscores the religious disapprobation.

3. The "Non-Sexual" Relationships

Thirdly, Bachmann's women would appear also to function on a
level that is free of sex-stereotyping, i.e. on a purely human level of woman-to-woman communication. While all male-female exchange between Bachmann's characters seems to be sex-determined or sex-conscious, some female-female interchange seems to offer the possibility to go beyond this range. Charlotte has thoughts along these lines - before her relationship with Mara slips back into the old sex-determined role-play, reversed as it may be - when she speaks of the "größeren Spielraum" and of freedom from sex-determination and role behaviour. When women meet outside sex-determined situations, genuine human communication may be possible. This is the case between Franziska and the elder Frau Jordan when a close relationship develops between the two and Franziska learns about the evil character of Leo, her husband. This type of communication seems to be the only successful one among Bachmann's women in the long run.

C. Social Interaction with Men

It is significant that much more width and depth has been given by Ingeborg Bachmann to the development of man-woman relationships than to any of the other three categories which are treated in this chapter. Already, some factors of this relationship have been discussed in their relevant context in other chapters of this study and may, therefore, be omitted here. As has been frequently the case in our survey until now, here again the man-woman relationships in Bachmann's works are basically governed by conventional sex-determined role images:

Ich:
Es muß schon etwas bei den Primaten und spätestens bei den Hominiden danebengegangen sein. Ein Mann, eine Frau . . . seltsame Worte, seltsamer Wahn! Wer von uns beiden wird summa cum laude bestehen?
These remarks by the narrator in *Malina* seem to reflect not only regret about these images and doubt about their real basis, but also the opinion that a male-female relationship is one of competition, of rivalry.

1. Role Behaviour of Subjects

An understanding of the differences between the two subject groups (men and women) contributes not only to a clearer picture of the female image, but also is a prerequisite for any analysis of social interchange between them. The narrator in *Malina* recounts some of these differences rather emotionally in the novel:

Darin ist der Grund dafür zu suchen, nach dem noch niemand gesucht hat, warum nur die Frauen immerzuden Kopf voll haben mit ihren Gefühlen und ihren Geschichten, mit ihrem Mann oder Ihren Männern. . . . Für ihn ist es ja leicht, wenig an die Frauen zu denken, denn sein krankes System ist unfehlbar, er wiederholt, er hat sich wiederholt, er wird sich wiederholen. Wenn er gerne die Füße küßt, wird er noch fünfhzig Frauen die Füße küssen, warum soll er sich also beschäftigen in Gedanken, bedenklieh wegen eines Geschöpfes, das sich zur Zeit gern von ihm die Füße küssen läßt, so meint er jedenfalls. Eine Frau muß aber damit fertig werden, daß jetzt ausgerechnet ihre Füße an der Reihe sind, Sie muß sich ungläubliche Gefühle erfinden und den ganzen Tag ihre wirklichen Gefühle in den erfundenen unterbringen, einmal damit sie das mit den Füßen aushält, dann vor allem, damit sie den größeren fehlenden Rest aushält, denn jemand, der so an Füßen hängt, vernachläßigt sehr viel anderes. Überdies gibt es noch die ruckartigen Umstellungen, von einem Mann zum anderen muß sich ein Frauenkörper alles abgewöhnen und wieder an etwas ganz Neues gewöhnen. Aber ein Mann zieht mit seinen Gewohnheiten friedlich weiter, manchmal hat er eben Glück damit, meistens keines.160

As this text shows, the perspective from which these male-female relationships are recounted is a female one — as is the case in the majority of such encounters.161 A generalized profile of the emotional tenor
of men-women interaction in Bachmann's works may be pictured thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>female</th>
<th>male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aggressive-passive</td>
<td>aggressive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>submissive</td>
<td>dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>superior</td>
<td>dependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impulsive</td>
<td>reflective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emotional</td>
<td>calm, reserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personally engaged</td>
<td>routine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sensual</td>
<td>sexual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loving</td>
<td>adventurous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It appears that this profile does basically concur with the "traditional" male and female role images.

2. Kinds of Interaction

There are nine main types of male-female interaction patterns discernible, which recur throughout Bachmann's stories and radio-plays. Firstly, there is a distinctly submissive-dominant, often sadistic relationship. Evidence was submitted earlier to show that Bachmann's female lovers frequently exhibit various degrees of submissiveness;162 furthermore, it appears that any movement in this direction is initiated by the female and in most cases rejected, or, at best, tolerated by the male partner:

Anna:

Laurenz:

Heute wird gelacht! Was unterstehen Sie sich? Hören Sie sofort auf zu jammern, ich lasse Sie guillo . . . guillo . . . ich lasse Sie töten!163

It may well be that this pronounced tone of submissive feeling in Bachmann’s women represents the disadvantaged position they are in as emotionally involved beings in situations where the male is less or not at all involved emotionally.164 One important exception does exist, however, and that is the narrator’s relationship to her father in Malina.165 Here, the initiative clearly emanates from the father and evokes hardly any pleasurable response from her:

Wir stehen bei 50 Grad Kälte, entkleidet, vor dem Palast, müssen die befohlenen Positionen einnehmen, im Publikum seufzen manche, doch jeder denkt, daß Bardo, der unschuldig ist, mitschuldig ist, weil man anfängt, die Ströme eisigen Wassers über uns zu gießen. Ich höre mich noch wimmern und eine Verwünschung ausstoßen, das letzte was ich wahrnehme, ist das triumphierende Lächeln meines Vaters, und sein befriedigtes Seufzen ist das letzte, was ich höre. Ich kann nicht mehr um das Leben von Bardo bitten. Ich werde zu Eis.166

What, then, besides the ominously accentuated sadistic note, is different about this relationship? First of all, it is an incestuous relationship, from which the narrator seemingly derives no sexual pleasure: "... ich werde wieder mit ihm schlafen, mit den zusam-

megebissen Zähnen, dem unbewegten Körper."167 On the other hand the passage might be understood as expressing a denial mechanism.168 Furthermore, this father-image tries to destroy any other developing relationship between the narrator and her male partners.

One could, of course – assuming polyvalence of the father-image as indicated in the dialogue between the narrator and Malina 169 – speculate about transference of a guilt complex, of a sexual and/or incestuous
nature, lifting, thereby, the torture scenes into the realm of psychiatry. However, the development of this relationship seems to be too concrete, to give much support to this interpretation.

Secondly, reviewing the gruesome element of the chapter "Der dritte Mann", it appears that there exists an additional level of meaning, namely, the essentially destructive and oppressive nature of a sex determined man-woman relationship in general. Lastly, considering the extensive symbolic nature of this chapter, one may detect a third, more universal level: evil and hell - especially in the person of the father - pursuing man on earth. However, any attempt at an elaborate interpretation of the second chapter of *Malina* lies beyond the scope of the study.

Other father-daughter relationships are developed quite differently by Ingeborg Bachmann, a fact that supports the opinion that the relationship presented in the second chapter of *Malina* extends beyond the personal level. An example is the story *Drei Wege zum See*, where a paternalistic father-daughter relationship prevails.

A third type of man-woman relationship to be found among Bachmann's women is that of a maternal attitude toward men. Such is the case in Beatrix's relationship - although disguised by her - with Erich:

... danach hatte er sofort Beatrix angerufen, seinen "Lichtblick", seine "Oase des Friedens" in einem verpatzten Leben, und er versicherte ihr, zitternd noch, aber inständig, daß er ohne sie nicht mehr weiterkönne, wie sehr er ihren Mut und ihre Gefäßtheit bewundere, ihre Stärke und eine Vernunft in ihr, ...
In this relationship, Beatrix reacts from a position of superiority, having manipulated Erich into believing that he is needed and important to her. Whereas Erich seeks support and uses her as a mother-substitute. In _Simultan_, Nadja calls Ludwig Frankel a romantic and a child: "... und das gefiel ihr nun wieder besser als ihr erster Eindruck von ihm, daß er ein praktischer und erfolgreicher Mann sein müßte."¹⁷² Here we find once more a negative reference to efficiency and success, qualities which are always associated in Bachmann's prose with "male" orientated values. It should be noted - as pointed out previously¹⁷³ - that here, too, women do not try to dominate the man, but rather, as a consequence of the weakness of their partners, they find themselves in a position of superiority which makes most of them feel quite uncomfortable.

Strength of personality and character paired with a "traditional" attitude of accepting and expecting leadership from the male in certain areas appear to be part of Bachmann's image of the woman. Elisabeth is one of Bachmann's heroines who laments the lack of strong men:

Nur eine Hoffnung durfte und wollte sie sich nicht offen lassen, denn wenn sie in fast dreißig Jahren keinen Mann getroffen hatte, einfach keinen ... der stark war und ihr das Mysterium brachte, auf das sie gewartet hatte, keinen, der wirklich ein Mann war und nicht ein Sonderling, Verlorener, ein Schwächling oder einer dieser Hilfsbedürftigen, von denen die Welt voll war, dann gab es den Mann eben nicht, ... ¹⁷⁴

Proof that a certain sympathy with weak men is caused more by a surplus of maternal feelings than by preference, is supplied by the next type of male-female interchange: that of learning. The learning process - at times so intense as to warrant the designation of a "way of salvation" - is a characteristic of Bachmann's fiction. It is particularly
obvious between Ivan and the narrator in *Malina*, between Jan and Jennifer in *Der gute Gott von Manhattan*, and between Trotta and Elisabeth in *Drei Wege zum See*. Here, again, the male partner appears to occupy in many respects a dominant position; it is the woman, who has constantly to re-learn, to readjust.\footnote{175} It seems that the learning process gone through by Bachmann's women consists of at least two stages: it involves, firstly, learning from the male about the male and the male view of the world; secondly, a constant readjustment for the woman in regard to the specific desires and habits of the male in question. The fact, however, that there is hardly any reverse interaction in this type of relationship could be seen to place the female in a superior or advanced position. A fifth type of man-woman relationship found in Bachmann's works is based on sex alone. The relationship of Wanda with Wildermuth in *Ein Wildermuth* is a well developed example of this type, although sex can be detected to some degree in almost any man-woman relationship in Bachmann's fiction. In this context, one should name two additional areas of interaction that dominate the life of Bachmann's female characters: love and emotion.\footnote{176} In these types of relationships, it is always the female who suffers because of the nature of the sexes, since — according to Bachmann — it is only the female who involves her heart.

The narrator in *Malina* makes this point:

Sonst machen die meisten Männer aber die Frauen unglücklich, und eine Gegenseitigkeit ist nicht da, denn wir haben es mit dem natürlichen Unglück, dem unabweisbaren, das von der Krankheit der Männer kommt, zu tun, deretwegen die Frauen soviel nachdenken müssen und, kaum angelernt, wieder umlernen müssen, denn wenn man über jemand immerzu nachdenken muß und für ihn Gefühle erzeugen muß, dann wird man regelrecht unglücklich. Das Unglück verdoppelt, verdreifacht, ver-
hundertfacht sich mit der Zeit obendrein.\footnote{177}
A further distinct realm of man-woman relationship seems to be art. A singular example of this is the exchange between Gerda Wildermuth and Edmund Kaltenbrunner in Ein Wildermuth. Here too, one finds a non-egalitarian relationship. Kaltenbrunner has Gerda's admiration for his poetry and his individual perspective of the world—notably neither "typically male" characteristics. As a matter of fact, Kaltenbrunner is depicted in obvious contrast to Judge Wildermuth with his continual search for absolutes. Bachmann's women are notorious for their lack of understanding of or interest in their partner's professional life. Gerda's interest in Kaltenbrunner may be an exception because of his "atypical" activities. Lastly, there is a distinctly professional type of man-woman relationship. The reader meets Anna in Ein Geschäft mit Träumen—except during the dreams—only during office hours, where she displays a truly businesslike attitude toward all men. Elisabeth's relationship to Duvalier is another example of this kind of relationship, in which Bachmann's women are largely able to act outside their sex roles, and are measured by ability and achievement. Nonetheless, one finds them in this type of social interaction also on the receiving end. Even Elisabeth is—despite her achievements—always second to Duvalier.

Male-female social interaction in Bachmann's fiction may be represented by the following table: 178
In summary: The source, male or female, as well as the types of interactions illustrated in the graph above, indicate that in general the structure of all male-female relationships does conform largely to "traditional" role expectations. Secondly, we have found that the female — though she is in most cases dependent and the passive recipient — may be said to be by right of greater intuition, discernment, and farsightedness, the superior of the two. Finally, it seems that all types of man-woman relationship developed by Bachmann, sooner or later turn out to be unsatisfactory for the female partner. It may also be pointed out, that there exist no purely exploitative relationships, although isolated instances can be determined. 179

D. Social Interaction with Society

The last group selected for study is that of society. Though social engagement of authors and their works has been particularly prominent in post-war German literature, Ingeborg Bachmann has been called an "ivory tower writer".180 It was of interest therefore to review Bachmann's presentation of social themes in relation to her female characters. It has also been found that Bachmann's women
assume in many respects outsider roles, yet in others engage quite actively in social interchange and activity. The question then arises: What is the extent and quality of their interaction with society?

There is no doubt, that Bachmann's women do react to social issues. One widespread form of reaction is escapism as carried on by Miranda in Ihr glücklichen Augen, where she repeatedly destroys or "loses" her glasses in order to avoid facing unpleasant social realities:

Mit Hilfe einer winzigen Korrektion - der durch die Zerstreuungslinsen - mit einem auf die Nase gestützten goldenen Brillengestell, kann Miranda in die Hölle sehen. Dieses Inferno hat nie aufgehört, für sie an Schrecken zu verlieren. Darum sieht sie sich, immer auf der Hut, vorsichtig um ... eh sie die Brille aufsetzt, ... denn wenn sie nicht achtgibt, kommt in ihr Blickfeld, was sie nie mehr vergessen kann: Sie sieht ein verkrüppeltes Kind oder einen Zwerg oder eine Frau mit einem amputierten Arm, doch solche Figuren sind wirklich nur die grellsten, auffallendsten in mitten einer Anhäufung von unglücklichen, hämischen, verdammten, von Demütigungen oder Verbrechen beschriebenen Gesichtern, unträumbar Visagen.181

Extensive sleep, another form of withdrawal from interaction with society, is used by Beatrix in Probleme Probleme:

Zuhause würde sie sich ruhig und glücklich hinlegen, ihre Haare ausbreiten, ihre Füße betrachten, denn im Kino gab es sicher wieder einen dieser anstrengenden Filme, mit Mord und Totschlag und manchmal sogar Krieg, und wenn es auch alles gestellt und erfunden war, dann nahm es sie doch zu sehr mit, gerade weil es in der Wirklichkeit anders zuging.182

The criticism of this type of social behaviour intended by Bachmann is clearly formulated in her lecture on "Literatur als Utopie": "Wir schlafen ja, sind Schlüfer, aus Furcht, uns und unsere Welt wahrnehmen zu müssen."183

However, there is also evidence of an opposite form of this type of response. For instance, Elisabeth responds in Drei Wege zum See to
Trotta's cynical remarks about reporting on the suffering of the Algerian war: "Elisabeth war fassungslos, denn sie hielt das für das einzig Richtige, alles, was sie taten zu der Zeit, die Leute mußten erfahren, genau, was dort vor sich ging, und sie mußten diese Bilder sehen, um 'wach gerüttelt' zu werden." And later she adds: "... die Menschen müssen einmal zur Vernunft kommen. Dazu werde ich tun, was ich kann, wie wenig das auch ist." It should be noted that none of Bachmann's women appears as a social revolutionary or politicizes about the state of the world. This is left to men, who, as Undine points out, are much better at analyzing the state of the world:

So hat noch niemand von den Menschen gesprochen, von den Bedingungen, unter denen sie leben, von ihren Hörigkeiten, Gütern, Ideen, von den Menschen auf dieser Erde. Es war recht, so zu sprechen und so viel zu bedenken.

Wherever responsive social interaction with society occurs, it is of the personal, individual type. Examples are Franziska with her concern for the elder Frau Jordan and the narrator in Malina who incurs debts to help a rather dubious exile from Bulgaria. A. Weber found the social theme in Bachmann's story Das Gebell intense enough to note:

Exemplarisch also Probleme könnten herausgearbeitet werden: der historisch-soziale Rahmen, die Mutter-Sohn-Beziehung, der Lebensweg einer Frau, Leistung auf Kosten des Menschlichen, Wissenschaft auch als Ehrgeiz, Ruhmsucht und Alibi, die Zerstörung menschlicher Gemeinschaft wie Familie und Ehe durch die Unwahrhaftigkeit, der Egoismus des Menschen, die zentrale Aufgabe der Liebe (auch als caritativer, franziskanischer Hingabe), vor allem aber das Problem des Alters und Alterns, des Todes, worauf Schüler heutzutage, in einer jugendfixierten, hybriden Welt, an einem solchen Modell hinzuweisen wären. Menschlichkeit steht am konkreten Fall zur Entscheidung, nicht Deklarationen.

This preference for individual social interaction by Bachmann's women, where it does exist, is voiced by Elisabeth in Drei Wege zum See:
Was in ihnen, selbst in Philippe, so verkümmerte oder in leeren Formlichkeiten sich erhielt, das reichte noch bei manchen jungen Leuten für einen Liebesausbruch für die Menschheit, aber es reichte nicht mehr bis zur nächsten Tür, zu jemand, der, schluchzend oder am Zusammenbrechen, neben ihnen auf der Straße ging.

Two observations ought to be added: firstly, there can frequently be detected a critical view on church and religion in the context of social problems. Nadja, for instance, remarks in Simultan during her visit to the huge statue of Christ at Maratea:

Als sie sich entfernt hatte, fühlte sie, seitlich im Rücken immer noch diese wahnsinnige Gestalt, die irgend jemand auf die Spitze des Felsens getan hatte, diese Wahnsinnigen, daß man das zuließ, und in einem armseligen Dorf, das in jedem Moment ins Meer stürzen konnte, wenn man auch nur fest auftrat oder eine Bewegung zuviel machte, und deswegen bewegte sie sich nicht, damit dieser Felsen nicht hinunter-stürzte mit ihnen beiden und mit der äußersten Armut dieses Dorfes und den Nachfahren der Sarazenen und allen beladenen Geschichten aus allen mühseligen Zeiten.

Support for this observation may also be gained from Bachmann's essay: "Was ich in Rom sah und hörte", where she writes: "Noch sorgen die Armen in ihrer Behutsamkeit dafür, daß die Kirche nicht fällt, und der sie gegründet hat, verläßt sich schon auf den Schritt der Engel." In this light, by the way, it is doubtful, whether Bachmann intended the Franciscan allusion pointed out above by A. Weber.

But there is a second point. There is, at times, a sense of resignation and disillusionment present in Bachmann's women when social activities are being discussed:

Ehe der Algerienkrieg zuende war, hatten sich Elisabeth und Trotta getrennt, und Elisabeth sah, während alle anderen längst zur "Tagesordnung" übergingen, noch bedrückt, was aus der Freiheit schon zu werden drohte, und aus dem neuen Algerien kam sie niedergeschlagen zurück, sagte aber ostenta-tiv allen, daß es hochinteressant sei und schrieb mit vor-sichtigen Einschränkungen allerlei Positives, und sie überlas
ihre Bildtexte, stundenlang, ehe sie sie abholen ließ, ihren Grenzübertritt in die erste Lüge, die ihr klar war, ... 

Needless to say that, because of the scope of this study, other aspects of this topic have been excluded, e.g. the changing attitude of Bachmann toward social issues as it manifests itself in early poetry and later prose writings;\(^192\) or social protest that ranges outside the particular activities of women, such as in the story \textit{Unter Mördern und Irren}. Summing up this aspect of female social interaction, one may conclude that many of Bachmann's women do react to human cruelty, suffering, social injustice,\(^193\) either by taking a stand or by withdrawing. Those female characters who do withdraw must still be credited with a social consciousness; it is only their extremely sensitive nature that prevents their active engagement. None of them may be called anti-social. However, it seems that this part of their image is not a very pronounced one. Also it presents itself in the guise of human compassion rather than one of political commitment.
CHAPTER V
AGENTS AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT

This last of our investigatory chapters will focus on the ques­tion of development and its relevance for Ingeborg Bachmann's female characters. Are they static or dynamic figures? What are their agents of development, their drives, desires, determinants, motivations, their aims and limitations? For this purpose, the following agents of develop­ment have been found to be the most representative ones for all charac­ters studied: a search for identity; a quest for freedom; a yearning for a Grenzübertritt - a passing beyond all hitherto known limits. The second part of this chapter will then be devoted to a discussion of external agents and the extent to which they retard or advance develop­ment.

A. Inner Impetus

1. The Search for Individuality and Identity

One of the strongest of inner drives motivating Bachmann's women - as well as some male protagonists - is a search for individual identity. They feel thrown into and caught up in a system of depersonalization. And it is against this that Bachmann's characters almost without excep­tion rebel. The process of this fixation and determination of the indi­vidual by some impersonal system shows itself in various ways. One of these is language itself:

Alles ist eine Frage der Sprache. Sie lastet als Erbschuld auf der Welt: wir lernen die Sprache unserer Vorfahren und übernehmen mit ihr die Bildnisse, die man sich von den

Like Max Frisch's characters, Bachmann's women strive to escape predetermined and fixed personality patterns such as the sex stereotypes discussed above. In order to achieve this, they must find a new form of language:


Charlotte explicitly condemns the old language as a means of stereotyping the individual: "Immer hatte sie diese Sprache verabscheut, jeden Stempel, der ihr aufgedrückt wurde und den sie jemand aufdrücken mußte - den Mordversuch an der Wirklichkeit." 196 The reason for this criticism lies in Bachmann's philosophy of language, which was developed under the influence of Ludwig Wittgenstein. 197 According to his theory, the only sentences that express truth are those describing an individual experience or case. For example, Peter is mortal, or Hans is mortal. Generalisations from these - which any language of convention must make to serve its purpose of general communication - such as: all men are
mortal, are meaningless. Likewise Bachmann expresses the view, that all our generalizing statements are not only without value but fail to do justice to the individual situation at hand. Therefore, each individual trying to express his own truth must search for a new language. The existentialist problem underlying the whole language discussion is clearly expressed by Gerda in *Ein Wildermuth*, when she points to the relativity of all individual statements of truth.198

Closely connected with this problem of identity versus language, is the attempt by many of Bachmann's female characters to develop or retain individuality in thought. Here, the profession of interpreter in *Simultan* represents an extreme instance of the situation from which Bachmann's heroines are trying to free themselves.

... sie rieb sich beide Ohren, wo sonst ihre Kopfhörer anlagen, ihre Schaltungen automatisch funktionierten und die Sprachbrüche stattfanden. Was für ein seltsamer Mechanismus war sie doch, ohne einen einzigen Gedanken im Kopf zu haben, lebte sie, eingetaucht in die Sätze anderer, und mußte nachtwandlerisch mit gleichen, aber anderslautenden Sätzen sofort nachkommen, sie konnte aus "machen" to make, faire, faire, hacer und delat' machen, jedes Wort konnte sie so auf einer Rolle sechsmal herumdrehen, sie durfte nur nicht denken, daß machen wirklich machen, faire faire, fare fare, delat' delat' bedeutete, das konnte ihren Kopf unbrauchbar machen, und sie mußte schon aufpassen, daß sie eines Tages nicht von den Wortmassen verschüttet wurde.199

This same urge - in a wider application - motivates Charlotte's defiant: "Es sollte zu gelten anfangen, was sie dachte und meinte, und nicht mehr gelten sollte, was man sie angehalten hatte zu denken und was man ihr erlaubt hatte zu leben."200

Another manifestation of this drive for individuality and personal identity may be seen in the preoccupation of many of Bachmann's leading females with self-analysis. Most of the content of the stories
studied here is reflective and introspective, either in the form of a stream of consciousness, by flashbacks (a technique that was rather successfully adopted in the dramatization of *Drei Wege zum See* for television), or by an analytical form of prose, redeveloping and analysing past events. A. Weber noted this very point in another context: "So ist der Roman 'Malina' die handlungsarme Selbstreflexion einer Schriftstellerin, der Ich-Erzählerin, ebenso von Charlotte in 'Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha', von Elisabeth Matrei in 'Drei Wege zum See'." In Bachmann's works it is generally the mature person that begins to search for an understanding of the self. The thirty-year old "wirft das Netz Erinnerung aus, wirft es über sich und zieht sich selbst, Erbeuter und Beute in einem, über die Zeitschwelle, die Ortschwelle, um zu sehen, wer er war und wer er geworden ist." It is no coincidence, that the leading character in *Malina* calls herself "Ich". The self-analytical nature of this novel has been widely discussed by critics, one of whom may be quoted as representative:


However, the thoughts on the I expressed in this quotation are basically a rephrasing of Bachmann's ideas formulated in her lecture on "Das schreibende Ich":

... Die erste Veränderung, die das Ich erfahren hat, ist, daß es sich nicht mehr in der Geschichte aufhält, sondern
Similarly, one may place at least part of the stories *Jugend in einer österreichischen Stadt*, *Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha*, *Undine geht* and all of the stories of *Simultan* in the self-analytical or self-reflective category as far as the female characters are concerned. It may well be that the pronounced lack of social engagement discussed above frees Bachmann's heroines for the investigation of and reflection on their essence, existence, purpose, and fundamental motives.

It is hoped that a closer look at this major motivating agent - the search for identity - will result in additional evidence for the nature of the image of Bachmann's women. Neither social liberation nor political emancipation are the primary motivating forces within them. It is instead the unrelenting search for access to the "inner self". Most of Bachmann's characters, both male and female, are equally driven by the urge to experience and to understand this inner self's full spectrum of feeling and knowing.

2. A Quest for Freedom

Another major drive that motivates Bachmann's women - related to that of the quest for self - is a desire for freedom and independence. Freedom in all aspects of life: freedom from binding social obligations; freedom from tradition and convention, moral or otherwise; freedom in thought, expression and movement; freedom to choose one's own life-style. A closer look at this topic shows that here, too, Bachmann deals not
with feminist issues, but with the freedom and independence of the individual. The issue is rather that which Ralf Dahrendorf has described thus:

Jenseits aller Psychologie und Soziologie wird das Ärgernis der Gesellschaft für den Einzelnen damit zu einer Frage des Spielraums, den das Auge der selbst sein Innerstes durchdringenden Gesellschaft ihm läßt bzw. den er sich zu schaffen vermag. In ihrem erschreckendsten Aspekt ist die Welt des homo sociologicus eine "Brave New World" oder ein "1984" worin alles menschliche Verhalten berechenbar, verlässlich und ständiger Kontrolle unterworfen ist.208

The pronounced apolitical image of the woman - except for the occasional condemnation of National Socialism - developed by the poetess reflects interesting and, thus far, rarely explored dimensions. Furthermore, it seems that Dahrendorf's statement is of particular significance in the light of the sustained attack by Bachmann's leading female characters on rationalism and calculated purpose.

Free movement, as a single but very prominent issue for Bachmann's women, merits closer attention. The metaphoric use of the world of water as the element of freedom, of free motion, of fluidity which we first find in Undine geht, is operative in other prose as well as lyric works of Ingeborg Bachmann:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land</th>
<th>Water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rational</td>
<td>irrational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>functional</td>
<td>irrational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fixed</td>
<td>without purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tangible</td>
<td>fluid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trapped</td>
<td>intangible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>determined</td>
<td>free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>purposeful</td>
<td>undetermined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reasonable</td>
<td>true reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>realistic</td>
<td>Undine-like way of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bourgeois</td>
<td>Undines and like females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male (incl. Menschenfrauen)</td>
<td>without gravity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ahistoric</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For Bachmann's women, water is the element where:

. . . niemand sich ein Nest baut, sich ein Dach aufzieht über Balken, sich bedeckt mit einer Plane. Nirgendwo sein, nirgendwo bleiben.209

Typical, too, for many female characters portrayed by Bachmann is a longing for territorial freedom. Nadja and Elisabeth Matrei are cosmopolitans210 without territorial attachments:

Daheim war sie [Elisabeth] nicht in diesem Wald, sie mußte immer wieder neu anfangen, die Wanderkarten zu lesen, weil sie kein Heimweh kannte und es nie Heimweh war, das sie nachhause kommen ließ, nichts hatte sich je verklärt, sondern sie kam zurück, ihres Vaters wegen, . . .211

Bachmann's women want to redefine and to recreate the world, therefore, they discard all attachments. Also, the narrator in Malina talks in the Mühlbauer interview about the irrelevance of boundaries and national loyalties. This is a view on extra-territoriality that has caused some critics to trace Bachmann's cosmopolitanism to the supranationalism of the old Habsburg Empire.212 To whatever origins one may wish to trace this cosmopolitanism, be they historic, psychic, or literary (e.g. Rilke's "Weltinnenraum"), it does appear to be a basic physical prerequisite for the ongoing individual development of Bachmann's women.

Numerous thoughts, statements and even dreams express this urge for territorial freedom and independence. "Gehen wir weg, weit weg." suggests Mara to Charlotte.213 Two other quotations from the sphere of fantasy should be added, since they may be said to be better qualified to reveal the innermost desires than statements taken from the "rational" sphere:

Die Prinzessin war sehr jung und sehr schön und sie hatte einen Rappen, auf dem sie allen anderen vorausflog. Ihre Gefolgsleute beredeten und baten sie, zurückzubleiben, denn das Land, in dem sie waren, an der Donau, war immer in Gefahr, und Grenzen gab es noch keine, wo später Raetien, Markomannien, Noricum, Moesien, Dacien, Illyrien und Pannonien waren. Es gab auch noch kei Cis- und Transleithanien, denn es war immer Völkerwanderung.214
And Anna exclaims in the III. Dream of Ein Geschäft mit Träumen:

Ich liebe die großen weißen Schiffe, ich liebe Kleider aus silbernen Fischschuppen und Halsbänder aus Tang, ich liebe die Wellen, die an große weiße Schiffe schlagen, ich liebe die wunderbaren Lieder der Matrosen und die hohen Masten, in denen sich schneeeige Wolken verfangen. Ich liebe das Heulen der Sirenen und die Ferne, auf die die großen weißen Schiffe Kurs nehmen, und ich liebe das Ufer der Sonne am Horizont, auf das mich der Wind mit seinen starken Armen heben wird, ich liebe die Unendlichkeit des Meeres . . .

Matrosen, macht mir den Weg frei, meldet mich dem Kapitän! Ich habe freie Fahrt und ein Visum für die Unendlichkeit.215

Bachmann frequently uses maritime images such as ships, water, ocean, and islands, as well as rivers, to indicate territorial and mental freedom. Following the lines of argument developed in previous chapters of this study, one can summarize, that for the sake of freedom and independence, Bachmann's women forego, whenever possible, binding social contracts and obligations such as large families, children, and even marriage. They try to disregard moral norms and values whenever these may restrict their own personal development, though they do not reject them as a matter of principle. Lastly, Bachmann portrays females who need and seek a large sphere of freedom for their personal ways of life, although this search is limited by certain dependencies, especially the dependency on the opposite sex. Examples of this are: the withdrawal of Undine to the world of water after every excursion into the "organized" world; the desire of Nadja to return to her own bed - if need be even to sleep in a bathtub - during her trip with Ludwig Frankel; the tiny rebellious cries of the children facing the "spiderwebs" of a programmed life in Jugend in einer österreichischen Stadt; the escape of Beatrix into the free space of sleep and many others.
3. A Yearning for Grenzübertritt

The last major agent of development in Bachmann's heroines is the urge for the Grenzübertritt or the desire to pass beyond rational boundaries. "Denn bei allem, was wir tun, denken und fühlen, möchten wir manchmal bis zum Äußersten gehen. Der Wunsch wird in uns wach, die Grenzen zu überschreiten, die uns gesetzt sind."²¹⁷ states Bachman in her speech when presented with a prize for radio-plays from the war-blinded. It is a motivating force, that though discernible in the male characters too - appears especially to impel Bachmann's female characters. It is also closely related to the two previously discussed agents of development; we might even say that it is an extension of these.

What exactly is this longing for a Grenzübertritt? Various answers to this question have been offered:

a) The utopian view

Ingeborg Bachmann's writings are characterized by a dominant theme: man's longing for das Utopische, which for her is any dream or concept that is ideal and impossible, thus "utopian", be it eternal life, true love, the language of truth, or the liberation from any human limitation . . . Since das Utopische always remains utopian and can never become reality (it is the contradiction of reality), man's striving must always end in despair. But Bachmann's writings suggest that man may free himself from the vicious circle of hope and despair, if he realizes that "Utopia is not a goal but a direction," . . . He must learn to live suspended between reality and utopia; . . .²¹⁸

b) The religious view

Die Christusgestalt ist ein Ausdruck für den Grenzübertritt, für dieses mystische Verschmelzen mit jener anderen größeren Ordnung, die den Namen Gottes tragen mag. . . . Die Mystik ist ein Weg, mit dem reinen Sein, der lichten Ordnung oder
Gott in Berührung zu kommen, die Liebe ist vielleicht ein anderer: . . . Es handelt sich dabei um eine Verschmelzung der gleichen Art wie die in der Mystik vorkommende, um etwas im eigentlichen Sinne Unaussprechbares. 219

c) The irrational, romantic view

Wenn das junge Mädchen schließlich "durch den Feuerreifen der Welt" springen, also nach dem Eis auch das Feuer bewältigen will, so sind damit die Leidenschaften gemeint. Auch sie sollen durchlebt und durchlitten werden - ohne Rücksicht, ohne Grenzen, wie eben überhaupt der Drang nach dem Extremen und Absoluten das Merkmal der Bachmannschen Lebenshaltung ist.


d) The motive of flight

Das Fluchtmotiv also ist der Ausgangspunkt für Hauptthemen, auf die wir hier eingingen. Flucht bedeutet einerseits Ausbrechen aus der Bedingtheit der Existenz, insbesondere aus der Bedingtheit durch Zeit und bestehende Sprache. In zweiter Linie ist Flucht aber auch ein Aufbruch auf etwas zu. Das erste Ziel, das gleichsam Durchgangsstadium ist, heißt Freiheit. 221

e) The view of individual freedom

In ihren Erzählungen variert Ingeborg Bachmann jenes Ausbrechen aus den Ordnungen auf verschiedenste Weise. Das Motiv dürfte im Denken der Dichterin überhaupt tief verankert sein, es ist doch auffallend, daß sie auch in ihren Ansprachen, Vorlesungen und Essays immer wieder darauf zurückkommt. Ingeborg Bachmann betont, daß die Existenz des Menschen nie abgeschlossen, nie beendet sein solle, sondern frei und allen Möglichkeiten offen; er müsse wach sein, stets bereit, die Anrufe zu hören und ihnen zu folgen. Die Voraussetzung dazu, meint sie, sei ja in uns allen angelegt: "Denn bei allem, was wir tun, denken und fühlen, möchten wir manchmal bis zum Äußersten gehen. . . ." 222
Each of these covers some valid aspect of the concept of Grenzübertritt. Yet, a more precise definition, one going beyond the general terms used by Bachmann ("Innerhalb der Grenzen aber haben wir den Blick gerichtet auf das Vollkommene, das Ummögliche, sei es der Liebe, der Freiheit oder jeder reinen Größe."), will be attempted after the analysis of the Todesarten theme (which we treat as an antithesis to Grenzübertritt).

The difficulty in defining Grenzübertritt is voiced by the good God: "Jede Geschichte fand in einer anderen Sprache statt. Bis in die Wortlosigkeit verlief jede anders. Auch die Zeit war eine andere, in die jede getaucht war." He continues by saying that only the uninformed see similarities in the various forms of Grenzübertritt, of which the only common denominator is the "Neigung, die natürlichen Klammer zu lösen, um dann keinen Halt mehr in der Welt zu finden." It seems probable that he refers here only to the Grenzübertritt in the realm of love, which - considering all other possibilities - would only emphasize the amorphousness of this "ultimate" way of existence. So one may conclude at this point that neither Dionysian, mystic, freedom nor any other labels we have investigated apply to all or even to many instances.

It appears that the Grenzübertritt theme, too, is governed by the sex-role image since, for instance, the Grenzübertritt in the realm of love and emotion is reserved for female characters alone, such as Jennifer, Undine, and Anna in Ein Geschäft mit Träumen, whereas their male partners are more or less carried along without the concomitant change of consciousness. On the other hand, the few attempts at a Grenzübertritt by male characters are limited to a "typical male" sphere such as the search for truth (by Wildermuth) or "new educational concept" (by Fipp's father).
An examination of the various dramatic manifestations of this agent of development seems to yield three basic patterns as it relates to the female characters.

Firstly, a complete Grenzübertritt leads to the destruction of the physical nature of the acting character (e.g. Jennifer or Anna), leads to a climax, a state of timeless existence. Only the female is able to experience and to sustain this condition, in both cases during an intense love affair. It should be noted that in the two instances of a violent Grenzübertritt the heroines are alone during this experience. Lauranz misses the sinking of Anna's ship in Ein Geschäft mit Träumen because of the interruption by the sales clerk and Jan relaxes in a bar while Jennifer is blown apart by the parcel bomb on the 57th floor of the Atlantic Hotel. Men, despite attempts to do so, are unable to follow their lovers into the realm beyond. Lauranz merely "bought" a dream and Jan returns to the rational "male" world in time before the transgression. Depth (the bottom of the ocean), as well as height (the skyscraper and the heavens), are the realms beyond. Both, but especially the ocean are Bachmann's topoi for limitless freedom.

This type of development, as shown in the graph below, usually proceeds by stages and degrees of intensity, and it may be said to represent the extreme form of Bachmann's image of the woman and the counterpart to the female victim of murderous males. That the destruction of the self does not happen to Undine may be explained by the view that she is not human, that since she lives in the realm beyond all boundaries, her Grenzübertritt is the reverse of Jennifer's or that of other human beings.
Secondly, the desire of most of Bachmann's heroines for passing beyond all limits allows a dynamic development of character. Examples are: Charlotte, Mara, Nadja, the narrator in Malina, and, in particular, Elisabeth. Women who develop within this pattern are constantly searching for the realization of their Grenzübertritt. Usually they reach one or more high points in the realm of love or emotion during their life, but without attaining a complete Grenzübertritt. Some, however, resign without abandoning this concept of absolute being. Elisabeth serves as an example:

Nur eine Hoffnung durfte und wollte sie nicht offen lassen, denn wenn sie in fast drei(ig) Jahren keinen Mann getroffen hatte, einfach keinen, der von einer ausschließlich Bedeutung für sie war, der unausweichlich für sie geworden war, jemand, der stark war und ihr das Mysterium brachte, auf das sie gewartet hatte, . . . dann gab es den Mann eben nicht, und solange es diesen Neuen Mann nicht gab, konnte man nur freundlich sein und gut zu einander, eine Weile. 226

Whatever the final attitude of heroines who are dominated by this search for Grenzübertritt may be, they all, in the end, have undergone a maturing process.

Lastly, there exists a group of women (not represented in the graphs below) such as the elder Frau Jordan, Franziska, Gerda, and Hanna to whom the Grenzübertritt development dynamic is not applicable. This group exhibits little or no emotional development, although development does take place on other levels. We can recognize this in the course taken by Franziska's gradual insight into Leo's character.
In speculating on Bachmann's conceptions of the term Grenzübertritt, however, it might be worthwhile to compare it with Wittgenstein's ideas of the "limits of the world" which is congruent with the limits of that which can be expressed. Bachmann defines these ideas in her radio-essay "Sagbares und Unsagbares - Die Philosophie Ludwig Wittgensteins" thus: "only the reality of the world can be expressed by language - and this is the language of science," and she lets her characters continue:

1. SPRECHER - naturwissenschaftlichen Sätzen nämlich -
2. SPRECHER - und er Wittgenstein ergänzt an einer anderen Stelle, daß wir obendrein fähig sind, mit unseren Sätzen die ganze Wirklichkeit darzustellen.
1. SPRECHER Gemeint sind immer die Wissenschaften, die die Wirklichkeit erforschen und sie ein Darstellungssystem bringen.
KRITIKER Was veranlaßt Wittgenstein dann aber, von "Grenzen der Welt" zu sprechen?
1. SPRECHER Er geht nun einen Schritt zurück und sagt, daß wir eines nicht darstellen können, und zwar das, was
unsere Sätze, die die Wirklichkeit darstellen, mit der Wirklichkeit gemein haben.


1. SPRECHER Und Wittgenstein beantwortet sie so: es ist die logische Form, die beiden gemeinsam sein muß, weil die Sätze sonst die Wirklichkeit überhaupt nicht darstellen könnten. Und die logische Form ist die "Grenze", nach der unser Kritiker vorhin fragte, denn sie ermöglicht zwar die Darstellung, kann aber selbst nicht mehr dargestellt werden. In ihr tritt etwas in Erscheinung, das über die Wirklichkeit hinausweist. Es weist insofern über die Wirklichkeit hinaus, als sich in der logischen Form etwas zeigt, das für uns undenkbar ist, und weil es undenkbar ist, läßt sich nicht darüber sprechen.

WITTGENSTEIN "Was wir nicht denken können, das können wir nicht denken; wir können also auch nicht sagen, was wir nicht denken können."

1. SPRECHER So formuliert Wittgenstein die "Grenzsituation", die sich für die Wissenschaft bei der Darstellung der Wirklichkeit ergibt. . . .227

The essay goes on to say that the Viennese Neopositivists do not reject the existence of systems of thoughts or of metaphysical ideas such as God or Idealism but that we cannot talk meaningfully about them as they lie beyond the limits of our language and therefore beyond our analytical capabilities. Bachmann concludes that – according to Wittgenstein's theories – men can only experience (not express or think) the metaphysical:

WITTGENSTEIN "Es gibt allerdings Unaussprechliches. Dies zeigt sich, es ist das Mystische."
2. SPRECHER . . .
Ja, er meint nicht, daß es keine Werte gibt, daß Ethik unmöglich ist oder daß es unmöglich ist, an Gott zu glauben - er meint nur, daß es streng genommen unmöglich ist, über all das zu sprechen. Die Sprache kann nur über Tatsachen sprechen und bildet die Grenze unserer - meiner und deiner - Welt. Die Entgrenzung der Welt geschieht, wo die Sprache nicht hinreicht und daher auch das Denken nicht hinreicht. Sie geschieht, wo sich etwas "zeigt", und was sich zeigt, ist das Mystische, die unaussprechliche Erfahrung -

1. SPRECHER Erfahrung nicht des Empirikers, sondern des Mystikers.228

These ideas may - in our opinion - help to explain some of Bachmann's thoughts underlying her concept of Grenzübertritt as well as the male-female antithesis. One may equate the realm of descriptive language and thought with the world of the male, and that experience that goes beyond the limits of language and thought, with the realm of the female or see it as the goal for which Bachmann's heroines yearn - as Grenzübertritt.

B. **Outside Agents**

By far the most important agent influencing the development of Bachmann's female protagonists from the outside is the male. None of the prose-works covered is without at least one, even the story of _Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha_ which has only women as main characters. Men act as retarding as well as advancing agents of development. They are also used to set up or create situations of conflict for the female. One may well be justified in saying that almost all major changes in the female character development are caused or initiated by men:

Elizabeth: (Trotta) . . . und erst als sie Trotta in Paris kennenlernte, änderte sie sich so vollständig, daß sie ihre Wiener Zeit und ihr Verhalten dort unbegreiflich fand.
. . . weil er sie zum Bewußtsein vieler Dinge brachte, . . . Das Allerwichtigste war, daß Trotta Elisabeth unsicher machte in ihrer Arbeit. . . . aber zum erstenmal hatte ihr jemand den Boden unter den Füßen weggezogen, . . . 229

(Manes) Einen Tag danach brach sie plötzlich zusammen, . . . weil ihre Klarsicht nichts ausrichten konnte gegen die Tatsache, . . . daß ein Mensch, mit dem sie sich schon zusammengehörig gedacht hatte, sie weggeworfen hatte, . . . Sie litt wie unter einer Amputation. . . . 230


Similarly severe influences are exerted by men on most other Bachmann heroines.

What conclusions about Bachmann's image of the woman may be justified by these observations? First of all, Ingeborg Bachmann still
considers the male to be the most important single factor influencing the development, motivation and actions of women, and to play a significant role in their various conflicts. Secondly, the male - in his motivating as well as in his retarding function - causes or contributes to a maturing process in the female. Data similar to the following collected on Jennifer by K. Rothmann could be gathered for most of Bachmann's female protagonists:

Jennifer ist:
- gesellig
- gesprächig
- neugierig
- flüchtig
- unabhängig
- naiv

Jennifers Wesen erfährt eine Umkehrung in diesen Wesenszügen

selbständig, unbefangen, hilfsbereit, abergläubisch usw.

Thirdly, in many instances - such as in the one quoted above involving Miranda - the pre-determination of male action is made clear, thus assigning him a functional role in the development of the woman that is stripped of any sexist elements. Fourthly, the male agent of change appears in a variety of roles: as a teacher, as a saviour, as a critic, as a weakling, as a father, as a dominant or submissive person. Lastly, it appears that nearly all of the conflict situations in which Bachmann's women find themselves can be said to have been brought about, actively or passively, by men.

C. Patterns of Development

Having shown that Bachmann's female protagonists are dynamic and developing characters and having discussed the major factors of this development or change, it is now necessary for us to examine those patterns of development. It appears that most follow one basic type of
pattern or, if the story covers only a shorter period in their lives, this period corresponds to one or more stages within this basic pattern. The following outline will illustrate the basic form in the entirety:

**immaturity; youth;**

**growing up in a family and local environment, dependent:**

**urge to leave home:**

**relationship with men, marriage (divorce, remarriage):**

**departure, travel:**

**independence; disillusionment, with men; the search for Grenz-übertritt:**

**attainment of a certain level of maturity; despite disappointments, retention of a positive view of life:**

**coming to terms with world**

The pattern can be traced in its entirety through the lives of Elisabeth and of Nadja.

It is representative, in parts, for Charlotte, Mara, the narrator in Malina and of most of the others. It may also be noted, that the "development through the male" stage has been worked out occasionally in depth by means of a single encounter with a male partner as in the case of Beatrix or, more frequently, by means of many and varied encounters with different partners as in the case of Elisabeth, Nadja and Undine.

Since the conclusion of many of Bachmann's stories leaves the heroines disillusioned with the male, must we then conclude that it is basically a negative development? Many critics have suggested nihilism or at best an attitude of resignation. M. Triesch writes on this point:
The criticism of Miss Bachmann's prose is meager, and there have been no attempts to determine philosophically the direction in which the author is going. One critic used the term "nihilism" in his discussion of Das dreißigste Jahr (H. Beckmann). He used it in a preventive sense, thus expressing his fear that Miss Bachmann might be blamed for being nihilistic. Maybe she is. Her heroes do not accept the world which they judge so harshly and which is incompatible with their own views. They simply resign themselves and go on living in it, very quietly. They do not even insist on their original intention to alter things. It may be a question of definition whether or not one is willing to term such an attitude nihilism.

Is it only a question of definition? One must reject this label, it seems to us, for two reasons. First of all because of the theoretical statements on the purpose of literature made by Ingeborg Bachmann herself. She writes in "Literatur als Utopie":


It ought to be legitimate to apply this statement also to her fiction and thereby explain the seeming presence of resignation on the part of the authoress. An even more pronounced credo for a commitment to life is formulated by Ingeborg Bachmann in her speech "Die Wahrheit ist dem Menschen zumutbar": "Wer, wenn nicht diejenigen unter Ihnen, die ein schweres Los getroffen hat, könnte besser bezeugen, daß unsere Kraft weiter reicht als unser Unglück, daß man, um vieles beraubt, sich zu erheben weiß, daß man enttäuscht, und das heißt, ohne Täuschung, zu leben vermöge." She continues: "Ich glaube, daß dem Menschen eine Art des Stolzes erlaubt ist - der Stolz dessen, der in der Dunkelhaft
Certainly no spirit of resignation is to be felt here; one might even detect a kinship with Schiller's ideas on human dignity.

A second and less debatable reason for rejecting the labels of nihilism or resignation is the result of an examination of the texts themselves:

Miranda: Despite the cruelty of the last scene, Miranda's final words or thoughts are: "Immer das Gute im Auge behalten."

Beatrix: She overcomes her own emotion in order to do a favour for an old woman, as she repeats the empty phrase: "Ja, die Männer!"

Undine: Here, a reconciling note is struck at the end of a scathing attack on the male. A slight element of hope is expressed at the end: "Komm. Nur einmal. Komm."

Hanna: Here too the story ends on a note of hope. Hanna emerges slowly from a state of petrifaction and suffering.

Nadja: "Aber im Gehen, als sie schon seine Hand genommen hatte, drehte sie sich um, weil ihr das Wichtigste in den Sinn kam, und sie rief es dem Jungen zu, der Adorni siegen gesehen hatte. Auguri!"

Gerda: "Den Rest der Zeit bis Mitternacht stritten wir dann . . . als ihr einfiel, daß sie mich schonen müsse, . . . preßte Gerda, wie immer, wenn sie zur Versöhnung bereit ist, heftig meine Hand, . . ."

Elisabeth: Again, one finds a new awareness of reality, one which concludes on a note of hope: "Es kann mir etwas geschehen, aber es muß mir nichts geschehen."

Similar conclusions can be noted for Charlotte, Franziska and the elder Frau Jordan. What do these final passages of each story show? Admittedly, a state of isolation, of disappointment, predominates but, notably,
there is also a recognition of true reality of Ent-täuschung. They also show that in the end we are almost always confronted by an action of the heroine - small as it may be - which repudiates any impression of complete resignation on her part. Lastly, they almost always point to a ray of hope beyond the existing situation. It may justifiably be noted that there has been a positive development of the female characters who even in the destructive cases (i.e. Jennifer) achieve a state of sublimation as they attain freedom from all worldly strictures.
PART III. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF THE IMAGE OF

THE WOMAN IN THE WORKS OF INGEBORG BACHMANN

CHAPTER VI

A DISCUSSION OF ANTITHETICAL IDEAS AND THEMES

During the collection and evaluation of much of the basic data on Bachmann's image of the woman presented in the previous chapters, several questions posed themselves repeatedly and could only be answered on the basis of one particular segment of that image. The questions were as follows: Firstly, does Bachmann's image of the woman fall into categories of "traditional social role" images which some writers have carried over into the present, or should it rather be classified as feminist? Secondly, is this image basically determined by personal experiences and biases, thus bringing with it definite biographical information? Thirdly, is it a sex-specific image, or is its intent allgemein-menschlich, thereby disqualifying, or at least modifying, a strictly sex-orientated interpretation? Fourthly, what is its value-structure? Does it rest in a social or individual context?

These are the main questions that have been selected for discussion in this chapter. The task is to discuss them in an overall context and to qualify and expand on some of the findings offered above.
A. Emancipatory versus "Traditional" Concepts

As is apparent from previous chapters, it is not possible to discuss this alternative in a simple manner. Perhaps this ought to be a commendation for the poetess as there are certainly no clichés that underlie this image. First of all, it ought to be noted that this image of the woman is a self-supporting one. Women are the leading characters, the perspective of the narrative is that of the female in most stories and the problems are those of the female. This is often not the case in contemporary literature as, for instance, the study by L. Köseoglu has shown. She concludes:


Das Ziel dieser Arbeit, anhand einiger repräsentativer Beispiele die Stellung der Frau in den modernen Dramen zu veranschaulichen, ist somit erreicht. Die Tatsache, daß alle drei Autoren die Frau vorwiegend in der Rolle einer Ehefrau zeigen, hat eine kulturhistorische Bedeutung, die wiederum auch aus soziologischer Perspektive untersucht werden sollte. . . .

Secondly, the image is inharmonious in structure. The Bachmann heroine shows on one side - as developed above - a woman, who in many respects exhibits a very independent nature, who tries to extend herself emotionally, disregards conventional social norms, especially in the field of female social roles. At the same time - again as pointed out above - there are many "traditional feminine" features present, especially in the area of behaviour and attitudes.
How then can these different aspects be reconciled? The answer seems to lie in the thesis that Bachmann's image consciously reflects the dilemma of a modern woman: Although inwardly longing for conventional structures and roles such as marriage and home-life, she seems unable to overcome the urge for freedom and independence which becomes a barrier to her successful integration into these structures and roles. Despite her search for love and emotion, she cannot conform to the limitations, the "traditional" and more acceptable roles which society offers her. This is obviously the reason why Bachmann's heroines either have troubled marriages or unsuccessful love lives. It is also the reason why they do not really succeed in establishing complete independence or, if they are successful in this respect, it is at a high cost to their emotional life. This is the dilemma for Undine when she says:


'Guten Abend.'
'Guten Abend.'
'Wie weit ist es zu dir?'
'Weit ist es, weit.'
'Und weit ist es zu mir.'
Einen Fehler immer wiederholen, den einen machen, mit dem man ausgezeichnet ist.241

It also appears very likely that, for Bachmann, this dilemma is based on the innate qualities of the female, a fact which further distances us from the more militantly strident "emanicipated" image. In Bachmann's works, this dilemma is further complicated by a male, whose image is still basically "traditional". Here, emotionally and personally advanced
females have to contend with males that are fitted for their "traditional" roles only.

In sum, it is certainly safe to say that Bachmann's image of the woman does not agree with the commonly accepted female images of today; too many of the basic needs, desires, characteristics, and behaviour patterns of "traditional" female images have been retained. Also - with the exception of the highly obscure symbolism of the second chapter of Malina, "Der dritte Mann" - there seems to be no indication of a Geschlechterkampf. As a matter of fact, Bachmann's heroines do not seem to question the existential nature of their situation. While - as stated above - much of their thoughts are self-analytical, and while they do act to make changes and reject certain role expectations, they rarely question their specifically female nature or reflect on new concepts concerning the female status. Even vague speculations along these lines are soon abandoned by Charlotte. It may be pointed out, in conclusion, that Bachmann's "two-soul concept" in her image of the woman does seem to be more convincing in the aesthetic as well as in the psychological realm than many of the homogenous images offered today.

B. The Biographical versus the Text-immanent View

It is certainly tempting to work from the premise that much of the female image developed by Ingeborg Bachmann is autobiographically determined. H. Pausch supports this view as he writes:

Universität Wien. Auslandsaufenthalte und Autoren, mit denen sich das erzählende Ich wie Ingeborg Bachmann während des Studiums beschäftigt hat: Kant, Locke, Leibniz, Hume, die Vorsokratiker, die Wiener Logistik, Freud, Jung...

Similar conclusions are drawn by A. Weber:

"Malina" ist das Auto-"Psychogramm" einer Schriftstellerin. Es liegt nahe, weitgehend autobiographische Züge anzunehmen - zumal einmal Ivans und der Ich-Erzählerin Initialen als "identisch" bezeichnet werden und andererseits von der Ich-Erzählerin ein Dr. phil., was die Autorin selbst war, abgespalten ist..."

It should be added that in addition Simultan as well as Das dreißigste Jahr yield many striking parallels between Bachmann's life and that of her heroines: Elisabeth hails from Klagenfurt, most of the principal women - except the elder Frau Jordan - are near Bachmann's age, the stories are set in locations quite familiar to Ingeborg Bachmann. Most striking of all, Jugend in einer österreichischen Stadt carries autobiographical notes, though for obvious reasons the - presumably - female narrator has not been used in this study.

However, references are made not only to external parallels but also to specific inner experiences. Thus, Heinrich Böll, in his review of Uwe Johnson's Eine Reise nach Klagenfurt, refers to Bachmann as eine Heimatvertriebene, a reference made to her experience of Hitler's Anschluß, that may also hint at the exile theme in her works. And A. M. Zahorsky-Suchodolsky mentions the shock of Bachmann's separation from Max Frisch as an element of influence on the conception of Malina. Yet, despite these arguments, it is necessary to examine each case on its own merits. Conclusions, such as these drawn by S. Woodtl about the poem "Die blaue Stunde", appear highly hypothetical:
Worüber schreibt denn Ingeborg Bachmann? - In dem Gedicht "Die blaue Stunde" gibt es eine Strophe, die schon darum etwas ganz Besonderes darstellt, weil es die einzige Strophe in ihrem Gesamtwerk ist, die ausdrücklich einem jungen Mädchen in den Mund gelegt ist. Sie enthält denn auch das ganze geistige Programm - oder sagen wir bescheidener - die ganze Lebenshoffnung der Dichterin:

Ihr Herren, gebt mir das Schwert in die Hand,
und Jeanne d'Arc rettet das Vaterland,
Leute, wir bringen das Schiff durchs Eis,
ich halte den Kurs, den keiner mehr weiß.
Kauft Anemonen! drei Wünsche das Bund,
die schließen vorm Hauch eines Wunsches den Mund.
Vom hohen Trapez im Zirkuszelt
spring ich durch den Feuerreifen der Welt,
ich gebe mich in die Hand meines Herrn,
und er schickt mir gnädig den Abendstern.


Why is the question about autobiographical influence so important for a study of this nature? The reason is that, if one were to accept the claim of contemporary psychology, creative and neurotic activities are interdependent and that any creative product is limited, shaped, distorted, and determined by the subconscious elements of the author's personality, one should feel compelled to investigate such influences in order properly to evaluate the creative product. A short quotation from L. S. Kubie's extensive study on "Die Wechselwirkungen zwischen schöpferischen und neurotogenen Vorgängen" may summarize his thesis on this interdependence:

Folglich hängt die Kreativität zwar vom Ablauf der freien Assoziation ab, welche die vorbewußten analogen Vorgänge möglich macht, läßt diese aber gleichzeitig durch den Einfluß gleichlaufender unbewußter Vorgänge empfindlich stören. Dieses unentrinnbare Paradox führt uns nun zum Kern unseres Problems. Ohne freie Assoziation gibt es
keine schöpferische Tätigkeit; denn sie befreien das empfindliche, fließende und plastische vorbewusste System von der Erstarrung, die am bewussten Ende des Symbolpektrums auftritt. Gleichzeitig aber liefern sie es erst den Verzerrungen und der Rigidität aus, die das unbewusste System verursacht.247

Applied to the topic of this study, this reasoning may mean that certain repetitive trends in Bachmann's image of the woman, such as a hostility toward marriage and childbearing, the roving, unstable life style, the complex-laden relationship towards men, and the longing for extremes (Grenzübergang), are the creative manifestations of her own subconscious conflicts, fears, frustrations, guilt, and/or hate complexes. However, it is difficult to pursue such lines of investigation further, since not only would we transgress limits of human privacy but also because conclusive and complete evidence is — at least at the present state of Bachmann research — unknown.

One piece of inconclusive evidence, however, will be offered at this point for discussion. In *Ein Ort für Zufälle*, based on her stay in a Berlin mental institution, Ingeborg Bachmann writes about a visit to the zoo:

... Die Männer gehen alle ins Aquarium, die Frauen ins Affenhaus. Die Männer verharren stundenlang vor den Fischen, zuletzt vor den kleinen Eidechsen, sie haben lauter grüngoldene Eidechsen im Aug, sanfte, sanfteste, die sie gern mitnehmen möchten, aber die Wärter klopfen sogar die Brusttaschen ab an der Tür, es ist nichts zu machen. Die Frauen, alle weit voneinander entfernt und mißtrauisch gegeneinander, besuchen ihre besonderen Affen. Sie haben einen silbernen Löffel und einen seidenen Beutel mitgebracht und geben nur ihrem Affen den Zucker. Vor Torschluß erst treffen die Männer und Frauen zusammen, in dem Treibhaus, auf der Brücke, über einem angedeuteten Fluß. In der stickigen Hitze dösen unten die Krokodile. Alles blickt mit immer schwerer werdenden Augen hinunter, aber die Krokodile geben keine Vorstellung und warten ab. Jetzt könnte die Brücke eintürzen und die Krokodile lebendig machen, aber sie stürzt
nicht ein. Es kann niemand hinunterfallen, solange keiner absichtlich stößt. Die Temperatur darf nicht steigen, weil sie genau reguliert ist, aber da steigt die Temperatur trotzdem. 248

If one were to accept this passage as a revealing psychogram of the author, it could be seen to yield much information about Bachmann's view of the female and especially about the man-woman relationship in the disturbing picture of men meeting women on top of a shaky bridge across a crocodile's pit 249 and in the desire of the men to grab the gentle lizards. Also, the suspicious behaviour of the females towards each other while each visits her special ape would almost demand the label: jealousy.

However, there are also other opinions on the biographical versus text-immanent issue. R. Wellek and A. Warren note in Theory of Literature:

Even when a work of art contains elements which can be surely identified as biographical, these elements will be so re-arranged and transformed in a work that they lose all their specifically personal meaning and become simply concrete human material, integral elements of a work. . . . The whole view that art is self-expression pure and simple, the transcript of personal feelings and experiences, is demonstrably false. . . . 250

In view of the foregoing, this study has rather stressed the text-immanent view of Bachmann's image of the woman and has only in isolated cases pointed to biographical parallels though there seems no doubt that personal experiences, frustrations, and emotions underlie especially such stories as Undine geht and Drei Wege zum See.

C. Sex-specific versus Allgemein menschlich Interpretation

To what extent Bachmann's image of the woman is sex-specific is certainly of particular interest for a determination of that image.
Not only have classic female images such as Maria Stuart or Iphigenie possessed characters in which basically human, non-sex-specific qualities predominated, but Hebbel's Maria Magdalena or Hauptmann's Rose Bernd still display these characteristics while struggling with more sex-specific problems. But the female image in literature has become increasingly sex-specific as writers turned to particular female-oriented problems, situations, and viewpoints.

Three significant test points have been chosen for the purpose of determining the sex-specific profile of Bachmann's female characters.

1. Themes and Problems

What are the themes of Bachmann's stories and radioplays and what are the major problems her female characters encounter? First, of course, there is the love theme, the themes of Grenzübertritt and of escape, of a new world and language, of self analysis and of freedom. It seems that all of these fall into the allgemein menschliche category. Themes such as woman and industry, sex discrimination, woman and society, or woman in politics are noticeably absent. A somewhat different situation, however, obtains if one surveys the problems with which Bachmann's women are confronted: how to achieve a satisfactory relationship with the opposite sex outside marriage (Undine, Elisabeth, Nadja, the narrator in Malina), marital problems (Franziska, Gerda, Charlotte, Elisabeth), or how to adjust as a woman to basically incompatible males (the narrator in Malina, Jennifer, Nadja, Beatrix, Elisabeth). The narrator in Malina defines this difficulty thus:

... es gibt höchstens Männer, mit denen es völlig hoffnungslos ist, und einige, mit denen es nicht ganz so hoffnungslos ist. Darin ist der Grund dafür zu suchen, nach dem noch niemand gesucht...
hat, warum nur die Frauen immerzu den Kopf voll haben mit ihren Gefühlen und ihren Geschichten, mit ihrem Mann oder ihren Männern. Das Denken darin nimmt tatsächlich den größten Teil der Zeit jeder Frau in Anspruch. Sie muß aber daran denken, weil sie sonst buchstäblich, ohne ihr nie erlahmendes Gefühls- treiben, Gefühlstreiben, es niemals mit einem Mann aushalten könnte, der ja ein Kranker ist und sich kaum mit ihr beschäftigt. 252

Here we find the problem couched in terms which are more definitely sex-specific.

2. The Point of View

An examination of the viewpoint of Bachmann’s heroines yields a position which we can definitely call sex-determined. A few samples:

Nadja: 253

. . . ihr Männer seid eine gottverdammte Bande,

Beatrix:

Ein Mann konnte sich Dummheit eben leisten, eine Frau niemals,. . . 254

. . . ich bin eine Frau, würde sie sagen, denn das war eben der Punkt, auf den es ankam,. . . 255

Undine:

Ihr Ungeheuer mit Namen Hans! 256

Charlotte:

Die Sprache der Männer war doch so gewesen . . . 257

Die Sprache der Männer, . . . die Sprache der Frauen . . 258

The narrator in Malina:

Sonst machen die meisten Männer aber die Frauen unglücklich, und eine Gegenseitigkeit ist nicht da, denn wir haben es mit einem natürlichen Unglück, . . . zu tun. 259

Elisabeth:

. . . und es sollten die Frauen und die Männer am besten Abstand halten, nichts zu tun haben miteinander,. . . 260

In view of these and many other similar statements one may surely speak of the sex-determined, even sexist perspective of Bachmann’s women.
One may even speculate about an Eve image in reverse as the narrator in 
Malina reflects about the contagiousness of the "male disease":

... die ganze Einstellung des Mannes einer Frau gegenüber ist krankhaft, obendrein ganz einzigartig krankhaft, so daß man die Männer von ihren Krankheiten gar nie mehr wird befreien können. Von den Frauen könnte man höchstens sagen, daß sie mehr oder weniger gezeichnet sind durch die Ansteckungen, die sie sich zuziehen, ...  

3. The External Description

Lastly, one could make use of the characterization of Bachmann's women to determine the specifics of their image. Which points does the authoress stress? The catalogue of Bachmann's description of the externals of her heroines is very slim. Eyes are the most frequently described physical detail, hair, which in general is blond, follows, but the description of other physical features is rare. Sex-specific features are rarely mentioned, such as the well-shaped legs of Miranda, or the physical image of Mrs. Brown. Other parts are mentioned without apparent descriptive intention. Pleasant and "attractive" features and youth are stressed over beauty. In these respects, then, the image can hardly be called sex-specific. However, this lack of physical description could also indicate a lack of stress on externals in general.

As shown earlier, we encounter an entirely different situation upon turning to the psychic profile of Bachmann's heroines. We find broadly "typical" female characteristics such as beauty-consciousness, vanity, irrationality, emotionalism, and, to some extent, homelife orientation. Here, too, we can speak of a sex-specific image.

An analysis of sex-specific aspects of language has been omitted because the term "female language" is still too vague and too speculative to be used for the purpose of this study, though Bachmann has used
the term "die Sprache der Frauen" without further explanation. An inter­

esting definition of the term "Frau-Sprechen" by L. Irigaray has been

quoted by M. Reichart:

In der Syntax des "Frau-Sprechens gäbe es weder Subjekt noch

Objekt, das 'Eine' wäre nicht mehr privilegiert, es gäbe also

keinen Eigen-Sinn, keine Eigennamen mehr; diese Syntax

privilegierte eine Nähe, so nah, daß jegliche Diskriminierung,

jegliche Definition . . . unmöglich wäre".265

In concluding this point of the discussion, one may state that Ingeborg

Bachmann's image of the woman is in its nature very much a sex-specific

one, but that in its substance it frequently goes beyond the limits of

the purely feminine into a general human realm.

D. Social versus Individualistic Values

Finally, the question arises: which value system -if any - does

Ingeborg Bachmann see as relevant for her women? In particular, is

Bachmann's image an anti-social one? This study has pointed to the very

pronounced outsider roles of Bachmann's female characters as well as to

their very limited social engagement; it has also directed attention to

the very individualistic qualities of the development these women exper­

ience. On the other hand, there are the frequent pledges by Bachmann

to a social commitment on the part of a writer of literature, especially

in "Die Wahrheit ist dem Menschen zumutbar", where she writes:

Der Schriftsteller - und das ist in seiner Natur - ist mit

seinem Wesen auf ein Du eingerichtet, auf den Menschen, dem

er seine Erfahrung vom Menschen zukommen lassen möchte

. . . aber insbesondere vom Menschen, der er selber oder die

anderen sein können und wo er selber und die anderen am

meisten Mensch sind.266

We can conclude that Bachmann is trying to communicate, through her

stories and their characters, the conflict between the individual's
area of totally free movement and the demands of social integration: the greater the social integration the smaller individual free-space becomes. For example, Nadja recollects:

. . . Jean Pierre, der alles verkehrt gefunden hatte, was sie auch tat und dachte, der sie einfach, ohne je auf sie einzugehen, in ein ihr fremdes Leben hineinzwingen wollte, in eine ganz kleine Wohnung, mit ganz vielen kleinen Kindern, und dort hätte er sie am liebsten in einer kleinen Küche gesehen oder nachts in einem allerdings sehr großen Bett, in dem sie etwas Winziges war, un tout petit chat, un petit poulet, une petit femmelle, . . .267

Elisabeth, on the other hand, consents to marriage to Hugh, a homosexual, a marriage with little social responsibility, because "... jeder würde sein eigenes Leben haben und den anderen nie stören, . . ."268 For the same reason, as we have seen, most of Bachmann's women shun any reproductive roles and withdraw from their native family settings. This conflict manifests itself not only in the smallest social unit, the family, but also in a larger context. As a result, one rarely meets Bachmann's heroines in socially productive or professional roles and that is why they consider themselves outsiders and exiles. The constricting of the free space of the individual begins in the social groupings of children. Thus, the narrator in Malina recalls in the Mühlbauer interview:

The narrator is speaking out against the determination, the fixation, the utilization of the individual in a social context, these are phenomena that Bachmann criticises through her female protagonists. It is also precisely this utilization that "kills" the narrator in Malina. A very simple question: "Warum sitzt du dann hier herum, anstatt uns endlich einen Kaffee zu machen?"\(^{270}\) initiates the symbolic break-up of her identity:

Das Telefon läutet, Malina hebt es ab, er spielt mit meiner Sonnenbrille und zerbricht sie, er spielt dann mit einem blauen Glaswürfel, der doch mir gehört. . . . Er spielt aber nicht nur, denn er rückt schon meinen Leuchter weg. . . . Er hat meine Brille zerbrochen, er wirft sie in den Papierkorb, es sind meine Augen, er schleudert den blauen Glaswürfel nach, es ist der zweite Stein aus einem Traum, . . .\(^{271}\)

Here, a seemingly very insignificant question by Malina triggers off a decisive development. It bares the whole terrible rift between men and women, between those who utilize others and those who want pure humanity, between social purpose and fixation in "traditional" roles and freedom of the total-individual. Malina demonstrates one of the "Todesarten" of the individual.

One other dimension is added to this conflict by Elisabeth Matrei as she reflects about differences between herself and Robert and Liz:

Es gibt wieder eine Frau Matrei, . . . und sie würden also doch nicht aussterben, denn Liz würde sicher Kinder wollen, . . . Denn sie wußte nur und auch genau, warum Familien wie die Matreis aussterben sollten, auch daß dieses Land keine Matreis mehr brauchte, . . . und Robert und sie sich zwar in die Fremde gerettet hatten und tätig waren wie tätige Menschen in wichtigen Ländern, . . .

Aber was sie zu Fremden machte überall, war ihre Empfindlichkeit, weil sie von der Peripherie kamen und daher ihr Geist, ihr Fühlen und Handeln hoffnungslos diesem Geisterreich von einer riesigen Ausdehnung gehörten, . . .\(^{272}\)
The term Empfindlichkeit - as well as the idea of Grenzübertritt - may suggest a relationship with the extensively developed theme of the artist versus social obligation that has occupied writers from the Romantics to Thomas Mann. In Bachmann's works the Habsburg Empire appears to be only a symbol for a realm of individual free space, for a Grenzregion, for liberal multiplicity and pluralism. Although this realm is not strictly reserved for the female, there seem to be only a few men who exist at times within it and these are the ones with whom Bachmann's women have satisfactory relationships.

Are Bachmann's women then anti-social? Are her themes outmoded and unzeitgemäs as critics have suggested? Some critics such as H. Heissenbüttel have even seen Malina as the story of a neurosis because it condemns the social reality of the twentieth century:

Die soziale Wirklichkeit, das Objektive sozial bedingter Existenz, beruhend auf der Möglichkeit von Auskommen und Zusammenleben von Milliarden von Menschen, die alle von sich als von einem Ich reden können, wird abgelehnt, ja als etwas unvorstellbar Ekliges ins Negative verkehrt. In dieser Ekelreaktion gegen die Menge Gleichberechtigter steckt der Kern der Neurose. ... Was Ingeborg Bachman erzählt, ist eine Krankheitsgeschichte. Bedefeutet das Erzählen Einsicht? Ja und Nein. Einsicht insofern, als die Autorin in der Rolle ihrer Erzählerin, mit der sie nur teilweise identisch ist, sich von sich wegbewegt und weiterlebt. Sie hat sich über die Runden gebracht. Einsicht fehlt, wie schon früher, weil das, was als Psychogramm interessant ist, immer wieder in Literatur umstilisiert wird, weil in keiner Zeile der Verlockung zur Sentimentalisierung widerstanden wird; diese Krankheitsgeschichte wird für das Objektive, das Wahre genommen, der sozialen Realität die Schuld zugeschoben. Indem die Geschichte der Neurose ins Literarisch-Sinngebende idealisiert wird, erscheint die soziale Realität des 20. Jahrhunderts als das absolut Falsche, der Tod der Innerlichkeit als Beweis tragischer Wahrheit. ... 

Can one really call the intense struggle of the individual to gain or to retain some small degree of individual freedom neurotic? Can one call
the claim for "das Recht von Individuation, von Gefühls - und Liebensan-
recht ... umgeben von entindividualisierter und brutalisierter
Literatur ..." as Karl Krolow phrased it, outmoded? Are Bachmann's
women at best mere "schöne Seelen"? It seems that Bachmann's female
characters advance a viewpoint that could certainly never be timelier
than today. They are not anti-social but reject only one aspect of con-
temporary society, namely the fast growing integration into and exploita-
tion of the individual by a bureaucratic state. We have seen that the
male is largely equated by Bachmann with that society. We must now
conclude that the struggle for individual freedom is a very substantial
part of her image of the woman.
CHAPTER VII

AN ANALYSIS OF THE THEME OF FREEDOM

In this chapter a working definition of Bachmann's image of the woman will be tested against the data, analyses, and findings of the first part of this study.

A. Working-Definition of the Image of the Woman

1. The image of Bachmann's women is built around a personal concept of freedom. Bachmann's women long for freedom and strive to attain the greatest amount possible. They equate freedom with life. In its most extreme form, the Grenzübertritt, freedom represents an existence devoid of all limitations.

2. Bachmann's women, therefore, reject all forms of constraint: reason and logic because they limit freedom of thought; the existing language because it limits freedom of expression, and because it stereotypes the individual; commitments, either social, personal, political, or moral because they limit the continuing freedom of choice.

3. Bachmann's women need freedom in order to avoid crisis situations that are caused when one's options are limited by self-imposed or otherwise-imposed thought and moral strictures. They feel the need for freedom to realize their own form of humanitas.

4. Bachmann's women try to analyse, to comprehend, and then to rely on their individuality, their "Ich". Only by this method of
self-analysis can they achieve the inner and outer freedom that they need, any outside point of reference is avoided. It is here, at the turning point of the self, that the inner and outer worlds of Bachmann's women have their common pivot.

5. Bachmann's women exhibit elements of the "traditional image". Specifically, they retain those aspects which allow the female greater extremes of expression, i.e. irrationality, emotionalism, self-centredness.

6. Bachmann's women, however, are not able to avoid situations of personal conflict, degradation, and suffering or the destruction of their self despite their attempts to retain free choice and a high degree of individuality. This happens because they are not able, owing to their continued dependence on love, sex, and emotion, to shield themselves from the society around them.

In summary: Bachmann's heroines can be seen as incorporating personality and life structures which well equip them for the task of investigating the existence in and viability of alternative modes of survival for the individual in a world based upon the finite measurability of all things, in a society dedicated to analysing, labelling, and manipulating its members.

B. Freedom and Social Environment

An analysis of the observations and data in Chapter II reveals a common denominator: the issue of freedom. One aspect or another of the theme of freedom dominates, transcends, causes, or explains the various characteristics of Bachmann's women.
We have noted that almost all of Bachmann's female characters are between the ages of twenty and forty years. This is an age-range in which the longing for freedom, especially that of personal independence, is most fully developed. In youth and in old age freedom of choice is limited; childhood and old age would certainly be less suited for the development of the theme of personal freedom, particularly if it is seen, for example, in the light of the physical oppression that adolescents have to endure as in Jugend in einer österreichischen Stadt. Yet, even in the few fringe cases of youth and old age presented by Bachmann, personal independence and freedom play an important part. A case in point is that of the elder Frau Jordan's attempt to retain as much independence as possible, despite her dependence on the financial and emotional support of her son.

More significant in this line of argument seem to be the conclusions reached regarding the educational background of Bachmann's heroines. The fact that they dislike formal education can be seen effectively to support the theme of personal freedom and an unwillingness to be: "In spanische Stiefeln eingeschnürt, .. ." The observation about the intellectual niveau of Bachmann's women does not contradict the foregoing, since intelligence and knowledge are considered to be pre-requisites for the development of a free personality - an idea already expressed during the enlightenment by Kant: "Unmündigkeit ist das Unvermögen, sich seines Verstandes ohne Leitung eines anderen zu bedienen."

Furthermore, it is significant that most of Bachmann's heroines are not involved in professional or occupational activities,
or - if they are employed - they are engaged in jobs that allow a large degree of individual creativity - an essential pre-requisite for the realization of individual freedom. A certain degree of financial independence and much leisure time (common to Bachmann's women) can be seen as additional conditions which the authoress presupposes to be necessary for the freedom of choice of the individual.

Lastly, the marital status of the leading female characters was examined. Here, too, the results indicated that freedom was the main issue. Marriage was seen as a hindrance for the free individual. This was shown not only by the large proportion of unmarried or divorced women but also by the attempts and failures of married women to gain individual freedom from marital restrictions through various other lifestyles, such as lesbianism, adultery, asexual partnerships, and three-sided relationships. The whole marital issue is used by Ingeborg Bachmann to experiment with and to search for a solution to a sex-specific dilemma: the need of women for sex, affection, and love versus the obligations, restrictions, and bonds of a committed relationship or traditional marriage.

Summarizing the lines of thought developed above, it becomes clear that Bachmann regards certain social and physical conditions to be pre-requisites for the attempt to reach a higher degree of freedom and independence. But in their attempts to secure freedom, her women also illustrate the difficulties as well as the possible pitfalls and failures. In no instance are we presented with a simple solution. Also, what does this mean for women who are without these pre-requisites? What about illness, lack of education, poverty, physical oppression, limiting social obligations such as children, dependents? Do these
conditions exclude a woman from independent self-development? The argument about the inner world, advanced by some critics, does not offer a solution, since the two - inner world and outer world - are interdependent in Bachmann's works.

C. Freedom and Psychic and Behavioural Characteristics

Although much criticism has been directed at the so-called "old-fashioned" qualities of Bachmann's heroines, these "traditional" qualities would seem to have an integral function in Bachmann's development of the image of an independent and free woman. All three main characteristics surveyed in part one of this study - vanity, emotionalism, and irrationality - contribute to a form of personal development and expression that is less restricted and more self-orientated.

1. Freedom and Feminine Vanity

What better means but female vanity and Ichbezogenheit could Ingeborg Bachmann have used to illustrate individualism? Attention was drawn to the statement of the narrative "I" in Malina: "... eine Frau ist zu erschaffen ..."279; here the creative or self-creative aspect of the concern with one's own body and appearance is indicative of the active role taken by Bachmann's females in their development (if only in this case in the composition of externals), which permits great freedom of choice. This explains, also, why, as was pointed out above, for Bachmann, vanity is a value not a fault. Vanity and self-orientation are further channels through which Bachmann's leading women find a
basis of existence, a point of reference within themselves. They are self-centred, free - or trying to be free - of outside points of reference and, therefore, independent personalities. The concern with their outer appearance is to emphasize and to foster their independence and is a parallel to the self-analytical trend of these women, as discussed earlier. Here, too, one finds an inter-relationship between outer and inner world. Furthermore, it becomes once more obvious why the female is Bachmann's choice for her presentation of the struggle to achieve a new mode for human living.

It is also apparent that the authoress attaches symbolic value to the so-called "traditional" female characteristics.

2. Freedom and Feminine Emotion

For Ingeborg Bachmann, one of the most effective means for the achievement of freedom is emotion. Emotion is a means of self-expression; it allows unlimited choice of expression as the first-person narrator in Malina remarks:

Mein Du für Ivan ist ungenau, es kann sich verfärben, verdunkeln, lichten, es kann spröde, mild oder zaghaft werden, unbegrenzt ist die Skala seiner Expressionen, es kann auch ganz allein, in großen Intervallen, gesagt werden und viele Male sirenenhaft, immer wieder verlockend neu, . . .280

Emotion is not calculable because it takes a unique form in each person, in each instance; emotion frees because it allows the traversing of borders (Grenzübertritt) and of behavioural norms; it frees because it allows one - at least temporarily - to disregard the limits of time and death (as in Der gute Gott von Manhattan, where lovers are not buried but set among the stars); not least, emotion frees the individual of guilt because of its individualistic nature: love is guiltless.281
The good God addresses the interdependence of freedom and emotion here symbolized by height frequently: "Es gibt nämlich einiges in den Höhen, wo die Adler nicht wohnen. Freiheit . . ." Later on he speaks of the less exceptional people who fall in love, as making a "Seitensprung in die Freiheit".

Once again, we seem to have support for the conclusion that a modified "traditional" female image, with its emotional aspect, suited the authoress well for her conception of a free individual.

3. Freedom and Irrationality

Irrationality is yet another means by which Bachmann's heroines attempt to realize their ideal of freedom. The antithetical equation of "female irrationality" versus "male logic" has been discussed extensively in Part I. Clearly, in this respect, irrationality fosters freedom of thought as it frees the mind from laws, rules and methods of thinking which, because of their universal acceptance, require a conformity to thought patterns, thereby shackling the mind. In Bachmann's and Frisch's terms, the same can be said of language. Irrational thought is unpredictable and thus offers freedom of choice and opens the way for more individual ways of thinking. Ein Wildermuth is a very impressive demonstration of female reasoning - interestingly enough from a man's point of view. Furthermore, it appears that logic and rationality are used by the male to subjugate and even to "murder" the female. The novel Der Fall Franza is a good illustration of this point. Thus, irrationality also provides a realm of escape for Bachmann's female characters.
D. Freedom and Favoured Social Roles

What has our analysis of the social roles of Bachmann's female characters contributed to the image? Once again individuality and freedom seem to be the dominant issues. Each one of the major social roles discussed is based on situations of conflict between freedom and social obligation. It was found that all of Bachmann's mother-roles were unhappy ones and that motherhood was unpopular with Bachmann's women because of the restrictions it put on personal freedom. However, Bachmann's opposition to the mother-role may be also an attempt to reject a label for the female. It was noted above that all of Bachmann's females reject labelling, role expectations, and fixation of identity. Secondly, the mother-role limits a woman's freedom of choice. Here, we may have an explanation for the phenomenon that the relationship of Bachmann's women to children is best if the children are not their own. The inner-psychic restriction factor in these cases is smaller, cf. the relationship between the narrator in Malina and Béla and András. Lastly, the idea may be present that raising a child means preparing it for and forcing it into the restrictive patterns of life. Pipps is a case in point. This would seem to be the case also in Jugend in einer Österreichischen Stadt, irrespective of whether we accept or reject an autobiographical interpretation of the story. Again, motherhood is in conflict with Bachmann's concept of individual freedom. The only attempt to develop another person's personality - this time on the adult level - Charlotte's attempt to build "her" creation, namely Mara, consequently fails.
The wife-roles of Bachmann's females demonstrate additional conflict situations regarding personal freedom. It is worthwhile noting that all husband figures (not lovers) in Ingeborg Bachmann's prose and dramatic writings are in some way figures of oppression. They range from the rather autocratic ways of Leo Jordan to the very subtle superiority of Malina, in whom, incidentally, some autobiographically orientated critics like Adolf Opel detect a portrayal of Max Frisch. Bachmann's wife-figures are meant to show the near impossibility of combining personal freedom and self-development with marriage and the resultant intensification of the antagonism of the male and female nature. Even the nearly ideal relationship of the narrator in Malina with a "husband" and a lover ends in tragedy. Her personality is "murdered". Once again, it is worth noting that the degree of intensity of the relationship is roughly proportionate to the severity of failure. Bachmann offers no solution. The promised "Salve Zukunft" is lacking. The ambivalence of Bachmann's women regarding the combination of qualities suitable for or detrimental to a marriage as pointed out in Part I of this study only serves to emphasize the dilemma of women and to point once more to the issue of freedom as the determining motive in Bachmann's females.

The role of lover seems to be the one in which Bachmann's women are happiest and most successful. It appears that the lover must be seen as alternative to the wife-role. In order to find the maximum amount of freedom available without relinquishing love, sex, and affection altogether, Bachmann's heroines experiment with both roles. Here, as far as the freedom issue is concerned, the lover-role has certain advantages over that of the wife, since many of the restrictions of marriage are
absent. The individual has more access to freedom. However, less scope is available for the "wifely qualities", such as longing for loyalty and protection. The successful lover, however, soon faces another problem: as Bachmann's women try to escape the limitations of a normative life, by searching for emotional love, they find, on attaining this love, that once more their freedom and personality are withering away - this time through submission, through de-personalization. "Vergeh ich schon? Und vergeh ich nicht wegen dir?" asks Jennifer in an advanced stage of disintegration of her self. It will be granted that this is a different form of destruction of personality from those brought about by marriage, social norms or identity-typing, yet the same basic conflict is present. So it seems that it is not primarily the rejection of a given social order - as most critics see it - that causes the doom of Bachmann's lovers but rather the unavoidable destruction of the self and their personal realm of freedom which is brought about by any form of intense emotional attachment. This was illustrated also by the various degrees of submission by the women that were observed earlier. Undine is always able to withdraw into her water-world of freedom; Jennifer is not and perishes. In this context, too, one finds the explanation for the last observation that was noted for the lover in the first part of this study, namely the so-called passive lover. This characteristic seems to reveal an innate hesitation of Bachmann's females to commit themselves to unconditional love, as it might involve the unconditional surrender of the self. The fear of a largely compulsory process beyond one's control - as was pointed out - is certainly present. It should be added that some
of these points do substantially distinguish Bachmann's romantic lovers from those of Romantic Literature.

The homemaker role, too, is transcended wholly and in a very subtle manner by the theme of personal freedom. It was found that housework did not represent physical oppression for Ingeborg Bachmann's women as it does in much of the liberationist literature. However, it did symbolize limitation for a woman; it symbolized the male world of purpose and efficiency. For Charlotte in *Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha* homemaking clearly has all the characteristics of order, purpose, protection, and limitations. She is almost magically confined by the furnishings of the apartment representing her married life. They are symbols during his absence for her husband Franz. Some of the furnishings have to be destroyed by Mara before she is able to break out. The reader is told that, after Mara demolishes the living room, "Ihre Gefühle, ihre Gedanken sprangen aus dem gewohnten Gleis, rasten ohne Bahn ins Freie. Sie ließ ihren Gefühlen und Gedanken freien Lauf."\(^{286}\) Malina's request for coffee, the brewing of which is another homemaking activity, triggers off severe consequences, namely the disintegration of the narrator's self. The relationship between Malina and the narrator had turned into one of calculated social utility. An ironic note in the antithesis of freedom and restriction seems to be present also in the homemaking aspect, inasmuch as Bachmann's women tend to offer their homemaking abilities to their lovers without realizing the restrictive elements that are inherent in the gift. This is the case with Jennifer and the narrator in *Malina* as pointed out in Chapter III. Once again, Bachmann's interpretation of
housework is of a much subtler nature than in more emancipatory and polemic writings. It is rather the routine, the purely utilitarian and the social aspects of this work - or of any similar activities - than its oppressive nature that are felt to restrict the individual development of a woman.

Here, too, the female seems well suited as a vehicle for the description of the problems involved in the struggle of the individual against restriction.

An analysis of the few professional roles of Bachmann's heroines reveals once more the search for freedom and personal identity to be the dominant theme. The negative connotations of the terms used by Bachmann's women in reviewing their careers, the limited space given to that topic as well as the ambivalent escapist nature of their professional life show professionalism to be no solution in the quest to gain a personal identity and freedom. It seems that work, even though it is of a creative nature, as pointed out above, and may help in the self-developmental process, provides no substitute for true identity. The loss of Nadja's self-assurance when she is away from work indicates at most the acquisition of a pseudo-identity through her profession for the heroine of Simultan. It follows that professional work provides neither real freedom nor emancipation, but that once more its subtly restricting features are uncovered, especially in view of the social aspect connected with most types of work. In the case of Nadja, the restricting element regarding independent thought is clearly pointed out in the story. An almost anarchic view of freedom is voiced in the Mühlbauer interview by
the narrator in *Malina*. Here, any purposeful activity is seen as slavery
and even to the question about hobbies the narrator answers:

... Ich bin nie beschäftigt. Eine Beschäftigung, die würde
mich abhalten, ich verlöre auch noch den kleinsten Überblick,
jeden Hinblick, ich kann mich absolut nicht beschäftigen in
dieser Geschäftigkeit rundherum, Sie sehen sicher auch diese
wahnwitzige Geschäftigkeit in der Welt und diese infernalischen
Geräusche hören Sie doch, die von ihr ausgehen. Ich würde ja
Beschäftigungen verbieten lassen, wenn ich es könnte, aber ich
can sie mir nur selber verbieten, ... .287

Another restricting feature of work rejected by Bachmann's women is the
planned and purposeful aspect of any career-oriented work, an aspect
that, as was shown earlier, is part of the "male" way of living.

Beatrix's sleep may also be seen as an anti-work state of existence:

Nichts als schlafen! Nur würde Beatrix sich hüten, das jemand
zu sagen, denn sie hatte schon seit einiger Zeit begriffen,
worauf die anderen hinauswollten, ... daß sie sich nämlich
entschließen sollte, endlich etwas zu tun, ja unbedingt eine
Arbeit haben müsse, und man müßte diesen Leuten eben ein wenig
entgegenkommen und gelegentlich Andeutungen fallen lassen über
Zukunftspläne und Interessen.288

The last role discussed, that of the outsider, is exclusively concerned
with the topic of freedom and personal identity. Whereas the other roles
were largely used as test cases with which Bachmann demonstrated the
possibility or impossibility of achieving freedom and personal develop-
ment in the context of various female roles and activities, the outsider
role seems to be an existential one. Bachmann's women are by nature out-
siders. Their search for personal freedom causes them to see and to
reject as restrictive almost any existing convention such as language,
patterns of thought, behavioural norms, etc. Here, too, Bachmann does
not hesitate to show the personal problems and the negative consequences
involved with the outsider position for her female characters. The role
weighs heavily on them.
Relief is sometimes found in the companionship of other outsiders such as in the case of the friendships between Trotta and Elisabeth, Mara and Charlotte. Lastly, it seems remarkable that most of Bachmann's female outsiders appear to see relief in creation of a new type of man - utopian as the concept may be - rather than in withdrawal and escape.

E. Freedom and Interaction of Bachmann's Leading Female Characters with Four Social Groupings

An analysis of the interaction of Bachmann's heroines with their human environment shows once again the issue of freedom and personal development as the major motivating and determining factor. Once more this topic is exemplified in various human situations which are especially relevant for the female.

The rather negative part that children play in relation to Bachmann's women was extensively documented earlier in this study; the restricting factors that are connected with child rearing and which Bachmann's women try to avoid were discussed. But it also seems that for Bachmann's females the child itself carries a stigma of confinement. It represents the first phase of the life of an individual within an endless chain of beings. It symbolizes - at least in Alles - man's entrance into a pre-determined routine of life. Although the child is not yet part of a senseless, restricted and routine way of life, it is being initiated into it by the adults as shown in Jugend in einer Österreichischen Stadt. Hanna in Alles does everything to draw Fipps into this conventional and routine life, because she herself is already caught up in it and, perhaps, because she realizes better than her husband
that Fipps will otherwise be forced to capitulate. The narrator in *Malina* formulates the point more extremely: "... eine Anhäufung von Kindern ist für mich etwas besonders Entsetzliches, auch ganz unbegreiflich ist mir, wie Kinder es unter so vielen Kindern aushalten können."  

Here, once again, the life of the child represents an existence from which Bachmann's females are trying to escape. It may be said that the child's image is a rather tragic one, as it demonstrates for Bachmann's women a secular version of Man after the fall.

Analysing the observations collected on the woman-woman relationships in Bachmann's works, one finds again the theme of personal freedom to be the key to understanding. The occasional occurrence of sexual rivalry and of competition between Bachmann's women underscores once more their disregard for social bonds.

"Human property" has no place in their conception of personal freedom. The young Elisabeth in *Drei Wege zum See* yells at her mother that Robert, her younger brother, could just as well be her child. Bachmann's women tend to be so self-oriented that they respect no outside point of reference, be it of a social, moral or behavioural kind. A second point emerges here in respect to the antagonism between some of the female characters. Since being sex-oriented, as was pointed out on different occasions above, appears in the authoress' view as a restrictive element, it is, therefore, only natural that Bachmann's women encounter conflicts, even more so here than in any man-woman relationship because of sexual antagonisms. This point is reinforced by the material and ideas submitted under the heading "The Non-sexual Relationships". Here, free-willed and self-oriented women meet outside any compulsion or
restraints and are, therefore, able to communicate successfully. The same argument about conflicts caused by sex-oriented relationships can be discerned in the lesbian partnership. All relationships of this kind fail because they prohibit personal freedom and individual development at least for the junior partner. Bachmann would seem to reject the possibility of any true realization of a woman's identity through a lesbian relationship.

The most problematic human relationship for Bachmann's women is the female-male relationship. Bachmann's heroines search first of all for a solution to the conflict between achieving or retaining independence on the one hand and of having emotional ties with a man on the other. The closest Bachmann's women come to a solution to this problem is when they meet a man of similar disposition. This happens, for instance, between Elisabeth and Franz Joseph Trotta in Drei Wege zum See, and between the narrator and Ivan in Malina. Emotional relationships without permanency seem to be the most successful for Bachmann's heroines. The dilemma, however, is never solved and Bachmann's narrators lament this repeatedly. The many and varied relationships between men and women in Bachmann's works illustrate a gamut of combinatory possibilities between different types of women and men. However, the basic tension of personal-identity and free-space versus commitment and the necessity of giving up a certain degree of freedom underlies all of these relationships. Furthermore, it seems that in this case, too, the female-male antithesis is symbolic of the conflict of the individual versus society. Often, the male represents those elements which Bachmann's females are trying to discard in human relationships, such as purpose,
reason, pragmatism, obligation, planning, stereotyping of human beings, social responsibilities, security, etc. It is interesting to note that there are females on the periphery of Bachmann's plots who accommodate themselves well with these male values, i.e. the so-called Menschenfrauen in Undine geht, but none of the leading female characters does so, although vestiges of this mentality are present among them in various degrees. This fact not only underlines the complexity of Bachmann's leading females but suggests also that, because of the negative image attached to the former, Bachmann regards those women that search for freedom and identity as better and more advanced personalities. A last point ought to be added; the fact that many of Bachmann's females display a distinctly submissive attitude towards their lovers does not contradict the conclusions of this analysis as this is clearly intended to be an act of self-realization, of emotional intensity. As suggested above, Bachmann's image is based to a great extent on "traditional" characteristics and on the idea of creating one's own identity. This, to a large extent, means realizing and exploiting those characteristics. That they lead to personal conflicts is part of Bachmann's realistic presentation of the woman's image and may well be felt to express the essence of her world-view. The whole topic of Bachmann's female characters and society can best be formulated as the conflict of the individual with society. We found in Chapter II that Bachmann's women refrain from expounding social theories or concepts. The reason for this appears to be that Bachmann rejects systems where the individual is administered and integrated into the system, leaving no room for individuality. Bureau-cratically organized system and societies are disliked by Bachmann's
women since they have been worked out by men with their usual logic and pragmatism and they leave no room for the spontaneity of the individual, a point that Nadja makes in a conversation with Frankel in Simultan. Bachmann's heroines have a social consciousness, but they are non-political. They admire and engage in individual acts of kindness and charity and self-sacrifice. Thus, Nadja praises the personal initiative of David Lubin in helping to supply agricultural knowledge to all, but she condemns organizations such as the FAO\textsuperscript{293}: "... denn immer wenn jemand auf die Welt kommt und etwas Abenteuerliches denkt und anfängt mit etwas Neuem, dann kommt ihr daher und verwaltet es zu Tod, ..."\textsuperscript{294}

Thus, the narrator in Malina gives away a large sum of money to a stranger from Bulgaria who claims to be very sick. It is always personal participation and help, not social concepts and organizations, that engage Bachmann's heroines. This is in line with their ideas on personal freedom, which also allows the single person to withdraw from involvement if she wishes. Miranda, for instance, does not appear to be intended as a negative characterization. Bachmann's remarks on the extreme sensitivity which causes her to turn away from any gruesome reality indicate rather the opposite. Since Bachmann's women dislike any collective as a restriction on the individual, they would rather confront or deal with another individual than with an anonymous term like society. In this sense, Bachmann's females may be termed anti-social or non-political.

Summarizing this chapter, it will be agreed that the issue of personal freedom and identity is certainly not only the dominant theme of Bachmann's image of the woman but also the key aspect which allows a complete understanding of their actions, reactions, thoughts, and
motivations. Although these thoughts and actions may differ in various situations in the stories and radio-plays, they can all be understood as variations on this main theme.
CHAPTER VIII

AN ANALYSIS OF THE FEMALE-MALE ANTITHESIS

The second major theme that appears to form most of Bachmann's fiction relating to the female is that of the male-female conflict. It is closely interwined with the theme of freedom discussed above.

It was shown earlier that the male and his world represents in Bachmann's writings certain ways of thinking, of behaving and of acting. And it was also shown that these stood in stark contrast to the female and her world. In this chapter we will try to analyse the very complex theme of the male-female conflict.

A. The Image of the Male

It is impossible to comprehend clearly the nature of Bachmann's image of the woman without devoting attention to the image of the male and its very influential position in respect to that of the female. Analysing the observations offered in the previous chapters, it becomes evident that the writer not only endows her male characters with many of the "traditional" characteristics of the male such as rationalism, intellect and logic, but she also expands these in order to develop a clear counter-image to her females and to all that they stand for. Thus, the male carries the image of pure reason, calculation, logical and analytical thought, soberness, pragmatism, unemotional behaviour, of programing and administering all aspects of life, of fixation and order, of limitation. The fact that a few of Bachmann's male characters try to
disassociate themselves from this concept of "maleness" does not alter the basic symbolic image the author develops in her male characters. Even Ivan in Malina fits this image fundamentally. As pointed out before, in the few instances when men do venture towards absolutes or attempt a Grenzübertritt they do this in the "realm of the male" (e.g. Judge Wildermuth trying to find the absolute truth or the father of Fipps in Alles attempting to build a new man) and they fail to achieve their goals because they use "male" precision of thought and logical reasoning.

Bachmann's intention in developing this image of the male - based largely on a typical sex-specific view - seems to be to illustrate through the male a particular type of human being, a very contemporary type of man, to which her women characters are opposed. In other words, the male in Bachmann's prose largely represents a conception of man that her female characters abhor and are trying to discard. At the same time, however, the reader is made aware of a fascination for some of the male's abilities - such as great intellectual concepts or scientific and technical achievements - that her females are not able to overcome. Taking these images as they stand and considering Bachmann's many statements in her fiction on this topic, the recurring theme of women trying to free themselves, yet because of their attraction to the male falling back into dependence, can be taken as Bachmann's analogy for the situation of striving and aspiring mankind. The escape into total individualism is hindered by the necessity of having elements of order and obligatory points of reference. The elements of order and restriction, represented by the image of the male, reveal Bachmann's realization that human society is unable to function without at least some of the restricting factors which the male stands for.
B. The Male-Female Conflict

The difference between the basic male and female image as they appear in Ingeborg Bachmann's fiction has been investigated and discussed extensively above - the juxtaposition of reason and logic versus emotion and feeling. It was also noted that in some cases women were attracted to or admired the male for these very qualities. They willingly learn from male partners or induce them to apply their male talents to the world's problems. Cases in point are Malina and Ivan in the novel Malina. Both are admired by the narrator for their abilities to reason and, in the case of Malina, for his ability to plan and organize. The final section of Undine's monologue praising men for all their technical and intellectual achievements was quoted earlier. On the other hand, the reader is repeatedly confronted with strong attacks on these "male" characteristics and notes the frequent acclaim of the "female" values of emotion and anti-rationalism.

Surveying Bachmann's writings with this in mind, one detects a pattern that allows the conclusion that the female accepts, sometimes even welcomes, the application of these "male" abilities in those areas where they are practicable and serve a business or social function but that the male-female conflict is strongest when reason and logic enter into the realm of interpersonal relations, when they are applied to the analysis of emotion and feeling. This conflict is developed in one of its most grotesque forms in the unfinished novel Der Fall Franza as Franziska (Franza) reflects about her unhappy marriage with Leopold Jordan, a very prominent Viennese psychiatrist, who has kept a case-history of his wife and has attempted to analyse and tabulate her
innermost feelings and emotions with scientific precision. Even a kiss was cause enough to engage his analytical mind:

Das waren englische Küsse. Jordan, der ohne Interpretation keinen Satz durchgehen ließ, unterbrach sie, das ist allerdings interessant, was du da sagst, englische Küsse, das ist eine Fehlleistung, denn du wirst gemeint haben angelische, und sie sagte heftig, nein, aber nein, und er sagte, unterbrich mich bitte nicht immer, und er studierte das kleine Problem und analysierte ihre Küsse, von der sprachlichen Seite her und dann von der Erlebnisseite, . . . Franza ließ sich, angestrengt zuhörend, analysieren und unterbrach ihn nicht mehr, bis sie ihre englischen Küsse gewogen, zerlegt und pulverisiert, eingeteilt und untergebracht wußte, sie waren nun säuberlich und sterilisiert an den richtigen Platz in ihrem Leben und mit dem richtigen Stellenwert gekommen.297

Franza felt that her whole life was wrecked when she found out that her husband had used her as a test case and had noted down scientifically every feeling and emotion.

This polarity of the sexes seems to explain also the pattern of male-female relationship and interaction investigated earlier and indicated in the graph in Chapter IV. In the emotional areas it is usually the female that dominates and leads; in the intellectual, professional and paternal situations it is the male from whom the action originates.

It also appears that herein lies one reason for the many failed marriages and love affairs in Bachmann's novels and stories. It is the different approach toward love, marriage and human relationship that each member brings into such a relationship. New in this presentation of a basically "traditional" view of male-female relationship seems to be the fact that the two orientations fail to complement each other in the important spheres of human relationships but rather are in conflict. In both novels, Malina and Der Fall Franza, of the unfinished cycle Todesarten
it is the male nature and the ideas that it represents that are responsible for the "death" of the heroine.

This theme of the "male nature" is closely connected with that of personal freedom which was discussed in the previous chapter. Categorization and analysis by their male counterparts has the effect of imprisoning, or suffocating Bachmann's female victims. Franza's remarks in the "Jordanische Zeit" chapter of the fragmentary novel Der Fall Franza seem to substantiate this:

Ich glaube, das ist es! Man vereitelt den anderen, lähmt ihn, man zwingt ihm sein Wesen ab, dann seine Gedanken, dann seine Gefühle, dann bringt man ihn um den Rest von Instinkt, von Selbstverhaltungstrieb, dann gibt man ihm einen Tritt, wenn er erledigt ist. Kein Vieh tut das, . . . 298

The male, then, by his nature seems to be not only a restricting factor - but even a lethal factor for the female.

C. The Female as Victim

Bachmann uses the word fascism repeatedly while describing male-female relationships.

Besides the destruction of the female's freedom and individuality, besides the shattering of her naïveté and her faith in the genuineness of emotion and feeling by analysing and examining them, besides the symbolic murders that husbands commit on their wives, 299 the reader of Bachmann's prose-fiction is made aware of an element of sadism that the male displays in his reactions. Frequently the male appears to enjoy the destruction of the woman's dignity. Der Fall Franza, is again a case in point. Leopold Jordan appears to gain
personal satisfaction by leaving his notes - the analysis of his wife's feelings - to be found by her:


Wie furchtbar hat er mich gequält, aber nicht spontan, oder nur selten, nein, mit Überlegung, alles war berechnet, Taktik, Taktik, wie kann man so rechnen?

Repeatedly, we find the words calculation, tactics, analysis, intent, but also intelligence in these accusations. The male nature is evil (in Bachmann's view) not only because of its inclination to analyse fellow humans but because such analysis leads to manipulation. In her notes on "Otello" she emphasizes this when writing about the "negative-hero" Jago:

. . . der negative Held, dessen Intelligenz und Gründlichkeit über die Maßen schrecklich sind. Nicht schurkisch, sondern schrecklich. Sein Credo . . . ist das konsequenteste Credo, das es für den konsequenten Mörder gibt, also für den, der Intelligenz hat. Er nimmt die Menschen, die für ihn keine sind, sondern analysierbare Puppen, auseinander, er macht sie leiden und schreien und töten. Die anderen sind die Menschen, unzulänglich, mitleiderregend, krank, dumm, blind, aber Jago ist erhoben in seiner Furchtbarkeit, er versucht die anderen zutod. Die Menschen zutodzuversuchen, das ist nicht schurkisch, sondern bestialisch, wenn das nicht ein zu gelinder Ausdruck wäre. Es ist unmenschlich. Man kann Menschen zutodbringen, aber nur ein Mensch kann das. Und Jago ist das extremste Beispiel für das was ein Mensch vermag. Das Geheul Otellos, das Sterben Desdemonas, die Demütigungen und Leiden der anderen - das sind sein Gewinn.

In Bachmann's world of the male-female conflict, the female is assigned the role of the victim. Her female characteristics protect her from becoming evil herself, although, at times, she does contract the "male disease". But the need for companionship and protection, sexual desires, and, most of all, the marital state - because here the possibility of
retreat is reduced – place Bachmann's heroines again and again in situations where they will be victimized. By their nature then, Bachmann's women become victims of the male, by nature the males become – intentionally or otherwise – the "executioners" of the female. Josef entertains such thoughts as he reflects on his affair with Miranda in Ihr glücklichen Augen:

Wer tut uns das alles an? Was tun wir einander an? Warum muß ich das tun? und er möchte ja Miranda küssen, aber er kann nicht, und so denkt er nur, es wird noch immer hingerichtet, es ist eine Hinrichtung, weil alles, was ich tu, eine Untat ist, die Taten sind eben Untaten.302

This condition would appear to be an underlying impulse behind the search of Bachmann's women for communication and meaningful relationships with other women as discussed in Chapter IV. The devastating results which male action may have on a woman's life would also explain the great prominence given to the male by Bachmann in the lives of her women characters.

D. The "Sick" Male

The thoughts we have just developed about the nature and function of the male-female conflict in Bachmann's fiction allow us to understand the frequent, very peculiar, remarks about the "male sickness," some of which were quoted in the first part of this study. The "sick" male is one of the concepts of Bachmann that appears to puzzle most readers. Critics appear to be content with pointing out this phenomenon without relating it to the overall concept of Bachmann's male-female characters.

P. Hamm remarks:

Obwohl Ingeborg Bachmann alles andere als feministische Emanzipationsliteratur im Sinn hatte, spielen doch die
Männer in ihrem Werk eine zumeist monstrose Rolle, sie sind unheilbar klinische Fälle, Schläger oder Mörder.


Analyzing the results of the section "men as agents of development" it appears that in general men are responsible for the disillusionment of the female, for the destruction of her idealism, while at the same time they plant the seeds of a new sense of realism. It appears that Bachmann assigns to the male a role similar to that of Satan in the Garden of Eden, whereby the specifically "male" way of thought takes over the function of "Knowledge." Bachmann repeatedly refers to the "male-disease" as being contagious for the woman. It is this function in particular that causes Bachmann frequently to picture the male as evil and the consequences for human relationship and development seem to be Bachmann's justification for so doing.

Another aspect of the "male-sickness" is clearly pointed out by the first-person narrator in Malina and has been discussed above. It is the habit of the male to treat all women alike because he has made for himself a concept of "the woman," a habit that is devastating to his temporary friend as well as to his lifelong wife. It is destructive to the former because she becomes aware of being treated according to norms
which apply to many others; to the latter because she has become an object of routine:

... die ganze Einstellung des Mannes einer Frau gegenüber ist krankhaft, obendrein ganz einzigartig krankhaft, so daß man die Männer von ihren Krankheiten gar nie mehr wird befreien können. ... ein Mann zum Beispiel beißt mich ins Ohrläppchen, aber nicht weil es mein Ohrläppchen ist oder weil er, vernarrt in das Ohrläppchen, unbedingt hineinbeißen muß, sondern er beißt, weil er alle anderen Frauen auch in die Ohrläppchen gebissen hat, in kleine oder größere, in rotblaue, in blasse in fühllose, in gefühlvolle, es ist völlig gleich, was die Ohrläppchen dazu meinen. Du [Malina] mußt zugeben, daß das ein folgenreicher Zwang ist, wenn man sich, ausgerüstet mit einem mehr oder weniger großen Wissen und einer in jedem Fall geringen Anwendungsmöglichkeit dieses Wissens, auf eine Frau stürzen muß, womöglich jahrelang, einmal, das geht ja noch, einmal hält das ja jede aus. Das erklärt auch einen insgeheimen dumpfen Verdacht der Männer, denn sie können sich nicht eigentlich vorstellen, daß eine Frau sich natürlich ganz anders verhalten muß mit einem kranken Mann, weil ihm die Verschiedenheiten nur ganz oberflächlich und äußerlich vorschweben, eben diejenigen, die von Mund zu Mund gehen oder die von der Wissenschaft in ein verschlimmerndes falsches Licht gerückt werden.

This sickness, given so much prominence by Bachmann, appears to be not only the cliché image of the woman that the man has adopted and according to which he treats women—every woman, but also the source of his lack of ability and desire to explore and to treat his female partner as an individual. It seems that in this case, too, a "typical" female behaviour characteristic— the desire to be "the only one"—is defended by Bachmann and related to the search for personal identity and individuality. Bachmann's narrator concludes the argument that since the woman does not share the attitude of the male, male-female relationships cause her harm and unhappiness: "... Das Unglück verdoppelt, verdreifacht, verhundertfacht sich mit der Zeit obendrein."
male-female problem not only from a sex-specific point of view but also within a value system in which the female is assigned a position superior to that of the male. The male appears to be marked by a kind of "original sin" and, by reason of the inescapable attraction which she feels for him, he is able to "infect" her or worse, commit "symbolic murder" directly or indirectly by causing the female's suicide. Leo Jordan in Der Fall Franza, Malina in Malina, and Marek in Requiem für Fanny Goldmann are the most developed examples.
CHAPTER IX

AN ANALYSIS OF THE FUNCTION AND INTENT OF THE IMAGE

OF THE WOMAN IN THE WORKS OF INGEBORG BACHMANN

A. Main Purpose

Ingeborg Bachmann's female characters appear as working model images for a renewed or better form of human existence, models for a better man, displaying or at least searching for a mode of behaviour and thought which Bachmann considers largely to have been lost by man in contemporary society and a model on which she places a great value. In this context her women may be seen as anti-, counter-, or alternative images to twentieth-century-man, whom she depicts largely in the guise of the male protagonists to her female characters. Her male protagonists display all the — in Bachmann's view — negative and unsatisfactory behavioural characteristics and attitudes of our society: scepticism and cynicism, materialism, pure rationality and calculation, selfishness and egotism; in summary: a view of the world that is limited to a perspective of efficiency and rationality.

The uniqueness, however, of Bachmann's development of this theme is its integration with a sex-specific perspective, with a male-female polarity. Considering the material presented in the previous chapters, it certainly would not appear to be either coincidence or merely a case of "sex solidarity," that Ingeborg Bachmann almost always chooses the female to be the vehicle for such superior character traits and idealistic
striving. In Bachmann's view, which as we have shown places great value on so-called "traditional" female characteristics, the woman is predestined, because of her nature, to fulfil best this task of providing examples of alternatives, of alternative ways of living, feeling, loving, suffering, experiencing happiness, thinking, comprehending, acting; of striving for freedom and full "realization."

It is to be noted, however, that these "typically female" characteristics are viewed from a special perspective: they are not seen as complementary or even subservient to the male nature, but as opposed, even superior to it, or - in a wider sense - as an alternative to an unsuccessful, male-dominated world. They are not seen more or less in a sociological light, but are presented in a context of extreme individualism. Lastly, it should be added that most of those characteristics and modes of behaviour retained were - as shown in the previous chapters - modified, merged with new concepts, and filled with new meanings: thus, the yearning for love has lost much of its biological and social emphasis and gained a new individualistic and emotional dimension; the desire for beauty has lost much of its air of vanity and obligation to a male sense of pleasure but has found new value as self-creative expression.

Bachmann, herself, remarks on the point of "traditional" attitudes:

Zeitlos freilich sind nur die Bilder. Das Denken, der Zeit verhaftet, verfällt auch wieder der Zeit. Aber weil es verfällt, eben deshalb, muß unser Denken neu sein, wenn es echt sein und etwas bewirken will. Es wird uns nicht einfallen, uns an die Ideenwelt der Klassiker zu klammern oder an die einer anderen Epoche, da sie nicht mehr für uns maßgeblich sein kann; unsere Wirklichkeit, unsere Streite sind andere geworden. Wie strahlend auch einzelne Gedanken aus früherer
It is to some extent because of the "traditional" elements which are so apparent in her women that some critics dismiss this image in the larger context of criticism of her prose as conservative, old fashioned and outmoded; and refuse to recognize the change — slight as it may frequently appear — that these aspects have undergone. It is also apparent that Bachmann's image of the female is an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary one. By building on so-called "traditional" values, Bachmann avoids reducing her women to mere symbols for a crisis in the values of modern society. Her image of the female is based solidly on human and individualistic values, realized in some cases, remaining utopian in others, but nonetheless worth striving for. Bachmann’s women bear no resemblance to Benn’s "Verlorenes Ich". Though they do not tread the secure ground of their Romantic and idealistic predecessors, they carry on in their search for personal freedom and the realization of their inner selves and never lose hope of one day being able to accomplish the Grenzübertritt. It seems that this is possibly the main justification which Ingeborg Bachmann would have presented for her female characters.

We want to give special attention to this didactic aspect before going on to the literary and social aspects of the image.

B. The Didactic Intent

There would appear to be a profound didactic and psychotherapeutic element in Bachmann's fiction. She presents females in situations which encourage the characters to analyse and to reflect on their
situation. The sophistication of Bachmann's method here lies in her ability to depict a multitude of difficulties and complications that confront women in their search for freedom and identity.

Bachmann's women have to suffer and to pay emotionally for their quest for personal freedom. It seems that for Bachmann the conflicts are deepened in the case of women because of their more sensitive psychic make-up. Thus, for instance, in Der gute Gott von Manhattan the conflict, which confronts both Jennifer as well as Jan, destroys Jennifer but not him. In areas other than that of love the suffering becomes less acute and the solutions are closer at hand because the conflicts are less intense. This is the case with Charlotte in Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha. In not every case, however, is this drive for individualism combined with suffering, as the character of Gerda with her particular concept of truth proves — a truth that constantly changes according to each situation — (in Ein Wildermuth). As a matter of fact her individual concept of truth makes her life easier and puts her in a position superior to that of her husband who comes close to having a breakdown in his search for Truth. But in no case does Bachmann let her women submit to the obstacles in their way or give up their search for freedom and identity; not even Jennifer, who is literally annihilated by the intensity of her personal conflicts. One conclusion which could be drawn is that the purpose of this aspect of Bachmann's image of the women is to give a realistic depiction of the difficulties, the sacrifices, the personal problems involved in a person's and, more particularly, in a woman's search for freedom and identity, rather than to foster an attitude of resignation and disillusion.
Secondly, besides the realistic development of much of the personal problems involved with the quest, Bachmann attempts to find satisfactory solutions. Bachmann lets her characters search realistically for solutions, even compromises, and lets them find them on occasion. Despite the charge of critics of utopianism or of trying to reconcile the irreconcilable, for which in a way Bachmann herself contributed much support through her non-literary writings and interviews, there is much evidence for more than just a "striving for utopia." Thus, Charlotte tries various approaches to reach her goal of self-realization; Elisabeth and Nadja both attempt with varying degrees of success to reach a satisfactory state of independence, without having to forego all interpersonal relationships. The narrator in Malina seems to approach most closely an ideal situation by retaining lover and husband, withholding a final commitment to either. All this is seen as strengthening the case for a didactic intent in the Bachmann image of woman, of her female characters as role-models or experimental images, as Entwürfe.

Bachmann repeatedly speaks in her literary essays of the models, of the Entwürfe that the writer ought to offer. The didactic aspect of art is clearly expressed by Bachmann in her "Frankfurt Lectures":

... Was aber möglich ist, in der Tat, ist Veränderung. Und die verändernde Wirkung, die von neuen Werken ausgeht, erzieht uns zu neuer Wahrnehmung, neuem Gefühl, neuem Bewußtsein.

Wenn sie eine neue Möglichkeit ergreift, gibt die Kunst die Möglichkeit zu erfahren, wo wir stehen oder wo wir stehen sollten, wie es mit uns bestellt ist und wie es mit uns bestellt sein sollte. Denn ihre Entwürfe entstehen nicht im luftleeren Raum.
C. The Literary Aspect of the Image of the Woman

As was pointed out in the previous chapters, the main literary theme of Bachmann's image of the woman is the quest for a truly individual existence. Surveying the impressive ranks of great names who have engaged in these same issues, one is not tempted to assign novelty to the theme itself. The particular merit of Bachmann, however— and presumably her intent— must be seen in the fact that she presents the themes of freedom and individualism predominantly under the aspect of woman and her human environment; the female and her world versus the male and his world. This gives the theme a very particular dimension, especially since Ingeborg Bachmann's women in no way correspond to the often rather crude and polemic images found in the literature of emancipation. They have their kin rather in the more feminine images of the female.

Another important feature of Bachmann's image of the female is its realism. This is particularly true in relation to the interdependence of the inner and outer world. Frequently theories have been advanced that most of the conflicts developed by Bachmann really take place in an inner world, in a Weltinnenraum, and have to be seen exclusively in the psychic realm (cf. Malina).

This argument is not convincing for two reasons. Firstly, Bachman herself repeatedly and outspokenly distanced herself from what she called German metaphysicism:

... Ungeheuer wichtig war für mich dann ein anderer Einfluß: die Wiener Schule. Man hat schon immer in Wien einen scharfen Kampf gegen die deutsche Metaphysik geführt: Nieder mit der deutschen Metaphysik, die unser Unglück ist.310

In the same interview Bachmann speaks pointedly of the "Verführung... zum deutschen Irrationaldenken..." The clarity of Bachmann's
statements on this topic make the chance of coded meanings and a "deeper" sense in her prose writings very unlikely. Inner processes are presented as such, as in the case of "The Third Man," in the second chapter of Malina. With a writer like Bachmann, who places so much value on the exact relationship between thought and language, and a very precise language at that, there is little room left for speculative interpretation.

A second argument against the "inner world theory" is the development of her female characters. This development exhibits an intense interdependence between the physical and the psychic realm. This is particularly the case with Bachmann's main theme of freedom and self-realization. Evidence has been supplied in the previous chapters that the inner feeling of being free is always accompanied by a consciousness of spatial separation - small as it may sometimes be in actuality - of the female character from her environment. All of Bachmann's women need physical and spatial freedom as a prerequisite to any degree of inner freedom. Bachmann appears to postulate a thesis of interdependence between the physical and psychic situation of an individual. Also, she clearly speaks of the deformation of the narrator's mind and body in Malina. She must, therefore, expect to be taken literally whenever she develops any "outer" conflicts. This does not deny or invalidate the fact that Bachmann makes use of symbols and metaphors, that she allows much space to the unreal and to the dream-world.

Another point that is of interest in this context is the unity of Bachmann's image of the woman. Analysing the facts and observations presented in this study, it appears that there are great similarities
between the various female characters in background, personal data, youthful experience, and environment: there is much congruency. The further the development of the individual woman is traced, however, the more dissimilarities that accumulate. We may conclude that Bachmann's intent was rather to show individual responses and reactions to similar problems and challenges than to develop completely unrelated female characterizations. Keeping this in mind, the individuality of responses and reactions becomes even more significant. It is the main theme of freedom and individualism that ties the various individual images together and allows us to speak of the image of the woman, a common image in the sense of similarly motivated responses to a common challenge. Any author's attempt to develop a collective image would, in Bachmann's view, stereotype the individual.

A discussion of the literary aspect of Bachmann's image of the woman would be incomplete without a final look at the poetic form of the authoress' presentation. The overt nature of Bachmann's rhetoric, imagery, and symbolism in her prose, often the target of negative criticism as opposed to the positive response to her poetry, can, we believe, be defended: Bachmann's "poetic" imagery and diction actively support her main theme of the woman and her search for personal freedom and individualism. The extensive symbolic development of the male as opposed to the female has been discussed in previous chapters. Of the many additional motifs that have only been touched upon above, the most frequently recurring is water.

Water and ocean were found to be the most consistently used metaphors. They are clearly used to represent the image of freedom. It
seems that Bachmann selected this particular substance, water, because of its amorphous-quality, because it facilitates three dimensional, unhindered movement (this figurative picture of freedom was used extensively in the radio-play Ein Geschäft mit Träumen in the underwater scene during the third dream), and finally, because of the image of limitlessness that is usually associated with the ocean. All this made it very suitable for use in the presentation of her vision of freedom. There is hardly a single story or radio-play where water is not assigned this role and only few heroines who do not at one time or another immerse themselves in it. Water is Bachmann's major symbol for freedom and the most extensively used metaphor in her narrative prose. This basic symbolic meaning of water is enhanced by Bachmann's persistent use of solid ground as an antithetical image representing the rigid (and secure) world of the male. A most effective example of this use of water imagery in conjunction with its antithesis, terra firma, occurs in Undine geht, in one of those exceptional moments when Undine feels herself on the verge of successfully accomplishing the Grenzübertritt with a male lover:

 Dann sind alle Wasser über die Ufer getreten, die Flüsse haben sich erhoben, die Seerosen sind gleich hundertweis erblüht und ertrunken, und das Meer war ein machtvoller Seufzer, es schlug, schlug und rannte und rollte gegen die Erde an, daß seine Lefzen triefen von weißem Schaum.

D. A Social Intent?

Although Bachmann seems nowhere to formulate clear social theses, or to express sympathy with socialist ideologies, one may speculate about the social theme present in the development of her image of the
woman. In this essay "Das Unglück und die Gottesliebe - Der Weg Simone Weils" Bachmann points to Simone Weil's rejection of Taylorism, the Ford System or any other rationalization of human work. She recalls Weil's opposition to the so-called psychotechnic, the time studies of assembly line work and calls this the perfection of slavery:

Weil: "In allen anderen Formen der Sklaverei liegt die Sklaverei in den Umständen. Nur hier wird sie in die Arbeit selbst getragen."

Simone Weil bekämpft darum auch heftig die Anwendung der Psychotechnik - die sich damals übrigens noch in einem Anfangszustand befand - und meinte, daß unter der Diktatur ihrer Berechnungen, etwa über einsetzende Ermüdung, Abnehmen der Aufmerksamkeit nach soundsoviel Arbeitsstunden usw., die Versklavung perfekt werde.314

The postulate: "analytical, rational thought = negative results" appears to apply once again. If we are correct in applying these ideas to Bachmann's male-female thesis, then we would certainly have to admit at least a degree of social intent. This idea would also help to explain Bachmann's occasional reference to the male world and its attitudes as fascist.

E. The Intellectual Design of Bachmann's Image of the Woman

It remains to take a final look at the overall intellectual design of her image of the woman as it emerges from this study. Bachmann herself does not offer much more than a casual remark in answer to a question of K. Sauerland about the purpose of her choice of women as leading characters:

. . . und mir ist eingefallen, daß früher immer die großen Schriftsteller, . . . großen Wert darauf gelegt haben, . . . die Mores einer Zeit durch eine Reihe von Frauenporträts zu zeigen. Bei mir stehen zwar die Frauen im Mittelpunkt, aber es ist nicht unwichtig, was rundherum ist, ihre Beziehungen zu ihrer Arbeit, zu ihren Männern.315
She also offers the rather vague formula of the "Wiederspiel des Unmöglichen mit dem Möglichen". However, reviewing and summarizing the observations and conclusions advanced in the previous chapters, we see a complex conflict-laden image taking on final contours.

Departing from a "traditional" male and female role and identity structure, Bachmann's women have evolved into a state of modified "traditional" substance, influenced by and allied with the new components of an urge for freedom and individuality. This development has upset the original complementation and balance of the male and female sex-specific identities and has led to a very problematic relationship between them.

The conflicts arise from the fact that the male partner has largely retained his original condition, whereas the female has evolved. (Because "traditional" female behaviour forms such as emotionalism and thought patterns such as irrationality had been upgraded into positive and desirable qualities, much of their originally harmonious relationship with their male opposites has been destroyed.) The added desire of the woman for freedom and individuality has intensified this conflict until there are now two worlds in opposition. We can, however, also observe the continued existence of the "traditional" female image as represented, for instance, by the Menschenfrauen in Undine geht or the "common" women as in Ein Requiem für Fanny Goldmann. No noticeable disharmony exists between them and their male partners. Continuing our analysis of the essence of Bachmann's heroines, we found a complex structure of opposing drives and disagreeing elements. On one side there was still the strong longing for love, affection, paternalism, and protection which now clashed with the urge for freedom and the development of the self on the
other. In the absence of similarly evolved male partners, Bachmann's heroines are confronted with extremely difficult relationships with the male. Since Bachmann's women are unable to resist for very long their attraction to men, because of their retention of much of their original sex-typed longings and because of their libido, they enter into relationships with men which turn out at best to be unsatisfactory and at worst to end with the destruction of the female's inner existence. Hence, Bachmann's heroines place their hope in the possible escape from this condition, the Grenzübertritt, an existence which is free of these limitations, conflicts and restrictions.
PART IV. CONCLUSION

CHAPTER X
A SUMMARY DISCUSSION OF MAJOR INTERPRETATIONS

After having presented various interpretations to which our analyses have led, we will compare them now to those which deal with identical or similar areas in Bachmann research. Noted critics such as H. Pausch, E. Summerfield, S. Weigel, and M. Jurgensen not only offer views on the nature of Bachmann's heroines but also discuss other aspects of the Todesarten novels.

An evaluation of Pausch's excellent analysis of Bachmann's image of the woman must, in order to be fair, consider the fact that it appeared before the publication of the fragments of two of the Todesarten novels and that it, therefore, argues from a more limited point of view. Nonetheless, Pausch's discussion of the female characters in Bachmann's fiction is so substantial that it merits consideration.

Pausch's first thesis rests on the premise that social convention and role ethics subjugate Bachmann's heroines and privilege the male. According to him, the women in Simultan reject and break free of their "traditional" role image:

Pausch then explains the absence of successful marriages in the Simultan stories by blaming the men's ignorance of the woman's right to independence and he credits the women with a rebellious claim to the privileges of a man's world:

In einer Welt, in der der Mann das Recht auf die Eigenständigkeit der Frau noch nicht begriffen hat, haben auch Ehen keinen Sinn mehr, . . . In diesen Erzählungen werden die von der Welt des Mannes abonnierten Privilegien "simultan", also von beiden Geschlechtern gleichzeitig beansprucht. Daher passen zu der Simultan-Dolmetscherin Nadja in der Titelerzählung Simultan die Eigenschaften eines vom Beruf besessenen Mannes recht gut.321

Here, Pausch's interpretation of social convention and "traditional" role images entrapping the woman, espouses the kind of emancipatory - even feminist - lines of thought which we have consistently rejected. Pausch's interpretation ignores, for instance, the critical statements made by Nadja in "Simultan" - some of which we have quoted earlier - about such "male" activities as research and administration. Although Pausch directs attention quite rightly to the heroine's desire for individuality, his line of approach leads him to underestimate the deeper substance of Bachmann's male-female antagonism. By tracing the conflict to a denial of self-development, to a strait jacket of "Rollenzwang" and "Sittlichkeitsdenken" that is enforced by the male in a male-dominated society, to a prefabricated role from which Bachmann's females try to escape, Pausch reduces the issue largely to one of social and sexual emancipation. In contrast to this, we have tried to show that there exists a basic incompatibility between the male's and the female's world and an antagonistic form of existence that transcends emancipatory social issues. Bachmann's heroines can not gain freedom
by attaining the privileges of the male. Furthermore, by rejecting the
existence of "traditional" elements in Bachmann's image of the female
Pausch is unable to expose the inner dilemma of these women:

Im Werk von Ingeborg Bachmann endlich begegnen wir einem
Frauentypus . . . auf den die traditionellen Rollenleitbilder
nicht mehr anwendbar sind. Hier werden die . . . [traditionellen]
Kategorien der Rollenethik der Frau total negiert und durch-
brochen.322

As a consequence, he fails to explain the seemingly contradictory
behaviour of Bachmann's women as in the case of Undine who repeatedly
returns with eager desire to the world of the male which she has
indicted so harshly:

Trotz ihrer Scharfsicht für die Logik des Mannes, die Undine
heftig ablehnt, ist sie eine Art tragisches Wesen, denn nach
der Abrechnung bleibt ihr nur vorbehalten, die gleichen
Fehler erneut zu begehen. "Komm", so richtet sich abschließend
wieder ihr Ruf an die Menschen, "nur einmal. Komm."323

Pausch's second and more detailed interpretation deals with
Bachmann's novel Malina. He conceives Malina and the narrator as two
antithetical parts of one person (the "epic I"). These parts are unable
to coexist because external moral codes favour Malina but cause the
disintegration of the narrator:

Diese Bipolarität aber wird von der "Außenwelt", von dem
herrschenden Moralsystem zugunsten der Entscheidung für
eine Seite unterdrückt. Und eben daran geht auch das Ich
in Malina, wo der Vorstoß gewagt wird, zugrunde.324

Pausch continues by describing the narrator and — in a wider context —
Bachmann's heroines in general as characters of hypersensibility with-
drawing into an inner world, as characters who question their own
existence and admit to a "Verhaltensschwäche". Although, Pausch points
quite correctly to the outside forces acting upon the narrator in
Malina, which he terms "herrschende Moralsysteme" and which we have defined as the male world, we disagree substantially with the characteristics he accredits the narrator and the dynamics of the interaction of the characters. We have earlier tried to show the great value Bachmann attaches to the woman's ways of perceiving and existing in contrast to the man's. Pausch's view of the narrator ("Der hypersensiblen Erzählerin ist Außenwelt nicht nur gegenstandslos geworden, sondern unerträglich, und das seit der Bekanntschaft mit Ivan."325) appears to contradict substantially the narrator's many statements about the re-generation of her self brought about by Ivan which enables her: "... mit den ersten Worten dieser Welt wieder die Ehre zu erweisen, ..."326 and to reassert her outer existence: "Endlich gehe ich auch in meinem Fleisch herum, mit dem Körper, der mir durch eine Verachtung fremd geworden ist,..."327 Furthermore, Pausch's interpretation of the narrator's character seems to contradict his earlier view of the leading females in Bachmann's stories: "Abgesehen von Frau Jordan ... sind für alle Hauptpersonen Selbstbewußtsein und Unabhängigkeit Grundverhalten."328 Although one might argue here that these women act along the lines of the narrator's Malina part, it seems to us that such an argument would be rather contrived. We feel that our own approach is a more consistent analysis of all of Bachmann's heroines. It may be added that Pausch's analysis of a "Verhaltensschwäche" on the part of the narrator in Malina shows lines of analogy to Jordan's analysis of Franza. There, Bachmann tries to show that Franza's "abnormal" behaviour - as Jordan sees it - is caused by Jordan himself as one of the means by which he "kills" Franza. Likewise the narrator's progressively solipsistic behaviour, caused by
fear just as in Franza's case, must be seen as induced by Malina and foreshadowing her murder. Furthermore, much of Pausch's evidence to prove the "Verhaltensschwäche" of the narrator, such as rejection of the "verordnete Denken", of planning, of regular useful activity, of administration and bureaucracy, we have earlier shown to be part of the vision of Bachmann's heroines: a vision of a better world based on individual freedom and an existence without pre-defined behaviour and male-dominated goals. In short, Pausch blames the murder on the victim rather than on Malina and the world of the male. The narrator is killed because she does not know how to survive.

Pausch counterbalances his concept of a weak and introverted narrator with that of a strong, supportive Malina and, going beyond this, he sees Malina "nicht nur als Gegensatz, sondern als integraler Teil des epischen Ichs". As evidence, he points to the many passages on the "Doppelleben" and to the important statement of the narrator: "Ich bin auch Malinas Geschöpf." It would lead us astray to enter here into a discussion on structural issues. We have taken—contrary to most critics—what we hope to be a more perceptive approach. In our view, Bachmann, in this passage, did not imply a double identity between Malina and the narrator but shows the gradual distortion of part of the narrator's self by Malina. She also shows the dichotomy between the narrator's true self and Malina's image of the narrator's self, his "creature" which in important aspects equals Ivan's "creature" as both have their origin in the man's image of the woman. Using two different lovers, Malina and Ivan, Bachmann demonstrates the conflicts within a woman who is equally attracted by a benign, more selfpreserving
partnership and a submissive, ultimately selfdestructive relationship. It is the narrator in *Malina* who exhibits the tragic nature of Bachmann's heroines most impressively.

A more detailed interpretation of *Malina* than Pausch's is offered by Ellen Summerfield. Approaching the problem of relating the main characters through the concept of the "aufgelöste Romanfigur" she argues:

Indem Bachmann durch die Darstellung der aufgelösten Figur ihre Frauenfigur, die Hauptgestalt und Erzählerin des Romans, mit den Personen ihrer Umwelt verschränkt, schafft sie ein in der deutschen Literatur bisher einmaliges Bild des modernen Frauenbewußtseins. . . . Am Beispiel ihrer fiktiven Erzählerin, . . . stellt Bachmann die menschliche Situation einer runden, vielseitig entfalteten Frauenpersönlichkeit dar, die sich gegen Unterdrückung und Unterschätzung auflehnt und sich als Einzelperson im "Krieg" mit der Tradition befindet. Eine Lösung ihrer Problematik ist der Romandarstellung nach nicht möglich.331

Proceeding further than Pausch, Summerfield interprets Malina as an element of male characteristics within the narrator:

Geht man davon aus, daß Malina ein Teil der Ich-Figur ist, klärt sich inhaltlich vieles auf. Zunächst läßt sich die Zeit der Begegnung ganz anders verstehen: die Begegnungen stellen dar, daß ein anderer Teil ihres Selbst sich entwickelt und behauptet. Vernunft, Selbständigkeit und Sachlichkeit werden bei dieser Frau erst im Lauf der Jahre erworben, bis sie zum starken, permanenten Teil ihres Wesens werden.332

At the same time, she retains him also as an independent subject by means of the concept of the "aufgelöste Figur" which she derives from the thesis that there can not be a separation of inner and outer existence: "Malinas Existenz als Teil der Hauptfigur schließt jedoch nicht aus, daß er auch als unabhängiger Mensch zu betrachten ist."333

With the aid of the "aufgelöste Romanfigur" the "murder" can then be seen as a withdrawal and loss of the narrator's feminine layer - a very
"traditional" layer of "Hingabebereitschaft, Liebenswürdigkeit und Hilfsbereitschaft" - and as an emerging of Malina within her. His expansion is necessary for her survival.

Durch die Risse und Sprünge und endlich das Verschwinden in der Wand wird bildlich dargestellt, was in dieser Person vorgeht. Ihr Ich-Teil, der an Ivan gebunden ist, zieht sich zurück, läßt sich verschwinden. Die Malina-Seite ihrer Persönlichkeit breitet sich aus und herrscht über die Person. 334

However, by introverting the conflict and murder in this manner, Summerfield dismantles the element of force, of intrusion into, and the destruction of, the narrator's identity, all implied in Malina and the other Todesarten novels. In other words, the meaning of murder is lost. Heissenbüttel, whose position is more extreme than that of Summerfield, (he assumes an inner world only) asks quite rightly: "Aber wer hat gemordet? . . . Wenn Subjektivität stirbt, abstirbt, was ist das Objektive, das für dies Absterben verantwortlich sein kann?" 335

This view becomes even more problematic when Summerfield, very much like Pausch, attaches rather positive characteristics and values to the narrator's Malina part. Malina, then, is seen as the "ausgleichende, ergänzende, vorsichtige, nüchterne, unabhängige" part of the narrator: "Er ist die rationale, lebensfähige, selbständige Seite ihrer Person." 336 As a consequence, Summerfield appears to have difficulty in relating this positive aspect of Malina which is responsible for the narrator's survival to the actual murder: "Daß Malina die Führung übernimmt, ist keine positive Lösung, sondern wird als ein 'Sterben' in Malina und als Mord bezeichnet." 337 This and the diminuation of Malina as an active agent have caused Summerfield to arrive at a much less definite conclusion about the murder and murderer than we have:
Die Ich-Figur lebt so lange in der Umgebung von Mör dern, es ist ihr so viel Unmenschliches angetan worden, daß der Mord am Ende nicht als einzelne Gewalttat zu verstehen ist, sondern als Ausdruck des Brutalen und Tödlichen in den menschlichen Beziehungen. ... Es ist kein konkreter Mord der in Malina dargestellt wird. Es geht um die Art, einen anderen zu behandeln, so mit ihm umzugehen, daß es schließlich sein Ende bedeutet. Mord und Selbstmord sind beide darin enthalten.338

Similarly, Ivan is interpreted in substance as the narrator's "Liebesprinzip" and as her "Anlage zur Liebe und Hingabe". Although Summerfield quite rightly points to the restraining effect of Ivan on the narrator's self ("Er erkennt die Individualität der Ich-Figur nicht an, sondern zwingt sie in eine einseitige Rolle.")339 and assigns him a role in the murder ("Ivan ist ja ihr Geliebter, aber im gewissen Sinne ist er auch ihr Mörder."340), she essentially attributes the breakdown of the Ivan-narrator relationship to disappointed love followed by the narrator's increasing reliance on her sober and realistic Malina part.

Thus, by identifying Malina and Ivan at least partially with the "Ich" character, Summerfield also erodes Bachmann's concept of the murder of the female. Summerfield leaves little room for any substantial "Ich" part of the narrator which - as we have shown above - has been extensively developed by Bachmann herself. One needs only recall in this context the narrator's answers in the Mühlbauer interview. Throughout the novel the narrator develops an individual substance independent of Malina and Ivan. We have directed attention earlier to the symbolism of the narrator's dressing herself and applying extensive make-up under the theme "eine Frau ist zu erschaffen." She accounts:

And, later in the same scene, she goes on: "Einen Augenblick lang war ich unsterblich und ich, ich war nicht da für Ivan und habe nicht in Ivan gelebt..." Immortality, it seems, can here be achieved only within the exclusively female realm, her true self.

It may be added that our analysis of Summerfield's concept of "aufgelöste Figur" was not only troubled by occasional vagueness on crucial points such as the exact relationship between the "Ich" and its Malina and Ivan substances but also by her terminology as in the following passage:


Is "Gleichwertigkeit" opposed to "Gleichheit oder Ebenbürtigkeit"?  

Although Summerfield's concept of "aufgelöste Figur" may intrigue from the point of view of structure and may be a convenient
device for overcoming some of the interpretative problems of Malina, it appears to be highly speculative. Summerfield impresses the reader with a wealth of quotations from, and references to, Malina to prove her points, yet a closer analysis of her methods often reveals a somewhat arbitrary way of selecting her evidence. The following is a representative example of this: Summerfield argues that the survival of the narrator's Malina part can be explained by his work at the Army museum. "Daß Malina fähig ist weiterzuleben, hängt damit zusammen, daß er die Beschäftigung mit dem Kriegswesen zu seinem Beruf machte. . . . Er muß die Mittel kennen, deren sich die Menschen bedienten, um zu überleben." This may sound reasonable; however, Summerfield now fails to apply the same reasoning to the Ivan part in the narrator's personality. Ivan, the narrator tells us, works for a financial institution in Vienna. This is hardly an activity that can be seen as symbolic of the "Liebesprinzip" or the "Verkörperung ihrer Anlage zur Liebe und Hingabe" that Ivan, according to Summerfield, stands for. This point should even be more important for the interpretation of Ivan since Summerfield contends that Ivan's inner and outer existence are more closely fused than Malina's.

Another disadvantage of the concept of "aufgelöste Figur" as against our own is that it can not be applied to most of Bachmann's other main characters including her female protagonists. Summerfield appears to have difficulty in finding further "aufgelöste Figuren". She finds traces of it in Moll (Das dreißigste Jahr), Hans (Undine geht), Wildermuth (Ein Wildermuth) and to an even lesser extent in Elisabeth (Drei Wege zum See), and admits that "In den neuesten
Erzählungen im Band *Simultan* (1972) spielt die aufgelöste Figur keine besondere Rolle mehr.  

Summerfield's concept of the "aufgelöste Figur" also provides the basis for Sigrid Weigel's interpretation of Malina in "Der schielende Blick. Thesen zur Geschichte weiblicher Schreibpraxis." Weigel interprets Malina and Bachmann's women in the larger context of "Frauenliteratur". She starts upon the premise that female writers living in a patriarchal society and writing about women are determined by, and under the influence of, images of the women that have been developed by a male culture. Thus, their view of women is distorted by a "male bias":

Da die kulturelle Ordnung von Männern regiert wird, aber die Frauen ihr dennoch angehören, benutzen auch diese die Normen, deren Objekt sie selbst sind. D.h. die Frau in der männlichen Ordnung ist zugleich beteiligt und ausgegrenzt. Für das Selbstverständnis der Frau bedeutet das, daß sie sich selbst betrachtet, indem sie sieht, daß und wie sie betrachtet wird; d.h. ihre Augen sehen durch die Brille des Mannes. (Die Metapher "Brille" impliziert die Utopie eines befreiten, brillenlosen Blicks.) Während sie die Betrachtung der Außen-Welt dem weitschweifenden Blick des Mannes überlassen hat, ist sie fixiert auf eine im musternen Blick des Mannes gebrochene Selbst-Betrachtung. Ihr Selbstbildnis entsteht ihr so im Zerr-Spiegel des Patriarchats. Auf der Suche nach ihrem eigenen Bild muß sie den Spiegel von den durch männliche Hand aufgemalten Frauenbildern befreien.

Weigel likens the male-female relationship to one between exploiter and the exploited, between colonizer and the colonized and sees an eventual authentic female literature being created only by a feminine self that is free of all references to norms, social roles, and culture determined by men:

Ihre Inhalte und Erzählformen sind nicht umstandslos als originäre weibliche Ausdrucksformen zu beschreiben, sondern als Bewegungsversuche innerhalb der männlichen Kultur und als Befreiungsschritte daraus. Die Anfänge einer weiblichen literarischen Tradition sind überwiegend

Applying this idea of "Doppelexistenz" (with its problem of love and happiness versus survival and existence) and Summerfield's concept of "aufgelöste Figur" to Malina, Weigel interprets the narrator's conflict as a struggle between (male) reason and (female) love, either one disallowing the existence of a separate, individual, female self. Weigel assumes that the basic condition of today's woman, one which presents a fusion between the male image of womanhood and female identity, makes the creation of a liberated woman impossible. It seems to us that Weigel's rather restricted and materialistic definition of the historic condition of women (utilizing concepts and terminology of Marxist class analysis) does not do justice to Bachmann's image of the woman which we found to be rather idealistic in nature.

The major difference between Weigel's view and our own is that Weigel not only claims a split (gebrochene) existence for the narrator in Malina (and for women writers in general since they too cannot escape men's images of women in a patriarchal society) but also insists on certain "male" perceptions which ensure the narrator's "liberation".

Um sich aus der Existenzweise als "anderes" Geschlecht zu befreien, brauchen die Frauen alle ihre Sinne, ihren Verstand und ihr Gefühl. Sie müssen vor allem neue Wahrnehmungs- und Äußerungsweisen finden. Wahrnehmungen, das sind Sinneindrücke, die be-greifen, urteilen, aktiv sind; z.B. der Blick.

By rejecting any attempts of raising the female culture to a higher, idealist level as we have done in our Bachmann interpretations, Weigel
tries to avoid a new male-female dichotomy replacing the old. It is for this reason, that Weigel thinks of the antithesis between men and women so obvious in Malina as temporary. It seems to us that Weigel, by holding this view, subordinates literary criticism to ideological and sociological doctrines.

Weigel also points to the frequently voiced criticism by feminist literary critics, that there exists a gap between Bachmann's theoretical "geschlechtsneutrale" writing in which the writer achieves self awareness and change for the better, and her fictional writing, in which her female characters remain caught in the web of tradition. Contrary to our own view, Weigel sees Bachmann as a concealed feminist:

Die geschlechtsspezifische Konkretisierung neutraler literaturkritischer Aussagen auf weibliche Erfahrung hin in ihren literarischen Texten ist so offensichtlich, daß die Schreibweise hier als feministische Praxis gedeutet werden kann, die in der Maskierung des theoretisch sich artikulierenden Autors dort vorbereitet ist.

Weigel concludes her argument on Bachmann's "feminism" very wisely with a questionmark:

Die Autorin selbst konnte sich noch nicht feministisch artikulieren, eine Öffentlichkeit für verallgemeinernde, programmatisch die Situation von Frauen kritisierende Überlegungen entstand erst nach ihrem Tod in den 70er Jahren. Sie selbst schmuggelte ihre Ideen, die alle Momente aktueller feministischer Theorie und Literatur vorwegnehmen, in zwei Bestandteile aufgespalten, in der Maskierung geschlechtsneutraler Literaturkritik und im Schutze ihrer Poesie, an die Öffentlichkeit.—Eine heimliche Feministin wie viele Frauen vor ihr auch?

Another line of approach to Bachmann—via language—is taken by M. Jurgensen. His interpretation of the Todesarten novels as epic creations of female neurosis and schizophrenia—as he calls it—is worth looking at despite a monotonous paratactical style and repeated inaccuracy in the textual analysis as the following example shows:
Immer hatte sie diese Sprache verabscheut, jeden Stempel, der ihr aufgedrückt wurde und den sie jemand aufdrücken mußte—den Mordversuch an der Wirklichkeit. Aber wenn ihr Reich kam, dann konnte diese Sprache nicht mehr gelten, dann richtete diese Sprache sich selbst.

Das Bachmannsche Reich beheimatet sich in einer neuen Sprache, die den Mordversuch an der Wirklichkeit richten wird.  

Departing from his premises: "In der Sprache bewahrt sich das Ich." and "Das Wort weiß nicht nur zu identifizieren, sondern auch zu vergewaltigen."

Thus Malina and Ivan are interpreted as "protagonistische Ich-Variationen" of the narrator in search of her identity. "Malina ist zugleich als Ergänzung des unvollständigen weiblichen Ichs gedacht, als . . . komplementäre Bewußtseinsgestalt . . ." According to Jurgensen, the woman has no individual identity because of her "gattungshafte Rollenexistenz" and, therefore, the narrator attempts a "Doppelgeschlechtliche Selbstverwirklichung". Jurgensen, in essence, argues that there is a need for the male element within Bachmann's females so that they may escape their prescribed role and find a self-identity free of sexual constraints.

This interpretation stands in contrast to our own. In our opinion, a woman's own identity is damaged or destroyed if it is related to a ("traditional") male. The woman finds herself then living a social role that is dependent on the male for its definition. It is of little significance, in this argument, whether the male exists as an independent subject or as a mental projection only. This is also the reason why—as we have shown—the dilemma of Bachmann's heroines does not affect the "traditional" female; she already has her prescribed role identity. As soon as the male becomes the point of reference for Bachmann's
females, their formerly intangible, undefinable, and magic existence becomes definable, predictable, causing damage to, or destruction of, their individual identity. This process is often—as shown earlier—accompanied and intensified by the woman's attachment to male ways of thinking.

In contrast to this, Jurgensen's interpretation of the Todesarten novels may be summarized as death by self projection and isolation resulting in "Sprachverlust" of the self: ". . . das sich ihr [der Gesellschaft] verweigernde Ich vergewaltigt menschliche Beziehungen." Thus the self becomes increasingly inner oriented, thereby anti-social, and dies. Doubtless, Jurgensen is correct when he states that Malina "... bezieht sich auf ein doppeltes Du, auf das gesellschaftliche und das verinnerlichte." However, he—like Summerfield and others—takes an anti-Bachmann position when he concludes that the heroine, by neglecting her social orientation in place of orientation toward her self, causes her own "Sprachverlust" and death. This is the opposite of our findings. It is self-denial, part of the "traditional" role behaviour of women who must show devotion, love and care for others, that contributes to the death of Bachmann's heroines. Malina represents the male view when he counsels the narrator that she can improve the world only through her "Du" and not through her "Ich":

Ich: (con brio) Siegen! Wer spricht denn hier noch von siegen, wenn das Zeichen verloren ist, in dem man siegen könnte.

Malina: Es heißt immer noch: siegen. Es wird dir ohne einen einzigen Kunstgriff gelingen und ohne Gewalt. Du wirst aber auch nicht mit deinem Ich siegen, sondern—

Ich: (allegro) Sondern—siehst du?
Malina: Du wirst es nicht mit deinem Ich tun.

Ich: (forte) Was ist an meinem Ich schlechter als an anderen?


Ich: (piano) Auch wenn es das Unverzeihliche ist, will ich mich immer verzetteln, verirren verlieren.


The narrator's intended synthesis of the two ("Ich werde es [das Ich] lieben wie meinen Nächsten, wie dich!") fails. The heroines of the Todesarten novels are not able to solve this dilemma.

In his interpretation of Requiem für Fanny Goldmann, Jurgensen retains his thesis of "Vergewaltigung durch Versprachlichung", rape by verbalism. He also sees the Todesarten heroine as being an example of neurosis: "... Bachmann ... ist ... mit Fanny Goldmann ein Musterporträt weiblicher Neurose gelungen." He substantiates this by pointing to Fanny's early hateful behaviour:

Fanny "hatte eine unerträgliche ... Abneigung gegen die kleine Malina," (488) heißt es zu Beginn des Romans. Die Gründe für diesen zunächst noch milden Haß werden deutlich angegeben: "weil sie alles hatte, was Fanny und die anderen nicht hatten, das Unerlernbare, Unerreichbare...". (ebd.) Die Anlage zum Haß ist von Anfang an ein wesentlicher Bestandteil ihres Charakters. Fanny befindet sich "in dem Zustand der Hellsichtigkeit des Hasses." (489) Ihr späterer leidenschaftlicher Haß gegen Anton Marek bringt also—ob berechtigt oder nicht—keinen Wandel in ihrer Persönlichkeit, sondern erweist sich nurmehr als die Kehrseite ihrer ebenso leidenschaftlichen Hörigkeit. (Vgl. "Kurze Zeit später war Fanny ihm hörig",496) Es mangelt ihr an emotionaler Ausgeglichenheit, sie lebt und liebt das Extreme.

A close textual analysis, however, yields quite different results.

Fanny Goldmann's first contact with a Marek–like figure, the young
actress Malina, results in her antipathy and eventual hate toward Malina. Fanny sees this feeling as a blemish on her inner integrity. She hates Malina not, as Jurgensen suggests, because of her talents as an actress but because Malina play-acts in love affairs, plays at being in love: ". . . und so sagte sie, in dem Zustand der Hellsichtigkeit des Hasses, diese Person ist unfähig, jemand zu lieben, . . ." Thus, in her false relationships, the actress Malina is a precursor of Marek. This point is important as it demolishes much of the basis of the theory of neurosis. Other evidence submitted by Jurgensen on this point proves to be just as inconclusive:

Karin belongs—as we earlier indicated—to the category of females which is repulsive to Bachmann's heroines because of the character of these women which is adjusted to male expectations. Karin's repulsiveness is intensified by her name with its symbolic connection to fascism, to male aggression and cruelty. Her name does present her as a person. Throughout Bachmann's prose there exists a close name/person interdependence. Jurgensen himself quotes the passage: "... ihr Name war so besamt von seinem Namen, ..." only one page below the above passage. In this light his statement is even more surprising.
We may conclude that none of the critics we have discussed in the first part of this chapter sees the seemingly "traditional" image of Bachmann's heroines in its idealistic and redeeming function as we have done. On the contrary, all of them interpret it as one of failure in various ways.

In the second part of this chapter we will discuss critical works of the second phase of reception (zweite Rezeptionswelle) that are pertinent to Bachmann's women characters.

Gabriele Bail in Weibliche Identität: Ingeborg Bachmanns "Malina"\textsuperscript{362} sets herself the task of analysing the identity problem of the narrator in Malina. Bail commences this analysis with the premise that "Ich" has a "Nicht-Identität". She derives this, firstly, from the observation that few and vague personal data are offered for the narrator during the introduction of the dramatis personae, secondly, from the argument that the narrator lives in spatial dislocation and exists in time diffusion (disorientation in space and time). Bail sees the identity problem of the narrator as so urgent that the epic I willingly accepts "traditional" female social roles offered her by the three men characters in Malina:

Das Identitätsproblem ist für die Ich-Figur so dringlich, da sie nicht nur den Rollenerwartungen anderer hohe Bedeutung beimäßt und sich entsprechend verhält, sondern auch verschiedene Testverfahren zur Identitätsbestimmung heranzieht. . . .
Durch das Scheitern solcher Testverfahren wird die Orientierung an den Rollenerwartungen der anderen nur umso dringlicher.\textsuperscript{363}

Alle drei Männer erwarten von der Ich-Figur, daß sie im Rahmen patriarchalischer Strukturen traditionelle Frauenrollen übernimmt. Die Ich-Figur ist bemüht, diesen Erwartungen gerecht zu werden, . . .\textsuperscript{364}

Accordingly, Bail structures her analysis threefold: Ivan, the father, and Malina. Bail unnecessarily weakens her analysis here by relating
the three men to the Holy Trinity. Whereas she still has some convincing arguments for the first part of the analogy (Ivan as Christ figure), her textual evidence for the second part becomes very speculative (the father as God father), "... mein Vater steigt auf die Kanzel und hält seine Sonntagspredigt, ... er ist der größte Sonntagsprediger weit und breit. - ... ich ... benetze meine Stirn, im Namen des Vaters, ..." and "Mein Vater ist zum Theater gegangen. Gott ist eine Vorstellung" are Bail's only proof. Turning to the third part (Malina as the Holy Ghost), Bail acknowledges the extremely speculative position she is in but continues to operate with the "patriarchalische Dreieinigkeit" throughout her analysis.

Bail's analogy becomes even more doubtful as the following section is headed "Symbolfigur des Krieges" referring to Malina and citing his request to the narrator to kill Ivan. Furthermore, one may question the statement that a necessity for life is necessarily "holy".

More important, however, is Bail's argumentation regarding the narrator's search for identity. Since Bail examines the narrator's identity problem and eventual destruction with a - basically - feministic approach:
Ingeborg Bachmanns Verdienst ist es, in 'Malina' für die Unterdrückung von Frauen präzise Bilder gefunden zu haben.  

her interpretation remains wanting on points that were - we felt - crucial for an understanding of Bachmann. Two examples will illustrate this: During her analysis of the relationship between the narrator and Ivan in the chapter "Krankheit: Identitätsbestimmung durch Ivan", Bail encounters the seeming paradox of the willing acceptance by the narrator of Ivan's role demands and norms on the one hand and - as Bail sees it - Ivan's aggression and sanctions against her on the other, which eventually contribute to her "collective Murder". Because of her approach, Bail can offer only an inconclusive explanation to this apparent paradox:


Second, as Bail continues her analysis by examining "die künstlerische Produktion" of the narrator, she quotes the crucial passage: "Es entsteht eine Komposition, eine Frau ist zu erschaffen . . .". Quite rightly, Bail points out the attempt of the narrator to define her identity in front of the mirror. But again, her approach prevents her from seeing a consistency in the narrator's actions - as we have tried to do - and forces her to interpret the rest of the passage as "von bitterstem Sarkasmus", while portraying the woman before the mirror as
the "Frauenbild der Kosmetikreklame". In view of Bail's following argument about the feminine utopia, this interpretation is even less convincing.

Although much of our criticism of Summerfield's analysis of Malina is relevant to Bail's major findings - she relies to a great extent on Summerfield's arguments - we ought to discuss her conclusions regarding the nature of the "murder". Bail attributes the collapse of the narrator to the incompatibility of the role expectations of the three men with regard to her and to their ensuing sanctions:

Alle drei Männer erwarten von der Ich-Figur, daß sie im Rahmen patriarchalischer Strukturen traditionelle Frauenrollen übernimmt. Die Ich-Figur ist bemüht, diesen Erwartungen gerecht zu werden, muß jedoch scheitern, da die Rollenerwartungen einander ausschließen. Auf die Nicht-Erfüllung ihrer jeweiligen Rollenerwartungen reagieren die Männer mit Sanktionen, die sich auf die Ich-Figur vernichtend auswirken.

At least the first part of this statement may be questioned because all three roles of the narrator as well as the behaviour patterns of the three men characters are within the patriarchal social structure (Bail speaks here too of the "patriarchalische Dreieinigkeit"). From this it does not follow that the role expectations are mutually exclusive; indeed, one could make a case for their complementary nature. This will also appear reasonable through a comparison of the roles of the narrator that are mentioned by Bail. They are:

- for Ivan - "perfekte Hausfrau, attraktive Geliebte"
- for the father - "unterwürfige Frauenrolle, Rolle der Tochter"
- for Malina - (No role is given but Malina acts as "Beschützer, Vertrauter, rational-überlegener Helfer".

Therefore, one may assume the narrator must be protected and helped.)
Furthermore, a comparison of the role expectations that Bail lists show parallels in their substance:


Ivan bringt aus anderen Gründen kein Verständnis für die Intellektualität der Ich-Figur auf: eine Frau mit Intelligenz ist in den Regeln seines Geschlechterrollenspiels nicht vorgesehen. Aus diesem Grunde ignoriert er die Malina-Komponente.373

Malina ist der einzige der drei Männer, der die intellektuelle Autonomie der Ich-Figur unterstützt und sogar gegen den gewalttätigen Vater verteidigt. Er ignoriert allerdings Ichs emotionale Seite, die im Verhältnis zu Ivan hervortritt (S. 87). Zudem unterstützt er Ichs intellektuelle Autonomie nur, solange sie sich seiner Art des Denkens anpaßt. Sowie die Ich-Figur beginnt, ihr Denken und Erinnern auf ihre emotionale Beteiligung aufzubauen und sich dadurch von Malinas Denkweise distanziert, wendet sich Malina gegen sie.374

From this it appears that the intellectual autonomy of the narrator is the main factor of antagonism in each of the role expectations and that here too the thesis of incompatibility is not supported.

Similar conclusions on the impossibility of a self-defined existence for the woman in a male-determined world are drawn by Kurt Bartsch in "'Schichtwechsel'? Zur Opposition von feminin-emotionalen Ansprüchen und maskulin-rationalen Realitätsdenken bei Ingeborg Bachmann"375 as well as in "'Es war Mord' Anmerkungen zur Mann-Frau-Beziehung in Bachmanns Roman Malina”.376 He bases his interpretation on the thesis:

Die modellhafte Opposition von männlich-rational und weiblich-emotional, das Misslingen einer Integration von Verstand und Gefühl sowie die Finalisierung, Rückkehr in die gegebenen sozialen Zwänge oder Abtötung, prägen sowohl die Hörspiele als auch die erzählende Prosa von Ingeborg Bachmann, und da nicht nur die ausgesprochenen Frauengeschichten.377
The woman in a patriarchal society is prevented from finding her own identity because her role is defined by men:

Charlotte ist ein Beispiel dafür, daß die Frau in der Männergesellschaft sich nicht selbst definieren darf, daß sie nicht nur aus dem öffentlichen Diskurs ausgeschlossen, sondern bis in ihre Gefühlswelt hinein fremdbestimmt ist.\(^{378}\)

Furthermore, her role behaviour is enforced by men as in the case of Ivan:

. . . denn er drängt die Ich-Erzählerin in die konventionelle Frauenrolle, . . . Sie hat in der Beziehung zu Ivan keine Möglichkeit einer Entfaltung außerhalb der konventionellen Rolle der Frau, die definiert ist durch Hausfrauen- und Muttermpflichten sowie sexuelle Verfügbarkeit.\(^{379}\)

or sanctioned by a (male) social authority such as the good God:

Die Figur des guten Gottes von Manhattan, Inkarnation des Realitätsprinzips und Anwalt der Gesellschaft und ihrer individualitätsbeschränkenden Anforderungen, läßt die Ekstatikerin Jennifer, die "den Boden [der Realität] unter den Füßen" (I, 312) verloren hat, durch seine Heifer, die Eichhörnchen des Central Park von New York, mit einer Bombe in die Luft sprengen.\(^{380}\)

The attempt to go beyond her role means loss of feminity:

Es geht in Bachmann's Roman [Malina] um das grundsätzliche Problem der Frau in der patriarchalischen, faschistische Züge tragenden Gesellschaft und um den Verlust der Weiblichkeit, wenn die Frau Ansprüche über die von den Männern definierte Rolle hinaus erhebt.\(^{381}\)

This is the case in the woman's search for reason. Because her role does not allow for development of reason she must then give up her emotional demands:

. . . einerseits sieht die herkömmliche Rollendefinition der Frau in der "Liebes"-Beziehung rationale Verwirklichung nicht vor, andererseits muß die Frau, wo sie, wie die Ich-Erzählerin ohne Malina, d. h. ohne Ratio nicht leben kann, auf ihre weiblichen Gefühlsansprüche verzichten . . . \(^{382}\)

This is also the case in Charlotte's "Rollentausch" in Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha. Bartsch calls this: "Übernahme eines männlichen
In his analysis of Malina, Bartsch adds psychic dimension to the male-rational concept since he defines it here as "kritisch-kontrollierende Instanz" personified by Malina within the narrator:

Nun, Malina fungiert als kritisch-kontrollierende Instanz der Selbstbeobachtung, "unter" die sich das Ich "von Anfang an" (III, 17) gestellt fühlt, als eine gesellschaftlich vermittelte Instanz, die die weibliche Identitätsbildung verhindert.384

Analyzing Bartsch's approach we will direct criticism initially at two points: Although a male-female antithesis similar to ours is used, the analysis remains at the sociological level throughout, therefore - in our opinion - not being able to penetrate deeper layers of Bachmann's prose. In addition, it appears that operationalization and application of Bartsch's instrumentation are responsible for some of the shortcomings of Bartsch's analysis. First, it seems that the term "männlich-rational" is overextended. Bartsch applies it as a social authority defining roles and norms (Malina is called an auctor, the good God); a social force or constraint that limits individualistic development (it is represented by the father of the narrator, Ivan, the good God); a socialization factor influencing behaviour (for instance, Ivan or Franz); a psychic factor controlling behaviour (Malina as Super ego or Elisabeth's "verinnerlichte" role image); last, a pattern of existence or survival for the female (Malina for the narrator, role change for Elisabeth). Thus, the term becomes in our view very questionable as a tool for precision analysis. Second, the term appears to contain conflicting elements - in the way that Bartsch uses it - such as (male) "ratio" that restricts self-development of the woman as well as (female) reason that Bartsch sees necessary for self-
development of the woman. This appears to be the reason that he has difficulty applying his concept to more complex texts such as Malina.

For instance, Bartsch describes Ivan as an agent who prevents the narrator from finding a self-defined identity because he forces her into the conventional role, denies her rationality (in Bartsch's terms represented by Malina):

Die Hoffnungen auf ein Leben in Liebe mit Ivan müssen sich zwangsläufig zerschlagen, denn er drängt die Ich-Erzählerin in die konventionelle Frauenrolle, er ignoriert Malina, das heißt, er spricht der Frau das Recht auf Ratio ab. . . . Sie hat in der Beziehung zu Ivan keinen Spielraum, keine Möglichkeit einer Entfaltung außerhalb der konventionellen Rolle der Frau, die definiert wäre durch Hausfrauen- und Mutterpflichten sowie durch sexuelle Verfügbarkeit. Die Verwirklichung der Utopie der Integration von Verstand und Gefühl ist also in der Beziehung zu Ivan, dem Durchschnittsrepräsentanten der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft, unmöglich.385

On the other hand, Bartsch defines Malina as a figuration of the norm demands of the patriarchal society, preventing the narrator from developing her identity:

Malina . . . der offensichtlich das rationale Über-Ich figuriert, also jene von Sigmund Freud neben dem Ich und dem Es als dritte angenommene psychische Instanz, die als Ausdruck der Verinnerlichung der Über die Familie, in der patriarchalischen bürgerlichen Gesellschaft insbesondere über den Vater (daher eine männliche Gestalt!) vermittelten Normansprüche gilt und deren Funktion als kritisch-kontrollierende Selbstbeobachtung, Ich-Ideal und Gewissen umschreibbar ist. Nun, Malina fungiert als kritisch-kontrollierende Instanz der Selbstbeobachtung, "unter" die sich das Ich "von Anfang an" (III, 17) gestellt fühlt, als eine gesellschaftlich vermittelte Instanz, die die weibliche Identitätsbildung verhindert.386

Thus, on the one hand ratio (Malina) is denied to the narrator preventing her from overcoming the conventional role, while on the other, patriarchal norms and a critical control authority (Malina) prevent the narrator's identity development. Bartsch appears to be aware of these discrepancies:

It seems that these problems are caused by Bartsch's intention to cover Bachmann's depth structures by a sociological concept alone - important as it may be.

Comparing Bartsch's interpretation to ours, it will be obvious that by assuming a distinct "male" and "female" rationality - a "female" rationality which we have interpreted as superior to "male" reason and which we have analyzed as rooted in irrationality and intuition - we have not only overcome Bartsch's conflict of terminology but also his "utopia of integration of reason and emotion" for which he offers very little proof, but were able to develop an antagonism of values above that of social roles which - as we tried to prove - is more Bachmann-like. Furthermore, we feel that our concept allows a more in-depth treatment of Bachmann's characters. For instance, Bartsch indicates no distinction between the "death" of Jennifer who "erleidet einen typischen 'Bachmann-Tod'" and that of other heroines, although
Jennifer dies because of extreme emotion and the narrator in *Malina* "dies", according to Bartsch, as she continues living in a male identity pattern. Certainly, here is a difference of quality. Finally, it will be admitted that the all-pervading dominance of the "männlich-rational" determinant in Bartsch's interpretation leaves no room for any substance in Bachmann's female protagonists—a substance we feel we have plausibly demonstrated above. Thus, as a logical consequence of this, Bartsch classifies all of Bachmann's women in three categories of wrecked existences:

Zusammenfassend können wir in Bachmanns Werk drei weibliche Lebensmuster vorfinden:

1. die Frau in der konventionellen Rolle der Dienerin des Mannes bzw. der Familie, einer Rolle, die der Autorin als "schlimm" und "unwürdig" gilt und die die Ich-Erzählerin in der Beziehung zu Ivan zu spielen versucht, auf die sie sich aber nicht reduzieren lässt. Hier kann man wohl Franziska/Franza (Gebell, Der Fall Franza) und die alte Frau Jordan (Gebell) sowie die "private" Charlotte (Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha) subsumieren;

2. Undine, die zwar die Klage über ihre Situation erhebt ("Ihr Männer, ihr Ungeheuer!"), die aber – wie auch Beatrix (Probleme Probleme) und Miranda (Ihr glücklichen Augen) – auf Teilnahme am öffentlichen Diskurs verzichtet, sich zurückzieht, "geht";

3. die Frau, die sich in der Öffentlichkeit durch Übernahme eines männlichen Existenzmusters zu verwirklichen sucht: cum grano salis die "öffentliche" Charlotte, Nadja (Simultan), Elisabeth (Drei Wege zum See).

Diesen mehr oder weniger zerstörten Existenzen aber steht die noch nicht realisierte Utopie gegenüber, in der Verstand und Gefühl nicht mehr divergieren. Im Richtungnehmen auf diese Utopie hin erscheint mir Bachmanns Werk vorwärtsweisend im Sinne der Frauenbewegung: . . . 389

Surely, this would not indicate a positive image development by Bachmann as we tried to prove it. Bartsch's analysis, however, does not seem clear on one point of female development. In his thesis statement he
distinguishes clearly two conclusions to Bachmann's narrative prose and radio plays: a return to social constraints or death:

Die modellhafte Opposition von männlich-rational und weiblich-emotional, das Mißlingen einer Integration von Verstand und Gefühl sowie die Finalisierung, Rückkehr in die gegebenen sozialen Zwänge oder Abtötung, prägen sowohl Hörspiele als auch die erzählende Prosa von Ingeborg Bachmann, und da nicht nur die ausgesprochenen Frauengeschichten.390

He then confirms this return for Charlotte in his discussion of Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha:

Die Verwirklichung ihrer Autonomiebestrebungen in einer lesbischen Beziehung beziehungsweise in einem neuen Sprachgebrauch ließen Charlotte in die Position der Außenseiterin geraten. Sie geht jedoch, . . . nur einen Schritt nach Gomorrha und kehrt zurück in die soziale Ordnung.391

However, in his discussion of Malina, Bartsch precludes the possibility of return in general, after finding the narrator's search for identity to be a failure:

Da für Bachmann eine regressive Festlegung der Frau auf die konventionelle Rolle nicht in Frage kommt, löst sie das Dilemma durch Verzicht auf die weibliche Identität und Orientierung an maskulinen Identifikationsmustern.392

Clarity on this point would be of importance for the determination of patterns of development for Bachmann's heroines.

In contrast to the interpretations of Bail and Bartsch, Claus Reinert sees the "traditional" substance of Bachmann's characters as central. In the chapter headed "Wie reaktionär ist Ingeborg Bachmanns Menschenbild?"393 he states:

INGEBORG BACHMANN vertritt nicht nur in diesem Hörspiel eine Auffassung vom Wesen des Männlichen und Weiblichen, die - allerdings nicht in den von ihr gezogenen Konsequenzen - allen feministischen Emanzipationsbestrebungen zuwiderläuft. Wenn irgendwo, dann ließe sich in dieser Frage bei ihr eine antiquierte Gesinnung nachweisen: Ausgehend von angeblich zeitlosen anthropologischen und biologischen Determinanten
bleibt auch nur die Möglichkeit außer Betracht, variable soziale und historische Verhältnisse könnten grundlegend das Rollenverhalten und die 'Daseinsthematik' von Mann und Frau prägen. Wenn irgendwo, dann könnte INGEBORG BACHMANNs Hang zum Absoluten und die daraus folgende Bereitschaft, vorschnell zu verallgemeinern, ihr den Zugang für notwendige fortschrittliche Einsichten versperrt haben. ... so identifizierte sich INGEBORG BACHMANN bis ins Detail mit den ihr von der traditionellen Psychologie vorgegebenen Einsichten in das 'zeitlose Wesen' der Geschlechter.\footnote{394}

Reinert continues his analysis by comparing Bachmann's image of man to that of Lersch and Weininger and by pointing to extensive parallels finding at least in the case of Weininger a definite influence on Bachmann:

Soweit PHILIPP LERSCH! Es soll und kann nicht behauptet werden, daß INGEBORG BACHMANN ihn unmittelbar als Quelle benutzt habe, ... ein derartiger Nachweis wäre aber auch nicht erforderlich, denn LERSCHs Ansichten spiegeln nur die bis dahin erarbeiteten Erkenntnisse der traditionellen Psychologie wieder. ... . In diesem Zusammenhang zu erwähnen ist allerdings ein Einfluß, den man gerade bei einer Autorin am wenigsten erwartet hätte und den die BACHMANN auch eher verschwiegen hat, vermutlich, weil er ihr mehr und vor allem persönlichere Probleme zu lösen aufgab: der Einfluß des Wiener Philosophen, Psychologen und Anthropologen OTTO WEININGER. ... \footnote{395}

He then sums up:

Es kann hier nicht der Ort sein, ausführlicher auf die 'unterirdischen Querverbindungen' einzugehen. Der Hinweis auf WEININGER und der Rekurs auf LERSCH sollen nur verdeutlichen, wie sehr INGEBORG BACHMANNs Menschenbild tradierten Anschauungen entspricht, ... \footnote{396}

Reinert goes on to justify Bachmann's "outdated" image of the sexes by differentiating between truth in science and in art:

Die Unterschiede zwischen Wissenschaft und Kunst gestatten es nicht, vom Kunstwerk zu erwartern, daß es die jeweils neuesten wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnisse zu berücksichtigen und zu verarbeiten habe.\footnote{397}

Thus, in contrast to science, in art historic truths remain of value:

Das Bild, das LERSCH oder INGEBORG BACHMANN von Mann und Frau entworfen haben, trifft zu in bezug auf eine heute historisch gewordene Wirklichkeit, der diese Einsichten entzogen sind.
Was aber einmal wahr war, das wird wahr bleiben, auch wenn diese Wahrheit infolge des historischen Wandels ihren Wert verlieren sollte und nicht mehr zur Geltung kommen kann, weil die Wirklichkeit nicht mehr existiert, innerhalb derer die Aussage gilt. Wo aber unter diesen Voraussetzungen das wissenschaftliche Werk mit seinem absoluten Wahrheitsanspruch falsch und überflüssig wird, da vermag sich die im Kunstwerk verborgene Wahrheit dauerhafter in Erinnerung zu halten. . . .398

Therefore, Reinert concludes, Bachmann's image of the woman, though it is a historic image, still has a worthwhile message:

Gerade wenn der Mensch sich in seinen Wesensmerkmalen als historisches Wesen versteht, muß er sich mit seiner Geschichte als einer Summe realisierter Möglichkeiten des Menschseins auseinandersetzen, um sich seiner selbst gewiß zu werden. Und wenn er Einsicht in die Bedingungen des Menschseins gewinnen will, wird er auf Dichtungen nicht verzichten können, die Erfahrungen gestaltet haben, in denen die Zufälligkeiten und Besonderheiten ihrer Realität zum Allgemeinen und Typischen, zur Wahrheit verdichtet wurden. Darin gründet die bleibende Aktualität des Kunstwerkes; und in ihr ist der Grund dafür zu suchen, daß INGEBORG BACHMANN in den letzten Jahren als eine Autorin entdeckt zu werden scheint, die gerade auch in der Art und Weise, wie sie die Rolle der Frau im Verhältnis zum Mann und zur Gesellschaft bestimmt, Bedenkenswertes zu sagen hat.399

A comparison of our findings regarding Bachmann's image of the woman to those of Reinert shows that we both agree on the "traditional" appearance but differ on the substance. Whereas Reinert demonstrates the "traditional" nature, we have analyzed "traditional" characteristics that have been newly defined by Bachmann as advanced means of achieving a distinct identity, independence, freedom, and values superior to those of the male. Whereas Reinert defines this image as one of a "heute historisch gewordenen Wirklichkeit", we have defined it as a state of actual existence and a concept to strive for.

There are several points of criticism of Reinert's findings we ought to present: First, the contention that Bachmann's image of the
woman does not extend beyond the one of Weininger or Lersch can hardly be sustained if one goes beyond spot comparisons and compares concepts. As a point in case we quote from Weininger's chapter "Das absolute Weib hat kein Ich" in *Geschlecht und Charakter*:


Weininger continues by quoting proof for this that ranges from the ancient Chinese, ancient philosophers, and church fathers to modern literature and he concludes:


Da aber die Seele des Menschen der Mikrokosmus ist, und bedeutende Menschen solche, welche durchaus mit Seele leben, das heißt in denen die ganze Welt lebendig ist, so muß W absolut ungenial veranlagt sein. Der Mann hat alles in sich, und mag nur, nach den Worten Picos von Mirandola, dies oder jenes in sich besonders begünstigen.

Weininger re-enforces his thesis as he argues in the following chapter:

Die unbegriffliche Natur des Weibes ist aber, nicht minder als seine geringere Bewußtheit, ein Beweis dafür, daß es kein Ich besitzt.

A comparison of Weininger's statements on that point with Bachmann's emphasis on the identity of her woman characters should substantiate our doubts. Unless perhaps, one assumes a position of irony in this context and argues that, because Bachmann's heroines have no "Ich"
they must search for one, but even in this case Bachmann proceeds beyond Weininger.

A second point of criticism concerns the conclusions Reinert must draw because of his premise. We may pose the question how a basically complementing nature of male-female relationship as that described by Weininger can produce such violent and lethal opposition as that in the "Todesarten" novels? As a consequence of his approach, Reinert reduces the whole "murder" issue to the violent nature of death itself:

INGEBORG BACHMANN selbst begreift jeden Tod, auch das natürliche, physische Absterben, als einen Gewaltakt, einen gegen den Willen des Menschen erfolgenden Eingriff von außen, also als eine Hinrichtung, einen Mord, mit dem nichts versöhnen kann und der mit keinem Trost zu beschwichten ist. In ihrem Roman 'Malina' heißt es: "Ich habe ihm auch noch sagen wollen, was ich längst begriffen habe - daß man hier eben nicht stirbt, hier wird man ermordet." . . .

Doch dies ist nur die eine, wenngleich vorherrschende Seite des Todes. Hinzu kommt, daß der Tod vieles mit der unbedingten, ekstatischen Liebe gemein hat: das Stillstehen der Zeit, das Freisein von den Fesseln des Irdischen und die Entgrenzung des Individuellen. Liebe und Tod, Mord und Lust stehen deswegen in INGEBORG BACHMANN's Werken in einem befremdlichen, doch von hier aus erklärbaren Zusammenhang.404

We would argue here that it is Reinert's premise of male and female nature, that makes Bachmann's concept of "death" to him "befremdlich".

It will be recalled at this point that in our findings we stressed the difference between the "traditional" females such as the "Menschenfrauen" in "Undine geht" who are in harmony with their partners and Bachmann's heroines who are, because of their advanced nature, in conflict with the still "traditional" male characters. Another consequence of Reinert's interpretation of Bachmann's characters as purely "traditional" is that he must focus the conflict between individual and society,
which he recognizes too, on the man - not the woman, since according to "traditional" psychology (such as Weininger's and Lersch's) the female lives in harmony with her environment:

Wille und Rationalität fördern im Manne das "Bewußtsein der Abgehobenheit seines Ichs von der Umwelt" (S. 79); das gesteigerte Ichbewußtsein entfremdet ihn von seiner Umwelt und läßt ihn den 'Fluch' der Individuation' (S. 80), die Erfahrung des radikalen Aufsichgestelltseins erleben. Die Frau dagegen "lebt, mit dem Manne verglichen, in Symbiose mit der Umwelt" (S. 80) und verfügt über ein unbewußtes, unmittelbares Wissen 'von bestimmten kosmischen Vorgängen' . . .405

Thus, Reinert argues:

Sämtliche der feststellbaren Unterschiede lassen sich darauf zurückführen, daß Jan sich der Liebe wie allem anderen verstandesmäßig nähert und sämtliche Erfahrungen rational abzusichern sucht, bevor er sich zu ihnen bekennt; Motivation für seine Rationalität ist letztlich der Wille, die individuelle Freiheit gegenüber den Zwängen der Umwelt zu behaupten; . . .406

Lastly, one may question the strength of Reinert's conclusion regarding the emancipatory substance of Bachmann's presentation of the image of man, in view of his extensive analysis of this image as representing not only "traditional" concepts, but as nowhere extending beyond these concepts:

Gerade wenn der Mensch sich in seinen Wesensmerkmalen als historisches Wesen versteht, muß er sich mit seiner Geschichte als einer Summe realisierter Möglichkeiten des Menschseins auseinandersetzen, um sich seiner selbst gewiß zu werden. Und wenn er Einsicht in die Bedingungen des Menschseins gewinnen will, wird er auf Dichtungen nicht verzichten können, die Erfahrungen gestaltet haben, in denen die Zufälligkeiten und Besonderheiten ihrer Realität zum Allgemeinen und Typischen, zur Wahrheit verdichtet wurden. Darin gründet die bleibende Aktualität des Kunstwerkes; und in ihr ist der Grund dafür zu suchen, daß INGEBORB BACHMANN in den letzten Jahren als eine Autorin entdeckt zu werden scheint, die gerade auch in der Art und Weise, wie sie die Rolle der Frau im Verhältnis zum Mann und zur Gesellschaft bestimmt, Bedenkenswertes zu sagen hat. Sollte sich diese Tendenz fortsetzen und als fundiert erweisen, dann bedeutete dies, daß heute in der von vielen schon als reaktionär abgeschriebenen BACHMANNschen Konzeption
Furthermore, whereas we agree with Reinert that Bachmann advances no ideology or social program, we would argue that by reducing Bachmann's presentation of the male-female situation to a historic reality and shifting the formulation of a possible message to the recipient, Reinert strips Bachmann's works of a precise and timely statement.

A not insignificant part of the second phase of Bachmann reception can be classified as political interpretations, often combined with a feministic approach. Sigrid Schmid-Bortenschlager discusses one aspect of Bachmann's image of the woman in "Frauen als Opfer - Gesellschaftliche Realität und literarisches Modell." from a political point of view. Concluding an analysis of Bachmann's woman characters mainly in Simultan, she writes:

In Simultan und in der Romanwelt von Bachmann haben Frauen offenbar keine Chance: als Ehefrauen, die ihre Männer bewundern und beschützen, werden sie überflüssig wie Miranda, oder lästig, wie Franziska, sobald sie nicht mehr unkritisch mitarbeiten und Jordan bewundert, als Mutter werden sie mit einem lächerlichen Almosen abgeschoben . . . sobald sie ihre Funktion erfüllt haben; der Versuch, sich völlig auf sich selbst zurückzuziehen, wie bei Beatrix, ist zum Scheitern verurteilt, isoliertes Leben ist nicht möglich; lassen sie sich auf den beruflichen Wettkampf ein, so werden sie auch hier "ausgenützt", . . .

Schmid-Bortenschläger then points to the difficulty of comparing Bachmann's seemingly real male-female dichotomy to her models of society which, she argues, are partly abstract:

Die Schwierigkeit der Interpretation dieses scheinbar so eindeutigen Befundes ergibt sich, wenn man diese Dichotomie Mann/Frau mit den Gesellschaftsmodellen im Werk Bachmanns vergleicht. Auch hier zeigt sich wieder ein polares Denken, der heilen Welt Österreich-Ungarns, der Welt Matreis und Trottas steht die häßliche Welt der Gegenwart mit ihren Kriegen, Warenhäusern, ihrer Esperanto-Sprache gegenüber. Doch wird hier deutlich, daß die positive Hälfte keine reale Schilderung der historischen österreichisch-ungarischen
Monarchie sein will, daß es sich hierbei vielmehr um eine symbolische Chiffrierung zweiten und dritten Grades handelt.  

She therefore concludes that Bachmann's male-female polarity must also be taken as a model:

Ähnlich wie sich das Gesellschaftsbild bei Bachmann als abstraktes Modell erweist, so kann auch die Polarisierung Mann/Vater/Gott/Mörder gegen Frau/Tochter/Opfer nicht direkt realistisch und feministisch interpretiert werden.  

She concludes by interpreting the male-female antagonism as one of exploiters and exploited within Capitalism:

Bachmann geht es also in diesen privaten Geschichten auch um ein gesellschaftliches Problem. Ihr polares Modell von Opfern und Mörndern entspricht wohl am ehesten einer simplifizierten Kapitalismusinterpretation von Ausbeutern und Ausgebeuteten, in dem sich auch viele der konkret angesprochenen Details unterbringen lassen.  

Finally, Schmid-Bortenschlager directs attention to the problem of integrating Bachmann's frequent and concrete presentations of utopia into her interpretation:

Hier zeigt sich allerdings auch die Problematik von Bachmann’s Werken, die subtil und genau menschliche Beziehungen und ihr Scheitern nachzeichnen, sich jedoch nicht damit begnügen, sondern immer wieder ansetzen zur literarischen Gestaltung einer konkreten Utopie.  

Der Erzählband Simultan ist gegenüber den Hörspielen, aber auch noch gegenüber Malina reicher an realistischen Details, konkreten Beobachtungen, direkten Stellungnahmen zu politisch-gesellschaftlichen Tendenzen, doch dürfen diese Elemente nicht dazu verleiten, die Texte jetzt konkret-mimetisch zu interpretieren, sie sind nach wie vor eingespannt in das symbolische Weltmodell der Ingeborg Bachmann.  

Comparing the results of our analysis to those of Schmid-Bortenschlager we find agreement on the point that Bachmann's male-female image can not be interpreted by a feministic approach although our findings are more definite on that point. A substantial difference,
however, to Schmid-Bortenschlager — and to other Imperialism/Capitalism interpretations — is, that we have rejected the purely model-like nature of Bachmann's male-female antagonism. We have done this by analyzing its substance, its interdependence and its unity with the underlying conception of the world. To put it simply, Schmid-Bortenschlager's interpretation would allow the substitution of the male-female antagonism by a white-black or rich-poor conflict without effecting the substance of her conclusion. It will also be obvious, that our unified concept does not encounter the problem Schmid-Bortenschlager refers to, because concretion and abstraction (the male-female conflict and Bachmann's concept of the world) are seen to be of one nature. Besides, one may question Schmid-Bortenschlager's premise that one half of Bachmann's concept of the world is to be taken as real, the other not.

Summing up the second part of our discussion of Bachmann criticism regarding the image of the woman, we found an increasing trend toward a sociological and political perspective which in some aspects may require a reassessment of earlier purely literary approaches that were dominated by Bachmann's role as lyricist. We also found by comparing the substance of these conclusions to ours — where there was disagreement — that ours offer the more consistent and conclusive arguments in respect to Bachmann's image of the woman in its entirety.
CHAPTER XI

OUR INTERPRETATIONS AND FINDINGS

I. TODESARTEN AND THE TRAGIC CONDITION OF THE WOMAN

During our analysis of the image of the woman in Bachmann's prose, we have repeatedly drawn attention to a tragic dilemma in her existence and her relationship with men. Our interpretation of this theme, especially as it is developed in the novels of the Todesarten, is built on the two theories developed above: the search for freedom and personal identity, and the antagonistic nature of the male. The discussion is largely based on the figure of Fanny Goldmann in Requiem für Fanny Goldmann who is seen as an archetype for Bachmann's female protagonists in general and the main female characters in the Todesarten-cycle in particular.

A. The Fall

The question arises: why are Bachmann's women, despite their longing for independence, their non-rational insights, and their "counter-male" values, attracted to partners who become their jailers, tormenters and, eventually, their "murderers"? The answer is to be found in the fact that Bachmann's heroines are subject to elements of their nature that are, and always have been, "traditionally" female, such as longings for love, affection, protection, safety, guidance, and approval, such longings they find unable to resist. Our analysis
of the texts has shown this. After having extensively discussed the vestiges of such "traditional" female longings in Bachmann's women and after having also observed the "traditional" patterns of behaviour in male-female relationships, we must conclude that "traditional" role behaviour is the determining factor in all initial contacts of the female protagonists with their leading partners in all of the three Todesarten novels. Fanny Goldmann is concerned only about her appearance as she allows Marek to enter her apartment at night and quickly becomes dependent on him: Fanny "... war ... ihm börig". Franza marries a "father-image" and looks for protection. The narrator in Malina chases after Malina because she wants all her knowledge to come from him; she was "... von Anfang an unter ihn gestellt". In all of these cases, the male partners also represent "traditional" images: master, father/protector, teacher. Although Bachmann's females succeeded in becoming non-"traditional" in those aspects of their lives which did not involve relating to men, as we have shown earlier, they are unable to extend their independence into the deeply emotional realm of love. Love is never without dependence, without subordination. Thus, longing for love, if not discarded, will without fail drive Bachmann's females into involvement with, and dependence on, the male. There is a quality of determinism in the heroine's initial meeting with her lover. The narrator in Malina, for instance, reflects on her first contact with Malina: "... und ich muß früh gewußt haben, daß er mir zum Verhängnis werden müsse, daß Malinas Platz schon von Malina besetzt war, ehe er sich in meinem Leben einstellte. Es ist mir nur
erspart worden, oder ich habe es mir aufgespart, zu früh mit ihm zusammenzukommen.\textsuperscript{416} A force beyond the female's control is also at work in Franza's meeting of Jordan: Franza "... angeblich ohnmächtig geworden im Anatomiesaal, oder eine ähnliche romantische Geschichte hatte sie dem Fossil in die Arme getrieben, ...\textsuperscript{417} (Of course, pretending to faint was considered to be a "typical" and acceptable form of behaviour amongst "traditional" females.) The role played by a higher authority in Franza's relationship with Jordan is also expressed at another point in the novel when Bachmann refers to their initial meeting: "... durch welchen Ratschluß woh1?\textsuperscript{418} A less obvious example can be found in Requiem für Fanny Goldmann, where Fanny's meeting of Marek does not seem to have risen from her own choice. Right from the beginning of this relationship, she appears to have been an object of fate.

All of Bachmann's heroines are subject to a tragic quality because they are unable to break free of important "traditional" elements of their female nature or make them compatible with their new self. (To make them compatible would be a paradox because partner-directed behaviour excludes ego-directed behaviour; it implies the loss of the ego in the partner.) This tragic quality is not only responsible for luring the heroine into a psychological trap but also prevents her from becoming a fully evolved, independent human being, from achieving the Grenzübertritt or from entering the "new world" Bachmann envisions. One may also see this tragic situation in the wider theme developed by Bachmann in the story Alles and elsewhere: man is unable to create a
"new world" because he cannot escape the traditions and thought patterns of the past.

Although it is the tragic condition of Bachmann's heroines in the *Todesarten* novels - to a lesser extent of all heroines - that delivers them to their male oppressors, they are, however, not without responsibility in their own downfall. Franza speaks of an *Ammadostrieb* (a drive that leads a herd to slaughter), a Bluebeard marriage, but also of the female fascination for the world of the male and a woman's desire for wanting to know the incomprehensible and inexplicable nature of the male, though such knowledge may prove to be fatal. By submitting to their partner-oriented desires, to those qualities that are still "traditional", Bachmann's heroines submit to the male. By submitting to the male, they forego, without intent, the possibility of becoming a "new woman", of achieving individual identity and freedom. As the self is being enslaved, it becomes corrupted and is finally destroyed. It is first subjugated, then robbed of its identity, and finally trapped.

B. The Enslavement

The fall of Bachmann's heroines, their attraction to the male and his world, initiates a process that leads them to a loss of judgement, to self-deception, to a loss of self-reliance and self-orientation, loss of values, a distortion of their nature, and finally to a destruction of their self. Enslavement is the unavoidable consequence of their attraction. Their fall is a gradual fall from freedom into enslavement. This constitutes the main development in all three *Todesarten* novels. Franza, in *Der Fall Franza*, becomes aware of the
beginnings of her enslavement when she reflects on her relationship with Jordan:


Again, we are confronted with an antithesis in Bachmann's women, an antithesis between a "traditional" and an individualistic orientation, which causes so many of their conflicts. Although one part of the woman is driven to fall for the man, the other part signals a warning. This she ignores as her other-directed feelings come to the fore. It is important to note - in the context of our analysis above - that this warning is a mere feeling. Bachmann's women comprehend not by intellect and reason but by irrational insights and intuition. Intuition is an essential quality of the evolved heroine. With it, she becomes sensitive to the true nature of the male and to the dangerous situation she finds herself in. But as her partner-directed feelings become stronger, they turn out to be agents of deception. Soon after her commitment to Marek, Fanny begins to doubt. She starts to distrust Marek's literary abilities and suspects him to be lazy as he makes use of her literacy for his own gain. Yet, she hesitates to acknowledge his literary deceptions and finds excuses for him "... unmerklich, wurde die Person Marek einem Prozess unterzogen, aus dem sie immer bedeutender, vollkommener und fabelhafter, anbetungswürdiger, hervorging ..." A very similar situation exists in Franza's case. Under the influence of love and affection, she ennobles Jordan's actions and ignores reality and the warning given by her "other nature".

The process of subjugation continues when the woman drops her name, and thereby cuts herself off from her roots. She loses her identity; more important yet, she loses her ability for discernment and self-sufficiency; she becomes depersonalized.


Next, she loses her independence of mind as she abandons her values and thoughts in order to attach herself to the male's thinking. Franza recalls this loss during her early relationship with Jordan:

... daß ich vielleicht den Ritterschlag verdienen, mir verdienen könnte, erdienen mit ... Preisgabe meiner Gedanken, die sich erst zu bilden gehabt hätten. Ich hing mich ... an seine Gedankenleitung, unvorsichtig, ich hätte mich auch an eine Starkstromleitung werfen können, das wäre rascher und glimpflicher verlaufen, ein elektrischer Unfall, Totalschaden mit Verbrennungen, ...
This need to give up thinking, to abandon her own latent ideas, is a consequence of a diminishing identity and the last step toward the point of no escape. It is an act of self-denial which would only be harmless to a "traditional" woman. It is lethal to Bachmann's heroine.

The heroine has been reduced to a state of helplessness and dependence. Usually, the heroine suddenly realises that the means for her free and individual existence have been destroyed. Bachmann uses frequently the images of language, sentences, or letters, to demonstrate the loss. The narrator in *Malina* is searched for her sentences and has them taken away by police before she is put into jail. Fanny and Franza are reduced to readers - an image which in Bachmann's terms stands for existence in a foreign-designed world - of their life's story, their own psychoanalysis. Franza receives a "new skin", Fanny has her dresses designed by Marek. Earlier, we have discussed the meaning of self-selected dresses in *Malina*. The suppression and decay of a woman's "other nature", the loss of her independence, individuality and her values, her shift toward her "traditional" ways, her adjustment to the man's thinking, have made her helpless and insecure. All are typical of the "traditional" female. We are told that Fanny Goldmann becomes fearful and insecure after meeting Marek. We also note a similar situation in *Malina* and in *Der Fall Franza*. This helplessness contributes to facilitate the eventual "murder" of the heroine and prevents her timely escape. Bachmann's heroines have become subjected to, and infected by, their male partners. The same helplessness makes them also plead for help and salvation. Only the man seems to be able to banish deadly disease and bring salvation:
... und wenn Fanny etwas wünschte, dann jedenfalls im Anfang, daß dies von ihr genommen werde, da sie es als Krankheit zum Tod erkannte, daß Toni, seit sie dies wußte, kommen möge, nicht mehr, damit noch irgendwas zwischen ihnen geregelt würde, nicht mehr für eine Rechenschaft, sondern, um das von ihr zu nehmen, ihr die Hand aufzulegen, es mußte etwas in seinem Besitz geben (in wessen Besitz sonst), das sie erlösen konnte.424

The women's helplessness, their psychological dependence, denies them any individual freedom. There is not only danger from without, from the man, that undermines their freedom but danger from within. Bachmann's heroines know about their infatuation, about their voluntary submission, and they sense the deadly effects these have on their soul. Freedom also often entails alienation and isolation. We have earlier discussed the role of the outsider and the theme of social commitment and see in the partner-oriented urges of Bachmann's females a perhaps subconscious social yearning to compensate for the sense of alienation a truly independent individual can feel. Furthermore, there appears to be an automatic quality within the chain of cause and effect which leads the heroine step by step toward her enslavement. This can easily be seen when analysing the development of the heroines in the Todesarten. There is shown to us a further dimension in the image of the female. She becomes a representation of political and social developments during the rise of totalitarianisms in this century. In Bachmann's writings Fascism, as we have suggested earlier, is synonymous with certain ways of male behaviour.

C. The Trap

The tragic development continues as the feeling of helplessness changes into the heroine's realization that she is trapped. Bachmann
depicts this psychological condition of entrapment by painting gruesome pictures of traps, of which the gas chamber is the ultimate example. Other forms are the prison cell, the labyrinth, the tomb, the cage, a deadly disease like cancer, or a high-voltage fence of barbed wire.

What has caused this psychological feeling of entrapment, this claustrophobia? For Franza it is the realization that her whole emotional life is observed, tabulated and analysed. She speaks of the cage of Jordan's notes. In these notes, which contain the analysis and description of her mind and behaviour, her innermost being is imprisoned. Worse, she is reduced to a calculable and manipulable object that has to live in fear and terror. For Fanny Goldmann, on the other hand, it is the recognition that her life's intimate experiences and feelings are caught and put on display when they are described, exposed and marketed in Marek's book. Such display causes fear and hate in her, a hate that she likens to cancer and a mortal sickness. It is the realization of having been misused, thrown away, and having her ideals and values she has held destroyed. For the narrator in Malina it is the realization that, for her, survival in Malina's or Ivan's world is impossible; in it, she can not retain or develop her identity; her personality has been reduced to a caricature.

Generalizing from the individual instances, we must conclude that the progressive reduction of the woman's self, the entrapment of her ego, by the inner compulsion to feel and act in a "traditional" way and by the outer forces imposed on her by her partner is responsible for her anxiety and fear. It is fear which leads into the trap. Also, for Bachmann's heroines the loss of the ego means loss of human identity.
This explains the repeated animal imagery Bachmann provides in connection with the trap:

Wie habe ich mich benommen, wie ein Tier, das in seinem Käfig auf- und niederrennt, und wenn ich die Stäbe hätte durchrennen können mit meinem Schädel, wäre ich noch im Käfig gewesen, in dem Käfig seiner Notizen, die mich verfolgten, die mir vorausgingen.425

The realization of having been trapped is a sudden one and it appears to be a turning point in the consciousness of Bachmann's women. All three heroines in the Todesarten speak of a sudden change, a sudden disillusionment about their partners and often, also, about human values in general. This sudden realization at the climax precipitates the final development toward destruction. This suddenness can even be observed in Bachmann's short narrative Im Himmel und auf Erden where Justin uses Amelie to steal for him. The reader is told that Amelie, after having been arrested, suddenly realizes her terrible victimization: "Da stürzte die Einfält aus ihren Augen und wechselte mit einem Abgrund des Wissens, der mit einmal ihn und sie und das Gefüge ihrer Beziehungen verschlang." Similar words are used to describe Fanny Goldmann's instinctive realization of her situation:

Wie die Ankündigungen von schweren Krankheiten, die des Zusammenhangs noch entbehren, wie die Ahnungsanfälle von Todesfällen, Abstürzen, hatte Fanny etwas zwischen der Michaelerkirche und der Kärntenerstraße angefallen, und sie hatte diese etwas größeren Augen, die nicht zum Schauen da sind, nicht zum Anblicken, zum Begreifen, sondern zum Nichtverstehen, zum Starren, zur Fassungslosigkeit, . . . 427

At one point toward the end, the narrator in Malina tells the reader:

"Ivan ist nicht mehr Ivan, ich sehe ihn an wie ein Kliniker, der eine Röntgenaufnahme studiert, ich sehe sein Skelett, Flecken in seiner Lunge . . . "428 A similar situation is revealed by Franza suddenly
realizing Jordan's true character: "Ja, ich habe ihn nur angesehen, und
dann ging mir auf, was seine Strategiewar, er war ein großer Stratege,
... und dann wuβte ich, daß er genau wuβte, er wuβte, was in mir
vorging und er genoβ es, ...").

Thus, the feeling of being trapped represents the psychological
state of helplessness, of fear, and the recognition that one cannot
escape since all the means for such an escape, for survival itself,
have been lost or given up voluntarily.

D. Death

Execution, or murder, threatens all of Bachmann's women.

Keywords associated with it appear throughout Bachmann's work:
murder, murderer, execution, executioner, guillotine, torture,
massacre, fatal disease, cancer, slaughter, sacrifice, terror, gas chamber,
graveyard of daughters. Bachmann's metaphors for violent death in
the Todesarten novels range from the "white murder" symbolized by the
wedding dress and the wedding to the slaughter of a lamb representing
Fanny Goldmann's fate.

We have previously discussed the destruction of the female's
inner identity by the male. In the Todesarten novels the heroine is
either killed by having her mind and behaviour studied, analyzed and
manipulated (Franza), or by having her inner experiences fictionalized
and marketed (Fanny), or by being reduced to a fixed role, to an
inferior being, a caricature of her former self (the narrator in
Malina): ". . . weil ich zu einer Karikatur geworden bin, im Geist
und im Fleisch." Destruction may also be caused by a repression
of thought, speech, or willpower, as well as by the annihilation of her self-identity through "love". Destruction, or death, is a process of depersonalization that is triggered and sustained by the male as well as by the female as we discussed earlier. It is also sustained by stereotyping her, by denying her individuality, by projecting a false image onto herself.

A further and more devastating way to cause "death" is to penetrate her identity, kill her self-awareness, and her ability to express herself. This is brought about by the destruction of her sentences, her speech. It goes hand in hand with the destruction of her personality from without. A very poetic presentation of the ways to kill, namely through sex, is given in Requiem for Fanny Goldmann. A deadly assault on the heroine's self-identity is made when her name is swallowed up, consumed, in the act of sexual love:

... ihr alter Name Fanny war in seinem jungen Namen Walter untergegangen, hatte sich von ihm überwältigen lassen, er war in alle ihre Buchstaben eingedrungen, sein A hatte mit ihren Vokalen sich berührt, seine Konsonanten sich mit ihren verschlungen, sie hatten sich befeuchtet, sich gedreht ineinander, er hatte ihren Namen aufgeweicht, ihn vom F bis zum Ypsilon umarmt, ihr Name war so besamt von seinem Namen, er war auch in ihr aufgegangen, so hatte sie gemeint, aber nein, er war es nicht, er hatte sie umbenannt, er nannte sie Stephanie in seinem Buch, ... It should be noted here that it is not sex itself which is destructive but her depersonalisation which accompanies it. The narrator in Bachmann's Malina describes her relationship to Ivan in very similar words. Here, her identity is not destroyed:

Wenn Ivan auch gewiß für mich erschaffen worden ist, so kann ich doch nie allein auf ihn Anspruch erheben. Denn er ist gekommen, um die Konsonanten wieder fest und fasslich zu machen, um die Vokale wieder zu öffnen, damit sie voll tönen, um mir
die Worte wieder über die Lippen kommen zu lassen, um die ersten zerstörten Zusammenhänge wiederherzustellen und die Probleme zu erlösen, und so werde ich kein Jota von ihm abweichen, ich werde unsre identischen, hellklingenden Anfangsbuchstaben, mit denen wir unsre kleinen Zettel unterzeichnen, aufeinanderstimmen, übereinanderschreiben, und nach der Vereinigung unserer Namen könnten wir vorsichtig anfangen, mit den ersten Worten dieser Welt wieder die Ehre zu erweisen, damit sie wünschen muß, sich wieder die Ehre zu geben, und da wir die Auferstehung wollen und nicht die Zerstörung, hüten wir uns, einander schon öffentlich mit den Händen zu berühren, .

Both quotations illustrate not only the dilemma of Bachmann's heroines, the need to retain individual identity amidst a passion which is self-consuming, but also the importance of language as a means of self-expression and self-awareness. Although, we discussed earlier the role that writing and other creative activities play in Bachmann's novels, and their importance to the heroines, we should add here that there are two forms of writing in the novels. Marek, as well as the narrator in Malina write, but both do so in completely different ways and with different effects. Marek's way of writing is "second hand"; he copies Fanny's experiences. This is so because true "male" writing can only be analytic, descriptive and objective. Marek is not able to produce truly subjective, creative writing, and has also failed as a playwright. His writing is, like Jordan's or any other man's writing, destructive to women. Female writing, on the other hand, if it has not been contaminated by male influences, is shown in Bachmann's prose to be truly creative and to have a self-assertive, life-giving, inspiring, effect.

Throughout the Todesarten we find a connection between sex, sexual oppression, and assault on the woman's individuality and her
"other" nature. The destructive action of Marek is intensified by Bachmann's combining sexual with linguistic imagery. Here, one may observe in the destruction of Fanny's name a stylized form of castration which also underlies the image of the severed ring fingers of the dead daughters rising from their graves in Malina. Furthermore, the re-appearing archetypal father figure throughout Bachmann's Todesarten novels, especially in Malina, is laden with imagery of sexual oppression and destructiveness. These range from the huge, black, leech-like, hoses attached to the gaschamber in which the narrator in Malina is locked by her father/murderer, to the jewel-studded staff of the University of Vienna subduing her intellect, or to the piece of apple stuck in Franza's throat almost killing her, to the triple meaning of "aufs Kreuz gelegt". In the last two images, one notices a fusion of sexual and biblical imagery. There are throughout the Todesarten novels repeated analogies between sex, sexual oppression, brutality, and the destruction of women.

The death of the heroine takes on its strongest significance when Fanny Goldmann is seen as a Christ figure in its religious and sacrificial setting. The mount of Olives, the sponge with vinegar, the lamb of God, and the slaughter of the lamb, are used by Bachmann to convey a spiritual dimension. Earlier we have noted that the woman's better nature could mean salvation for both men and women. In this respect Bachmann's heroines are the receivers of divine gifts or messages. They come, as Bachmann phrases it, from the "highest authority" beyond the image of the almighty father in Malina:

The symbolic meaning of the rocks is complex. Perhaps, some point of likeness to Wolfram's holy grail was intended. In any case, the rocks do represent the essence of the better nature of Bachmann's heroines. The message of the rocks clearly relates to the "magic" and the "poetic" within the woman, that divine spark which the male characters endeavour to kill. During the "murder", Malina, after breaking the narrator's sunglasses (symbol of her eyes), throws her blue glass cube into the wastepaper basket. Here it is a cube, not a rock, but the reference to the above passage is clear. Number and colour both are the same. The cube represents the "divine" part of a woman's nature, that which is destroyed. Returning to the Christ image of Fanny Goldmann, we now perceive it as part of a religious symbolism that encompasses the anti-Eve image as well as a divine message: Bachmann's heroines as the daughters and messengers of God are meant to humanize a world deformed by the male, are killed, and sacrificed. Their "sentences" are taken from them; they are prevented from spreading the divine
message; they are silenced. Bachmann's rather savage image of Marek's consuming Fanny's flesh and blood re-enforces the idea of a most "unholy" communion.

E. Grenzübertritt

We have now reached the level at which Bachmann's concept of Grenzübertritt becomes clear. It is the antithesis to death. Although, during the first stages of development everything seems to lead toward death, opposing forces are simultaneously at work. This time, Bachmann's heroines act out of their "other" nature. Although they fall in love, they are able to retain their distinct character. In Der gute Gott von Manhattan, Jan is unable to take possession of Jennifer, although he tries. Attempting to discover all her secrets, he says:


JAN: Dann ist wenig Zeit auf der Welt. Denn wenn alles entdeckt und verformelt ist, wird die Lasur deiner geschmeidigen Augen und die blonde Haarsteppe auf deiner Haut von mir noch nicht begriffen sein. Wenn alles gewußt, geschaffen und wieder zerstört sein wird, werde ich noch verführt werden im Labyrinth deiner Blicke. Und es wird mich das Schluchzen, das deinen Atemweg heraufkommt, bestürzen wie nichts sonst.434

This time, the man tries to understand the woman not through analysis but through his emotions. And because he fails (and knows that he will fail again) the woman is saved. Her emotional territory is foreign to him. A very similar development takes place in Ein Geschäft mit
Träumen. Here, Anna, although she appears to love Lauranz, rejects her lover's offer of protection and seeks eternal freedom at the bottom of the sea. Her reaction to her male partner is the opposite of that of those heroines who end by being murdered.

In both of these cases of Grenzübertritt, the men retreat; they are unable, or unwilling, to follow their lovers into the realm of emotion and freedom. They are unable to confine the women, subjugate them, or comprehend them unlike men in the Todesarten. To Anna and Jennifer, "death" also happens, but it presents itself in a different manner. In Grenzübertritt it is the "physical" part of the woman's self which dies, and it is her existential "other" nature which survives in eternity. Therein lies Bachmann's concept of immortality; there is no belief in traditional Christian afterlife. As to the image of the woman, Bachmann's treatment of her in Grenzübertritt can be seen as a counterpart to her treatment in Todesarten. Both fit the overall male-female antithesis.

F. The Magic of the Woman

Many different dialectic views of the world have been developed throughout history. But Ingeborg Bachmann presents in her male-female antithesis a dialectic view in specifically sexual images, actions, conflicts, and processes. This makes her image of the woman so unique. It far transcends mere issues of emancipation. Thus, the Todesarten cycle ought to be seen as a literary presentation of the interaction between two conflicting worlds. Attraction and repulsion are their dynamics; harmonious coexistence is impossible. Bachmann,
despite presenting also the positive sides of the male world, leaves no doubt in the reader's mind with whom her hopes and sympathies lie.

What is it that the killers aim for? What is it that they wish to destroy? One finds the answers in the heroines' own words: "das andere in mir", "mein Lachen, meine Zärtlichkeit, mein Freuenkönennen, mein Mitleiden, Helfenkönnnen, meine Animalität, mein Strahlen", "die Magie", "die Poesie". These qualities are the target since men do not only lack them but completely oppose them. The protagonist's will to destroy these qualities and those who possess them is part of Bachmann's dialectic. She sees a world in which women participate in a magical, beautiful, ideal state of existence which is destroyed by the man's skeptical, unemotional nature and his will to power. The woman becomes his victim. She is destroyed. She is Christ on the cross sacrificed to man's evil nature, to his oppression, to the war and death he brings upon the world.

The theses of the "inner world", of "female emancipation", of the "aufgelöste Figur", and of female "neurosis" discussed in the previous chapter, are representative of most scholarly interpretations of Bachmann's works. The major difference between these interpretations and our own is that these critics assume that there is, for Bachmann, the possibility of a harmonious existence between man and woman, while we do not. They trace Bachmann's sexual dialectic to an imbalance of a normally harmonious order, an imbalance brought about by either a suppression of equal rights (S. Weigel) or a lack of understanding and love (R. Endres). An imbalance can also be caused by an outsider,
by female psychological disorders, by "Verinnerlichung" which is seen to be anti-social, auto-erotic, and decadent, and to be leading to suicide (M. Jurgensen). Last but not least, Bachmann's conflicts are seen in reference to Musil and his original male/female unity, or else interpreted as an inner projection of "Doppelgeschlechtlichkeit" or "Doppelleben" (H. Pausch, E. Summerfield). It appears to us, however, that Bachmann does not see the feasibility of a male/female state of harmony on this earth because of a fundamental antagonism between the two sexes. A synthesis of emotion and intellect, of faith and knowledge, of good and evil, would be a paradox; harmony would be impossible between such opposite spheres. Bachmann accepts the "Riß durch die Welt", a world divided by irreconcilable opposites, as reality, but she also envisions the magical dawning of a new world in which a new womanhood will emerge reversing the fall of mankind:

Ein Tag wird kommen, an dem die Frauen rotgoldene Augen haben, rotgoldenes Haar, und die Poesie ihres Geschlechts wird wiedererschaffen werden . . .436

The new woman will bring about a more loving and humane world:

Ein Tag wird kommen, an dem die Menschen rotgoldene Augen und siderische Stimmen haben, an dem ihre Hände begabt sein werden für die Liebe, und die Poesie ihres Geschlechts wird wiedererschaffen sein . . .437

The magical powers of the woman will dominate the world, a world free of male "progress". The new woman will usher in the golden age:

. . . und ihre Hände werden begabt sein für die Güte, sie werden nach den höchsten aller Güter mit ihren schuldlosen Händen greifen, denn sie sollen nicht ewig, denn es sollen die Menschen nicht ewig, sie werden nicht ewig warten müssen . . .

In den Wüsten wird das Wasser versiegen, wir werden wieder in die Wüste können und die Offenbarungen schauen, die Savannen und die Gewässer in ihrer Reinheit werden uns einladen, die Diamanten werden im Gestein bleiben und uns allen leuchten, der Urwald wird uns aus dem Nachtwald unserer Gedanken übernehmen, wir werden aufhören, zu denken und zu leiden, es wird die Erlösung sein.

Yet within this very poetic vision, Bachmann offers no concrete ideas about the future. Her utopia, like many others, exists in the misty vagueness of the poetic imagination. This is not a flaw. Bachmann intends her vision to serve not as a blueprint but as a beacon, warning and guiding towards a future which we are approaching through the constant "interplay of the unattainable with the possible".
1 The term "traditional" describing aspects of the social role image of the woman discussed in this study will be based on two foundations. First, it will be used in its sociological definition as given in:


Historically, roles have been defined as positions or status arrangements existing in socially structured organizations. Divisions of labor within these organizations provide differential structures, for example, levels of responsibility and obligation. By allocating status to structural conditions, roles provide a necessary hierarchy for maintenance and perpetuation of a social organization. Individuals become members of a social group through the assumption and performance of ascribed and socially acceptable aspired roles. Traditionally, an individual's self-meaning was defined, derived, and interpreted by his gradual adoption of roles required for adaptation to the social system. Thus, the historical approach to understanding the development of self was to focus upon overt position and status behaviors as producers of an individual's identity concepts. According to this approach, each individual develops a social identity which is his self-meaning. Such identities develop by appropriate performance of behaviors required by the "generalized others" (Mead, 1934). The individual becomes adaptive to his society by reflecting a mirror image of self (Cooley, 1922) by his increasing approximations of becoming what his roles demand and others expect.

Second, it will be applied in our analysis in the same way as many of the critical studies on Bachmann's works have with the same implications done. The following examples are given for reference:

Rita Jo Horsley:

... she [Charlotte] is blind to the fact that she would be perpetuating the traditional masculine and feminine roles through her exchange of the subordinate position for that of the oppressor. (p. 278)
... the story criticises the oppressiveness of the traditional female experience in heterosexual relations, ... (p. 279)

... Charlotte has already departed from more traditional roles of housewife and mother, ... (p. 279)

"Ingeborg Bachmann's Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha ..."

Holger Pausch:

Diese Tatsache allein wäre wohl kaum beachtenswert, wenn sich ihr [Bachmanns] Frauenbild nicht erheblich von dem traditionellen in der Literatur unterschiede. (p. 64)

In den fünf Erzählungen des Bandes Simultan wird der Ausbruch aus der traditionellen Rollenethik der Frau in der Gesellschaft nicht mehr ... philosophierend untermauert. (p. 68)


Gabriele Bail:

Alle drei Männer erwarten von der Ich-Figur, daß sie im Rahmen patriarchalischer Strukturen traditionelle Frauenrollen übernimmt. (p. 55)

Weibliche Identität: Ingeborg Bachmanns "Malina".

Claus Reinert:

Der Hinweis auf Weininger und der Rekurs auf Lersch sollen nur verdeutlichen, wie sehr Ingeborg Bachmanns Menschenbild tradierten Anschauungen entspricht, ... (p. 213)


The term "traditional" or "traditional role image" will be used by us to describe characteristics, behaviour, norms and forms of status found during the analysis of Bachmann's woman characters that are or appear to be partially or wholly identical or comparable to those of the late nineteenth century bourgeois social role of the woman.

The term sex-specific denotes that a characteristic, a form of behavior, an attribute, a disease, etc., is distinct to one sex only. This term
is frequently used in the literary analysis and criticism of
Bachmann's women characters and to a lesser extent also for her men
characters. It is usually used to denote a form of thinking and
behaving that is attributed by Bachmann to one sex only. In this
sense, it will be used in our analysis also. As the term is used
in its general denotation, we are not setting it in quotation marks.

2 Ingeborg Bachmann, "Literatur als Utopie," in Ingeborg
Bachmann, eine Einführung (Munich: Piper, 1963), p. 17.

3 "Literatur als Utopie," p. 15.

4 For instance: Holger Pausch, Ingeborg Bachmann (Berlin:

5 Pausch, Ingeborg Bachmann, p. 74.

6 Although Anna plays rather a major part, she has been
classified as secondary because she shows very little character
development; also the radio play is a very early work (1952)
not showing yet all the typical Bachmann features of the female
character.

7 M. Jurgensen, ed., Frauenliteratur: Autorinnen —

8 Some of the more recent publications and dissertations which
proved useful for this paper were:

Küseoglu, Lale. Die Stellung der Frauenfiguren in den
Dramen von Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Max Frisch und Hans

Merrifield, Doris Fulda. Das Bild der Frau bei Max

Silberman, Alphons, and Krüger, Udo Michael. Abseits
der Wirklichkeit. Das Frauenbild in deutschen
Lesebüchern. Köln: Wissenschaft und Politik,
1971.

Vieth, Adolf Rudolf. Die Stellung der Frau in den
Wien: n. p., 1939.
One may argue whether the elder Frau Jordan or rather Franziska is the leading character of this story. However, almost all secondary female characters are also within this age range.

Although Elisabeth in Drei Wege zum See is forty-nine, the reader is told that her appearance is that of a woman in her late thirties.

In the case of Jennifer, Hanna, Nadja, Beatrix, Elisabeth, the elder Frau Jordan and Franziska.

In Bachmann's terms of reference, preoccupation with language falls in the artistic-creative-aesthetic realm.

One may consider here her concern regarding the Akademiker.

Based on the Mühlbauer interview and on her correspondence.

Law, the Rigorosum in philosophy, The University of Vienna.

The question, whether this milieu is one of the causes for the desire of Bachmann's women to seek liberation - as has been suggested by some critics - will be discussed later on.
An exception here may be noted in the case of Anna in *Ein Geschäfts mit Träumen*, though she is not considered to be a leading character for the purpose of this study. This radio play is a very early work and is in many ways not characteristic of Bachmann's later writings.

Nadja appears to be the only example where some form of independence is gained through work. Compare: Bachmann, *Werke*, II, p. 286.

Compare in this context also Chapter III, The Role of the Professional.


Chapters VII and VIII.

Albrecht Weber, "Didaktische Perspektiven zum Werk Ingeborg Bachmanns," in *Interpretationen zu Ingeborg Bachmann*, ed. by R. Hirschenauner and A. Weber (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1976), pp. 28-29. It ought to be noted that Weber's conclusions are not supported by this study and that his term das Außerordentliche would make sense only as meaning the irregular, the unconventional as it is precisely the Außerordentliche, i.e. perfect love, which Bachmann's women do not find.

Compare Chapter VI, The biographical versus the text-immanent view of the image of the female.


In this context attention is drawn to the "dream" aspect of love which will be discussed later on. Examples are: *Ein Geschäfts mit Träumen* and the tales of the Princes of Kagran in *Malina*.

Explanation to the chart (column "adultery")
- lesbian means lesbian inclinations or experiences
- + means infidelity committed by the husband
- x means adultery committed by wife or by single girl with married man

Illis Plenge, *Die Emanzipation des Mannes* (Stuttgart: A. Bonz, 1969), p. 42. The translation is given by the author of this study. Plenge goes on to attack this image as biased and based neither on biological nor psychological facts.


45. Pausch, Bachmann, p. 57 ff.

46. E.g.: The first-person narrator in Malina.


50. For a discussion of the thesis of Innenwelt see Chapter IX.


The exception being the so-called Menschenfrauen in Undine geht.

Compare for instance the figure of the Waldweiβ in Tieck's Der Runenberger.

Bachmann, Werke, II, p. 255.


Bachmann, Werke, II, pp. 244-245.

Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 211.

Compare Chapter IV below.


Bachmann, Werke, II, p. 258.


Compare Chapter III below.

Frankfurter Hefte, 7 (1953), p. 10.

Compare also Bachmann's radio-essay "Sagbares und Unsagbares - Die Philosophie Ludwig Wittgensteins" discussed in Chapter V.

It ought to be noted, that socio-political theories influence such discussions frequently. Note also in this context the graph below.


74 Bachmann, Werke, II, p. 256.

75 Compare the following chapter for a discussion on interaction with children.


77 Bachmann, Werke, II, p. 150.

78 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 147.

79 Compare the parent-image in Jugend in einer österreichischen Stadt; see also Chapter VI below for a discussion on biographic elements in Bachmann's characterizations of women.

80 See the section on the marital status in Chapter II.


82 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 110.

83 Although the marital status is not quite clear, Malina may certainly be considered at least a common law mate. The opinion of some critics, seeing Malina as an alter ego of the narrator, should not invalidate the observations within this study.

84 Particularly in respect to Chapter II, "Der Dritte Mann," of Malina.

A discussion of the complex psychic relationship between Malina and the narrator, especially regarding the third chapter, would transgress the topic of this chapter.


In this context see also Chapter IV, V.


Bachmann, zwei Hörspiele, p. 56.


Bachmann, Werke, I, p. 205.

Note the chart under the section "marital and familial status."

Compare also the section "The Wife-Role" above.

Compare the sections on education and profession in Chapter II above.

All page numbers in this chart refer to Werke, II.

H. Pausch, p. 74.

Bachmann, Werke, I, p. 222.

Grenzgänger.


Bachmann, Werke, II, pp. 211-212.


Compare in this context contemporary outsiders such as Edgar Wibeau and Holden Caulfield.

For the understanding of Bachmann's ideas on Sprachkrise Wittgenstein is of seminal importance. Compare in this context the paragraph of Wittgenstein's "Sprachlosigkeit" below in Chapter V.


Compare "Patterns of Development," Chapter V below.

Compare in this context the section on the role of the mother in Chapter III.

Bachmann, Werke, II, p. 199.

Bachmann, Werke, II, p. 400.

Compare the section "Interaction with Men" in this chapter.

Page numbers refer to the corresponding stories; words in brackets are paraphrases, not direct quotations.


153. The other one is related in Werke, III, p. 216.


157. For this topic see the section below: Social Interaction with Men.

158. Compare the section on the roles of the wife, the lover, and the housewife.

This is the case in Malina, Simultan, Probleme, Probleme, Drei Wege zum See, Ihr glücklichen Augen, Ein Schritt nach Gomorrha, Undine geht.

Compare the section on the role of the lover above.

Compare in this context the sadistic attitude of Jordan discussed in Chapter VIII.

In psychology rejection can be seen as a perverted form of acceptance.

Compare the section on interaction with children above.

Compare the section on the role of the lover above.

Compare the section on the role of the lover in Chapter III above.
178 Arrows indicate direction: half arrow = weak interaction, full arrow = strong interaction, double arrow = very strong interaction; asterics indicate source of interaction; the sequence of the categories of interaction is that used in the text.


180 H. Stadler, K. Dickopf, Literatur, Fischer Kolleg 8 (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1973), S. 105.


182 Bachmann, Werke, II, p. 344.


185 Bachmann, Werke, II, p. 419.

186 Bachmann, Werke, II, p. 262.


188 Bachmann, Werke, II, p. 429.


190 Bachmann, Werke, IV, p. 29.


B. Schärer, "Ingeborg Bachmann's Erzählung 'Alles,'" Mutter-


See: Tractatus logico-philosophicus.


Film by Michael Haneke, ARD (German TV), June 8th, 1977.


Bachmann, Werke, II, p. 94.

Compare Chapter IV for biographic aspects.

H. Pausch, pp. 77-78.


Compare the paragraphs above on the roles of the professional and the outsider.


216 Compare the paragraph on Interaction with Society.


221 Angst-Hürlimann, Im Widerspiel des Unmöglichen . . ., p. 99.


228 Bachmann, Werke, IV, pp. 118-119.


234 Manfred Triesch, "Truth, Love, and the Death of Language in Ingeborg Bachmann’s Stories," Books Abroad, 39 No. 4 (1965), p. 392. Since this date there have been some publications on Bachmann’s philosophy.


236 Bachmann, Werke, IV, p. 277.

237 It has been argued, that even the males in the few male-orientated stories reveal a predominantly female point of view.


239 Chapters III, IV.

240 Chapters II, III.


242 Pausch, Bachmann, pp. 76-77.

243 Weber, Didaktische Perspektiven, p. 15.


249 Also Melanie, a sex rival for the narrator in Malina, appears as a crocodile.


251 Compare among others: I. Morgner, Christa Wolf and G. Wohmann.

252 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 270.

253 Bachmann, Werke, II, p. 305.


261 Speculate, because in other instances the man has appeared in a saving role. Compare also Chapter VIII, "the 'sick' male."

262 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 269.


Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 91.

Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 333.


Pausch, Bachmann, p. 76.


Karl Krolow in Der Tagesspiegel quoted from flap of Malina.

W. H. Fritz, H. Heissenbüttel, "Über Ingeborg Bachmanns Roman 'Malina,'" p. 27.

Compare in this context Chapter VIII, "The Male-Female Conflict."

Mein teurer Freund, ich rat Euch drum
Zuerst Collegium Logicum.
Da wird der Geist Euch wohl dressiert,
In spanische Stiefel eingeschnürt,
Faust I, Studierzimmer, 1910-1914.

See Chapter II, "Vanity."

Perhaps one may in this context suggest a relationship to the fool and asylum themes that are especially popular in recent literature, where frequently the insane or irrational person expresses the truth, where men escape from the enforced thought patterns of the outer world. In any case, there is no doubt, that Bachmann's heroines despise existing reason and logic which they associate with the male, as restrictive and that they plead for a new way of thinking which would require a new language. Compare also the stream of consciousness.

296 I. Bachmann, Der Fall Franza, in Werke, ed. by Christine Koschel, Inge von Weidenbaum, Clemens Münster (Munich, Zurich: Piper & Co., 1978), III.


299 Compare the context of the cycle of novels headed Todesarten.

300 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 404.

301 Bachmann, Werke, IV, pp. 344-345.


304 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 269.


306 Selfishness in its materialistic and exploitative sense. Bachmann's women, however, were found to be selfish in the sense of seeking and demanding self-development and in resisting social integration. C.f. Chapter IV.


311 Compare Chapter V, "Patterns of Development."

312 Compare "a quest for freedom" in Chapter V above.


320. Pausch, Bachmann, p. 68.


322. Pausch, Bachmann, p. 65.

323. Pausch, Bachmann, p. 67.

324. Pausch, Bachmann, p. 88.

325. Pausch, Bachmann, p. 79.


328. Pausch, Bachmann, p. 68.

329. Pausch, Bachmann, p. 84.


331. Summerfield, Bachmann, p. 2.
332 Summerfield, Bachmann, p. 48.
333 Summerfield, Bachmann, p. 57.
334 Summerfield, Bachmann, p. 54.
336 Summerfield, Bachmann, p. 49.
337 Summerfield, Bachmann, p. 55.
338 Summerfield, Bachmann, p. 44.
339 Summerfield, Bachmann, p. 12.
340 Summerfield, Bachmann, p. 41.
343 Summerfield, Bachmann, pp. 18-19.
344 Summerfield, Bachmann, pp. 54-55.
345 Summerfield, Bachmann, p. 77.
346 Stephan and Weigel, Die verborgene Frau, p. 85.
347 Stephan and Weigel, Die verborgene Frau, p. 87.
348 Stephan and Weigel, Die verborgene Frau, p. 111.
349 Stephan and Weigel, Die verborgene Frau, p. 128.
350 Stephan and Weigel, Die verborgene Frau, p. 130.
352 Jurgensen, Bachmann, p. 9.
353 Jurgensen, Bachmann, p. 66.
354 Jurgensen, Bachmann, p. 67.
355 Jurgensen, Bachmann, p. 69.
357 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 313.
358 Jurgensen, Bachmann, p. 104.
359 Jurgensen, Bachmann, p. 105.
360 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 489.
361 Jurgensen, Bachmann, p. 105.
363 Bail, Weibliche Identität, p. 28.
364 Bail, Weibliche Identität, p. 55.
365 Bail, Weibliche Identität, p. 42.
366 Bail, Weibliche Identität, p. 50.
367 Bail, Weibliche Identität, p. 79.
368 Bail, Weibliche Identität, pp. 36-37.
369 Bail, Weibliche Identität, p. 66.
370 Bail, Weibliche Identität, p. 66.
371 Bail, Weibliche Identität, p. 55.
Bail, Weibliche Identität, p. 55.

Bail, Weibliche Identität, p. 56.

Bail, Weibliche Identität, p. 56.


Bartsch, "Schichtwechsel", p. 78.

Bartsch, "Schichtwechsel", p. 78.


Bartsch, "Schichtwechsel", pp. 77-78.

Bartsch, Anmerkungen, p. 75.

Bartsch, Anmerkungen, p. 76.

Bartsch, Anmerkungen, p. 76.


Bartsch, Anmerkungen, p. 73.

Bartsch, "Schichtwechsel", pp. 87-88.

Bartsch, "Schichtwechsel", p. 87.

Bartsch, "Schichtwechsel", p. 77.

Bartsch, Anmerkungen, p. 76.
Bartsch, "Schichtwechsel", p. 78.

Bartsch, "Schichtwechsel", p. 80.


Reinert, Einführung, p. 209.

Reinert, Einführung, p. 212.

Reinert, Einführung, p. 213.

Reinert, Einführung, p. 215.

Reinert, Einführung, p. 215.

Reinert, Einführung, p. 216.


Weininger, Geschlecht, p. 49.

Weininger, Geschlecht, p. 52.

Reinert, Einführung, p. 43.


Reinert, Einführung, p. 36.

Reinert, Einführung, p. 216.

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409 Schmid-Bortenschlager, Frauen, p. 92.

410 Schmid-Bortenschlager, Frauen, p. 92.

411 Schmid-Bortenschlager, Frauen, p. 93.

412 Schmid-Bortenschlager, Frauen, p. 93.

413 Schmid-Bortenschlager, Frauen, pp. 93-94.

414 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 496.

415 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 17.


418 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 344.

419 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 401.


421 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 401.


423 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 400.


430 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 331.
432 Bachmann, Werke, III, p. 32.
434 Bachmann, Werke, I, pp. 315-316.
438 Bachmann, Werke, III, pp. 138-141.
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Essays and Lectures


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_____. "Ingeborg Bachmanns Selbstgespräche." Merkur, 26 (1972), 1038-1040.


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