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IMAGES OF THE ORIENT IN THE TRAVEL WRITINGS OF IDA PFEIFFER AND  
IDA HAHN-HAHN

By

Shubhangi Dabak

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## ABSTRACT

### IMAGES OF THE ORIENT IN THE TRAVEL WRITINGS OF IDA PFEIFFER AND IDA HAHN-HAHN

By

Shubhangi Dabak

The focus of this dissertation is the depiction of the Orient in the travel writings of Ida Hahn-Hahn and Ida Pfeiffer. As women travel writers in nineteenth century Germany, they traveled to far away places and broke away from their gender roles. Pfeiffer and Hahn-Hahn recognized their gender marginality in the patriarchal German society. Their awareness of this marginality offered them a chance to recognize the cultural marginality of the non-European Other vis-à-vis Western society. However, abandoning their marginalized gender roles, they embraced their cultural roles as superior Europeans. Belief in their superiority led to a belief in the inferiority of the non-Europeans. Contrary to the assertions made by many feminist critics, the depiction of the Orient in the travel writings of Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer is colonial in nature. The depiction of the Oriental women by Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer shows that the assumption of women as an already constituted and coherent group is problematic.

To the memory of my grandmother Sushila Soman (1918-1999)

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Theoretical Framework	1
A. Introduction	1
B. Women and/as the 'Other'	3
C. Feminism and Colonial Discourse	6
D. Orientalism and Its Criticism	12
E. Travel Writing in Nineteenth Century	20
F. Women Travel Writers in the Nineteenth Century	25
II. Marginalization of Women in Nineteenth Century German Society	35
A. Life of Women in Nineteenth Century German Society	35
1. Religion and Gender Role Division	35
2. From Enlightenment to Industrialization	37
a. Polarization of Gender Roles	37
b. Effects of Industrialization	39
c. Changes in the Bourgeois Ideal	42
3. Education of Women in the Nineteenth Century	44
a. Various Opinions About Women's Education	44
b. Educational and Professional Possibilities	46
4. Literary Socialization of Women	48
B. The Biography of Ida Hahn-Hahn-Hahn-Hahn-Hahn	55
C. The Biography of Ida Pfeiffer	59
D. Conclusion	65
III. An Analysis of Ida Pfeiffer's Travel Writing	67

A. Introduction	67
1.The Autobiographical Approach to Ida Pfeiffer's Travel Writing	67
2.Non-autobiographical Approaches To Women's Travel Writing	70
B. Self-representation in Pfeiffer's Travel Writing	73
1.Motives For Travel	73
2.Gender Ambiguity	77
a. Entering the Male domain	79
(1)Objectivity	80
(2)Crossing the Gender Line	82
(3)Authoritative Narrative Figure	85
b. Stepping Back to the Female Domain	87
(1)Genre of Diary	88
(2)Topos of Modesty	90
(3)Domestic Issues	94
3.Conclusion	96
C. Representation of the Other	98
1. Moral Superiority	99
2. Description of Women	104
D. Conclusion	109
IV. An Analysis of Ida Hahn-Hahn's Travel Writings	112
A. Introduction	112
B. Self-representation in Hahn-Hahn's <u>Orientalische Briefe</u>	115
1. Motives For Travel	116
2. Genre of Letters	121
3. Authoritative Narrative Figure	128

4. Conclusion	131
C. Representation of the Other	134
1. Description of the Orient	135
2. Description of the Non-Europeans	141
3. Description of Women	147
D. Conclusion	156
V. Conclusion	159
Bibliography	169

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## Chapter I

### Theoretical Framework

#### A. Introduction

A study of travel writing tells as much about the cultural framework of the land of the traveler as about the land visited. Travel writing is one of the forms of documentation of confrontation between two cultures or, to use Derrida's term, of "anthropological war," which he describes as "the essential confrontation that opens communication between peoples and cultures, even when that communication is not practiced under the banner of colonial or military oppression" (107). This confrontation produces writing in various forms, such as journalism, ethnographic description, imaginative literature or travel writing. Derrida argues that such writing involves "violence of letter." It is a violence "of difference, of classification, and of the system of appellations" (107). Travel writing shows the ways in which one culture interprets, represents and also subordinates another. Travel writing can be investigated to reveal the culturally determined subjectivity of the traveler as well as to gain information about the countries visited.

European travel literature reveals the West's perspective on the culturally and ethnically different. Reading it from the position of a woman from a non-European developing country, I am more specifically interested in the ways in which Western women experienced foreign cultures, especially the Middle East. Could

women, traditionally identified as the Other within European society, identify themselves with the non-European Other, with Middle Eastern women, with people outside the dominant European culture? Did they formulate their own feminine notion of the Other different from the male authors or was their experience subsumed by notions of European superiority? What is the specificity of women's travel writing and what are the features they shared with male writers? These are some of the questions that I try to answer in this dissertation.

My focus is on the two writers Ida Hahn-Hahn (1805-1880) and Ida Pfeiffer (1797-1858). I will discuss the travel works Orientalische Briefe (1844) by Hahn-Hahn and Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land (1833) as well as Eine Frauenfahrt um die Welt (1850) by Ida Pfeiffer. Pfeiffer and Hahn-Hahn combined explorations of the world with self-exploration. Their travel writing shows that their gender as well as their identity as white Europeans played a role in the perception of their own place in the social hierarchy of nineteenth-century Germany. Their gender placed them in a position inferior to the men in the patriarchal society at home. This fact, however, did not deter them from viewing the non-Europeans as inferiors when they were away from home. Their depiction of the Other is as Eurocentric as that of the male writers.

## **B. Women and/as the 'Other'**

The model of the power relationship between a man and a woman that assigned the superior position to the man has also been used by European travel writers to define the power relationship between Europeans and non-Europeans.<sup>1</sup> In this model non-Europeans and women occupy the same symbolic space that is inferior to the Western European male. Both are passive and childlike, ready to be governed. Both are seen as part of nature, not culture, whereas the Western man is a rational subject having control over nature.

During the period of the Enlightenment the image of the Other as 'wild' is replaced by the less threatening image of the "noble savage." The non-Europeans are idealized as people living in the earlier stages of mankind who are innocent and naïve. They are depicted in such a way that they seem to be stuck in a permanent stage of childhood. Women are described in a similar way as childlike and naïve. In constructing the identity of the non-Europeans and women as children who need to be controlled, the European man designates himself the role of the governor.

In her discussion about the similarities between images of Other and women in the Enlightenment, Sigrid Weigel points out

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<sup>1</sup> Sigrid Weigel gives examples of travel writers, such as Charles-Marie de La Condamine and Bougainville, who described the non-Europeans as childlike, primitive and inferior to the European man (174-75). The images that they used to describe the non-Europeans are similar to the images used by philosophers to describe women in the eighteenth- and nineteenth century (see chapter 2).

how the Western man had a superior position both to Europe's culturally Other and to women within European society:

Die Wilden in der Ferne bilden den Ort des Fremden, zu dem sich der europäische Mensch in eine historische Beziehung setzt, er besetzt dabei die Position des Fortschritts. Die Frau in der Nähe bildet den Ort des Anderen, zu dem sich der Mensch = Mann in eine moralisch-geistige Beziehung setzt, wobei er die Position des höhergestellten vernünftigen Subjekts einnimmt. (179)

The place that is assigned to non-Europeans and women in relation to the Western man is not identical. The non-Europeans are considered historically backward compared to the Western man, whereas women are morally inferior to him. However, both non-European Other and women are defined through their relation to the 'civilized' European man.

These definitions have more to do with the wishes and projections of the Western man than the real existence of the Other and women. They are defined to secure a superior position for the Western man. Weigel points out that "diese ganze Inanspruchnahme des Fremden für die Stabilisierung des Eigenen wiederholt sich in der Konzeptualisierung der Frau als anderes Geschlecht, vor allem im Diskurs über ihre Sexualität, die noch von Sigmund Freud als 'schwarzer Kontinent' bezeichnet wird" (175). When Sigmund Freud described women as 'the dark continent' he expressed a number of prevalent associations between femininity and the colonized Other. There was an element of mystique and danger associated with women as well as the Other. Both were 'incomprehensible' and 'undiscovered,'

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i.e. yet to be conquered and waiting to be systematized in the body of knowledge created by the European man.<sup>2</sup>

One of the West's images of the Other has been the Orient. The Orient and women are defined by the Western man not as they are, but as he wants them to be. Lewis describes this similarity between the Orient and women:

Just as the Orient is constructed into a series of signs whose significance lies more in their relationship to the Occident's self-image than in any truth about the Orient, so has it been argued that the European paradigm of sexual difference constructs women as objects of knowledge (the 'other within') which secure definitions of superior masculinity rather than revealing any truth about women.  
(18)

As Said tries to show, European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self. European discourse of sexual differences establishes the identity of Western man by objectifying woman and retaining the subject position for the man. The woman is thus marginalized or orientalized and the Orient is sexualized. Pelz explains this relation between the Orient and woman:

Durch eine enge und merkwürdig fortdauernde Assoziation von Orient und Sex (verschleierte östliche Braut, unerforschlicher Orient) erfahren der Orient wie die europäische Frau als zwei kontrastierende Bilder und integrale Teile der europäischen Zivilisation ein ähnliches Diskursschicksal. Weder 'der Orient' noch 'die Europäerin' ist einfach da und natürlich gegeben, noch sind beide rein imaginativ. Der Orientalismus ist genauso wenig wie die imaginierte Weiblichkeit ein wahrheitsgemäßer Diskurs über Orient und Frau, vielmehr bilden beide ein sich gegenseitig befruchtendes und

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<sup>2</sup> In Germany, attitudes toward women is also greatly influenced by religious teachings, notably Luther. For more on this see the section on religion and gender role division in chapter 2.

stabilisierendes mythisches System, das der europäisch-männlichen Macht und freien Verfügungsgewalt über die orientalisierte Europäerin und über den weiblichen Orient seinen Ausdruck verleiht. (Reisen in die eigene Fremde 171)

The Western woman is thus feminized as the symbolic inferior Other at home. Both women and non-Europeans are defined as binary opposites of the white European male. This methodology of opposition equates 'women' to the 'non-European Others' and suggests that opposition to colonialism could come from a coalition of Western women and the non-European Other.

### **C. Feminism and Colonial Discourse**

The metaphor of man as colonizer and woman as colonized is used by many feminists to portray women's oppression. It has been argued that the "economic dependence, the cultural takeover, [and] the identification of dignity with resemblance to the oppressor" (Rowbotham 201) is present in the colonization of the underdeveloped country as well as the subordination of the female. According to Marilyn French, just as the colonizer denies the colonized a voice in their own culture, women in most cultures "have not been deprived just of a cultural voice, but even a personal one" (134).

It is true that the space women are assigned by men in a patriarchal society and the space the colonized Other has vis-à-vis the colonizer are both marginal ones. But referring to the experiences of the Other just in terms of women's experiences omits any knowledge about the colonized Other and thus exhibits 'white solipsism' as Laura Donaldson calls it. Such feminism

does not take into consideration different factors that form gender. Instead, it melds all women together into one group irrespective of their class, caste or social status. Donaldson further elaborates problems related to the metaphor of the woman as colonized and man as colonizer. She points out precisely that such a metaphor

lacks any awareness of gender - - or colonialism, for that matter - - as a contested field, an overdetermined sociopolitical grid whose identity points are often contradictory. Historical colonialism demonstrates the political as well as theoretical necessity of abandoning the idea of women's (and men's) gender identity as fixed and coherent. Instead, it imbues us with a conception of gender as a site of conflicting subjective processes and makes it impossible to ignore the contradictory social positioning of white, middle-class women as both colonized patriarchal objects and colonizing race-privileged subjects. (6)

Singular and homogeneous categories such as 'woman' or the 'female identity' or for that matter 'man' or 'male identity' appear to be essentialist and need to be questioned. The power relations between white European women and non-European men and women need to be addressed in order to show that colonialism was not an exclusively male enterprise. The assumption of women as an already constituted and coherent group with identical interests and desires regardless of class, ethnic or racial locations, implies a notion of gender or sexual difference which can be applied universally and cross-culturally. But one has to take into consideration the differences not only between genders but within genders as well.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Still, there might be some interests that women share across class. For example, European women from different social

Some analyses of Western women's travel literature by feminist critics suggest that the European women travelers were against both patriarchy and a masculine imperialism, and that to be against patriarchy was to be in opposition to imperialism.<sup>4</sup> Feminist readings of travel writings by women have prioritized an analysis of gender over race and colonialism. These analyses present mainly the feminine aspects of the texts. Mills calls such analysis a "dominant reading." In a dominant reading of the text only those elements are emphasized "which form a cohesive reading, especially with reference to other discursive structures which are circulating in the society of the time" (51). While reading women's travel writing in the nineteenth century, those elements in the text are emphasized which conform to the ideal of femininity during nineteenth century. In a dominant reading of male authors colonial elements are foregrounded and in women's writing feminine elements are foregrounded.

Some feminists go so far as calling all the nineteenth-century women travelers emancipatory. Lydia Potts writes for example: "Einen Kampf gegen das Frauenbild ihrer Zeit, überhaupt gegen die Reduzierung aller Frauen auf ein ausschließliches Dasein als Mutter, Haus-und Ehefrau, haben alle Reisenden geführt" (36). Sweeping claims are also made about the

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classes might share a common feeling of superiority toward the oriental Other that unites them through their Europeaness.

<sup>4</sup> See for example Shirley Foster (3-25), Annegret Pelz (Frauen Literatur Politik 205-218).

"openness" of women travelers. In her book about nineteenth century women travel writers, Across New Worlds, Shirley Foster writes: "With all of them, their eagerness to discover the new and exciting underlay their undertakings and their openness to the foreign" (vii).

An analysis of the travel writings by Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer does not support these findings. Rather, it shows that the two women were colonized patriarchal objects within nineteenth-century German society, and that once they stepped outside and entered the non-European world, they too became colonizing, privileged subjects.

In the travelogues of Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer a tension between their identity as patriarchal objects and their identity as colonizing subjects is seen. On the one hand, they -- especially Pfeiffer--are trying to fulfill gender expectations by choosing to write about topics that were considered 'feminine' by the nineteenth century German reading public. On the other hand, they betray a belief in European superiority while describing the non-European Other. When they describe the non-Europeans, the writers are no longer the objects of a Western patriarchal gaze. Instead, they are turning the non-Europeans into objects of their gaze. They had access to places, such as harems and slave markets, where the European men could not go. They could interpret and represent the 'veiled world of harem' for the European society. This gives them access to the power, which men in the society at home had over

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them. They marginalize the non-European people in order to consolidate their hold on the temporarily gained power.

The symbolic position of the non-European Other outside the dominant Western culture and the position of Western women within patriarchal Western society is similar. One might expect the Western women to see these people as their mirror images, identify with them and show solidarity with them. But the women do not refer to their experiences of the Other in terms of their own experiences as marginalized women. The position of authority in the colonial discourse is not necessarily related to the gender of the subject. The place of women in the patriarchal society as subordinate objects in relation to men does not exclude them from the powerful subject position in colonial discourse. Brigitte Kossek points out this changing relation between power and gender:

Die Bedeutung von Macht und Unterordnung verschiebt sich, je nachdem mit welcher Person, mit welcher sozialen Gruppe und auf welche Weise sie in Beziehung stehen. Die verschiedenen Beziehungskonstellationen im Machtgewebe implizieren, daß Macht und Unterordnung keine sich gegenseitig ausschließenden Positionen von Frauen darstellen, sondern sich in einem Subjekt vereinen können. (14)

The nineteenth century women travel writers are aware of the images of women as created by male writers. They examine, assimilate and transcend these negative portrayals and achieve literary autonomy. But they achieve this autonomy by creating images of the non-European people that are as stereotypical as the images of women created by male authors.

The assumption in some feminist criticism that women's travel writing shares more features with other female-authored texts than it shares with male-authored texts is not necessarily true. Women's texts are taken to be self-evidently different from men's. In order to support these assumptions emphasis is on the shared elements in women's texts. Such a reading of the texts emphasizes only gender as the main issue and reduces the complexity of the texts to only one parameter, namely, gender. But as Mills points out, women's writing has multiple parameters:

Women's travel writing cannot be analyzed as if the texts originated from one determining factor, such as the author, 'reality', imperialism or femininity, but rather that the texts are produced in the interaction and clashing of a variety of constraining factors. Texts are heterogeneous, made up of various elements in response to different constraints on the writing process. (69)

Thus, the complexity of a text depends on the complexity of the authorial identity. However, taking into consideration the constraints on nineteenth century women in general (see chapter 2) and women travel writers in particular, it does not come as a surprise that most scholars working on the subject of women travel writers represent them only as exceptional individuals struggling to break away from the social conventions of their period. But expanding the discussion beyond the issue of gender to discussion of the colonial discourse present in the women's travel writings reveals greater complexity to these writings than earlier assumed.

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In fact, abandoning their gender roles, the traveling women took on their racial ones. These women were alienated at home because of their gender. However, this alienation did not necessarily make them either anti-imperialist or empathetic toward women of the countries they visited. Belief in their racial superiority was coupled with a belief in the inferiority of the non-European people. This was evident in the depiction of the Other in their travel writing. This makes their travel writing as much a part of colonial discourse as the travel writing of their male counterparts. To understand the colonial discourse in travel writing I will now briefly discuss Orientalism and its criticism.

#### **D. Orientalism and Its Criticism**

The study of colonial discourse began with Edward Said's pioneering book Orientalism in 1978, and authors such as Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Chakravarti Spivak and Mary Louise Pratt have further contributed to it. Said's basic thesis asserts that Western writers, especially since the eighteenth century, have constructed the Orient as the Other. The Orient is not a free subject of thought or action. Western writers have tried to control the Orient by fixing it in the position of an object and retained the powerful position of the subject for themselves.

Said calls this Western style of dominating, restructuring or having authority over the Orient "Orientalism." He defines Orientalism as a style of thought based upon the distinction

between Orient and Occident. Orientalism establishes a set of polarities in which the Orient is characterized as irrational, exotic, erotic, despotic and heathen, whereas the West, by contrast, is rational, familiar, moral, just and Christian. This binary opposition between Orient and Occident objectifies the Orient. The process of objectification is "a disciplined one: it is taught, it has its own societies, periodicals, traditions, vocabulary, rhetoric, all in basic ways connected to and supplied by the prevailing cultural and political norms of the West" (Orientalism 68). Said explains how this objectification is accomplished by textual means:

Everyone who writes about the Orient must locate himself vis-à-vis the Orient; translated into his text, this location includes the kind of narrative voice he adopts, the type of structure he builds, the kinds of images, themes, motifs that circulate in his text - all of which add up to deliberate ways of addressing the reader, containing the Orient, and finally, representing it or speaking in its behalf. (20)

Thus Orientalism is practiced by implementing certain textual strategies. Such strategies include "generalizations about the other nation, making valorized statements, fixing these people in an unchanging past or present tense and making them very much a textual entity" (Mills 49). Peter Hulme describes similar textual strategies while defining colonial discourse. He defines colonial discourse as

an ensemble of linguistically based practices unified by their common deployment in the management of colonial relationships . . . . Underlying the idea of colonial discourse . . . is the presumption that during the colonial period large parts of the non-European world were produced for Europe through a discourse that imbricated sets of questions and assumptions, methods of procedure and analysis, and kinds of writing and imagery. (2)

Just as the Orient is created by Orientalists to serve their own purpose, images of the non-European world are produced by colonial powers in colonial discourse.

While describing the tradition of European Orientalism, Said differentiates between German Orientalism and Anglo-French Orientalism. The Anglo-French Orientalism was used by England and France as a smokescreen to cover up their colonial endeavors, whereas German Orientalism served as a substitute for real colonies. Said points out that the German Orient was "almost exclusively a scholarly, or at least a classical, Orient: it was made the subject of lyrics, fantasies, and even novels, but it was never actual . . ." (19). The Orient in German literature was fictional, based on sources, such as translations of works on the East, for travelogues about the Orient, or even the Bible. Mustafa Maher reviews the motif of the Orient in German literature from Klopstock to Goethe and comes to the conclusion that

. . . keiner der Dichter von Klopstock bis Goethe, die orientalische Stoffe und Motive behandelten, [kannten] das Morgenland aus eigenem Erlebnis. Sie schöpften ihre Kenntnisse aus der Bibel, aus den Reisebeschreibungen, den Übersetzungen orientalischer Werke und aus den früheren orientalisierenden Werken wie Tassos "Gerusalemme Liberata" oder Voltaires "Mahomet". (30)

The Brockhaus Konversations-Lexikon published in 1889 defines Orient or "Morgenland," as it was called during that time, as "Asien und der nordöstliche Teil Afrikas" (636). But more than a geographical or political entity, the Orient was a topos. The Orient was projected as magical and seductive. With

its (projected) magic and seductive power, it was a place for an escape from rationalist European society. Thomas Tilcher describes the nineteenth century German Orient as a "Traum des Abendlandes." He describes how German Orientalism functioned in nineteenth century Germany:

Nur selten wurde der Orient zunächst als eine geographische und politische Realität begriffen; in erster Linie war er vielmehr ein Vorstellungsmodell. Als Inbegriff des Exotischen bezeichnete er vorzugsweise eine bezaubernd schöne, märchenhafte Welt jenseits der Wirklichkeit. Der Name eröffnete eine Galerie verführerischer Bilder, meist hartnäckiger Klischees, die in der Literatur wie in der Malerei bereitwillig reproduziert wurden und fortlebten. (1)

Germany did not have any direct nationalist economic interest in the Orient at that time, but it had a kind of intellectual authority over the Orient. The idea of a European identity superior in comparison with all the non-European people and cultures, is present in German Orientalism. In her book Orientalismus in der deutschen Literatur, Fuchs forms her own definition of Orientalism, which explains how Orientalism operates in Western literary tradition: "Orientalisierung des Orients: das Orient-Konzept des westlichen Dichters, das den realen Orient durch ein von westlicher Seite geschaffenes Denk- und Vorstellungsschema ersetzt, dient seinem eigennützigen Interesse. Dieses Konzept mußte vor allen Dingen funktionell und in Harmonie mit westlicher Ideologie sein" (5). Fuchs agrees with Said in his description of German Orientalism as intellectual authority over the East. Germany's relations to the East were different from France or Britain which had

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colonies in the East. Germany did not have any colonies in the East, but along with England and France it shared an intellectual authority over the East in its literature, where the Orient was depicted as exotic, magical and also despotic.

As Fuchs points out :

der deutsche Orientalismus [hatte] mit dem französisch-englischen . . . eine Art intellektueller Autorität über den Orient gemeinsam . . . Dieser "Orientalismus" zeigt sich durch eine generalisierende Darstellung des Orients, die außerhalb jeglicher Berührung mit menschlicher Wirklichkeit steht, durch eine jahrhundertlange Tradition geformt und durch westliche Denkkategorien gefärbt ist.(5)

Even though Anglo-French Orientalism and German Orientalism were functionally different, the way the countries portrayed the Orient was not different. Germany's intellectual superiority over the Orient can be seen in the idea of "Oriental despotism," which has its origin in eighteenth-century European thought. This idea was strengthened through Hegel's Lectures on the Philosophy of History in which Hegel presented his notion of the absence of subjectivity in the Oriental world. For him, the Oriental world is ruled by a supremacy of laws whose origin is external to the subjective consciousness of the individual. Morality does not originate from the individual conscience, but exists only by virtue of legislation and authoritarian rule. Thus despotism is inherent in the Oriental world. Hegel states that the moral order of the Orient rules "not as the moral disposition of the Subject, but as the despotism of the Sovereign" (Lectures on the Philosophy 111-16). He further concludes that the Oriental world is "imperishable, but it is in

its very nature destined to be mixed with other races--to be conquered and subjugated" (115). Hegel's notion of a lack of subjectivity in the Oriental world creates an image of the Oriental people as passive and lacking in desire for progress. His idea of the imperishability of the Oriental world suggests that the Orient can never be energized from within, but rather it needs to be conquered and subjugated by the outside world.

It is interesting to note here that Hegel's attitudes toward the Orient had little to do with real observation or study of historical data, but rather with a rational system he constructed in which philosophical categories had to be accommodated and arguments built to support them. As Hegel's "history" moves toward ever greater expressions of "freedom," he needed instances of despotism that showed a more primitive stage of development and one that would eventually be overcome.

In addition to Hegel's views, texts such as Herder's Über die Wirkung der Dichtkunst auf die Sitten der Völker in alten und neuen Zeiten (1778), or Friedrich von Schlegel's Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier (1808) represented Eurocentric views. As Nina Berman notes, these texts "dokumentieren die europäische Expansion durch das deutliche Bemühen, Sprach-, Kultur- oder Weltgeschichte in einer Weise zu interpretieren, welche die Legitimation der Herrschaft Europas über den Rest der Welt ermöglicht" (31).

In his book The Rhetoric of Empire David Spurr gives various examples from contemporary Western discourse concerning

the Third World to show that this discourse simply reformulates the Hegelian notion of Oriental despotism and classifies the Third World people as incompatible with development, i.e., economic and political modernization. Spurr's analysis proves that the language of colonial discourse has survived "beyond the classic colonial era and it continues to color perceptions of the non-Western world" (8). Spurr defines colonial discourse as

a space within language that exists both as a series of historical instances and as a series of rhetorical functions. Historically speaking, the phrase refers to the language employed by representatives of the great colonial powers in establishing authority over vast regions of Africa, Asia, the South Pacific, and Latin America during the period of imperial expansion that reached its height at the end of the nineteenth century. (8)

Although most critics working in the field of colonial discourse agree with Said's basic thesis, it has been criticized for its undifferentiated presentation of Western discourse on the Orient.<sup>5</sup> Disagreeing with the monolithic nature of Western discourse about the Orient as presented in Orientalism, Dennis Porter points out that

. . . Said asserts the unified character of Western discourse on the Orient over some two millennia . . . . He is thus led to claim a continuity of representation between the Greece of Alexander the Great and the United States of President Jimmy Carter, a claim that seems to make nonsense of history at the same time as it invokes it with reference to imperial power/knowledge. (181)

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<sup>5</sup> Said differentiates between the Anglo-French and German Orientalism. However, no alternatives to Orientalism within the German or Anglo-French discourse on the Orient are taken into account.

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Within Said's interpretation, no counter-hegemonic voices are heard, no alternatives to Orientalism are taken into account. It seems to suggest that there is no end to Orientalist representations and the power of Orientalist knowledge will always exist. But depending on the colonial situation, portrayal of the Orient by Western authors vacillates between images of a civilized Orient and the "savage." The colonial subject in Orientalism, on the other hand, is invariably unified, intentional and male.

In his article, "Orientalism Reconsidered," Said seems to be moving in a different direction. He stresses the need to "go beyond the polarities and binary oppositions . . . in order to create a new type of analysis of plural, as opposed to single objects" (23). However, Said does not discuss women's role as producers of Orientalist discourse. He represents the traditional view that women were not involved in the textual production that constituted Orientalism.

An analysis of the travel writings by Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer demonstrates the independence of ideologies of race and gender in the colonial discourse of the period. It shows that they understood themselves as a part of an imperial ideology, a system of binary opposition that placed them as superior in the West/East divide of colonialism, but at the same time placed them as Other and inferior in the gendered divide of European culture. Nineteenth-century women travel writers had a marginal position in Western society. The concept of marginality is two-sided, having both positive and negative aspects. It has the

benefits of another unique perspective and the disadvantage of being excluded from the center. It is the difference between "working from the margin and being marginalised" (Burkhard 5). The question that arises is to what extent Western women used their position of marginality in a positive way to develop a perspective of the Orient different from their male counterparts and to what extent they took part in the textual production that constituted Orientalism.

### **E. Travel Writing in The Nineteenth Century**

A critical study of western travel writing during the colonial period shows that travel writing was used as a tool for expansion and the establishment of the colonial rule. The purpose of travel writing was to motivate public consciousness in Europe and justify the colonial endeavor. Two important events in the mid-eighteenth century that influenced the nature of travel writing were the publication of the Swedish scientist Carl Linné's book Systema Naturae (The System of Nature), in which Linné laid out a classificatory system designed to categorize all plant forms on the planet, known or unknown to Europeans; the second event was the expedition led by Charles de la Condamine in 1735 under French leadership to determine the exact shape of the earth.

The expedition of Charles de la Condamine was a triumph for the European scientific community since it was evidence of the power of science to raise Europeans above even the most

intense national rivalries. The expedition set out under French leadership and had the support of British as well as Spanish authorities. The intense political rivalry between France and England and the otherwise protectionist policies of Spanish authorities were set aside to work together for this expedition.

Although the expedition was unsuccessful in the end, it marked the beginning of a very important trend -- the trend of international scientific expedition. Later in the eighteenth century international scientific expeditions became an important tool of European expansion. These expeditions sought to explore the interior of lands visited, instead of the borders of the land, as was the pattern of expeditions in the earlier centuries. The interior exploration was a search for commercially exploitable resources, markets and lands to colonize.

La Condamine's expedition spawned many travel writings that became popular in Europe (Pratt 18). Condamine and the other participants wrote various reports based on their expedition that were read and translated widely. Scientific exploration became popular among the general public. The Europeans learned about other parts of the world through scientific explorations. Thus Europe's understanding of the Other was channeled through scientific expeditions, which were themselves tools of colonial expansion.

During the same time, Carl Linné created a descriptive system designed to classify all the plants on the earth

according to the characteristics of their reproductive parts. He claimed that all the plants on the earth could be incorporated into this single system of distinctions, including any plants as yet unknown to Europeans. His system was praised as simple and elegant and it was perceived as making order out of chaos (Pratt 25). His followers began implementing his system everywhere to classify plants and insects. The Linnaean systematizing project popularized scientific inquiry. Such scientific inquiry became so popular that in the second half of the eighteenth century natural history played an important part in travel and travel writings even if the travel was not a scientific expedition or the traveler a scientist. Ralph-Rainer Wuthenow describes this transition in the nature of travel writing in later part of the eighteenth century: "Nach und nach tritt der Hang zum Fabelhaften und Exotischen zurück, er weicht dem Drang nach genauer Beobachtung, nach kontrollierter empirischer Wahrnehmung" (Reiseliteratur in Aufklärung 161). Scientific knowledge was brought into the public sphere through various forms of writings, but narrative travel accounts worked as the most popular link between the scientific network and a larger European public.

With the Linnaean systematizing project, the world was being rearranged according to the European categories of systematization. Mary Louise Pratt describes this process:

The eighteenth-century classificatory systems created the task of locating every species on the planet, extracting it from its particular, arbitrary surroundings, (the chaos), and placing it in its appropriate spot in the

system (the order-book, collection, or garden) with its new written, secular European name . . . . One by one the planet's life forms were to be drawn out of the tangled threads of their life surroundings and rewoven into European-based patterns of global unity and order. The (lettered, male, European) eye that held the system could familiarize ("naturalize") new sites / sights immediately upon contact, by incorporating them into the language of the system. (31)

Pratt suggests that such a system could subsume culture and history into nature. Pratt calls this process of wiping out the differences between different cultures "global resemanticizing" (31).

Linné also included people in his classification of animals. He divided homo sapiens into six varieties:

- a. Wild Man. Four-footed, mute, hairy.
- b. American. Copper-colored, choleric, erect. Hair black, straight, thick; nostrils wide; face harsh; beard scanty; obstinate, content, free. Paints himself with fine red lines. Regulated by customs.
- c. European. Fair, sanguine, brawny; hair yellow, brown, flowing; eyes blue; gentle, acute, inventive. Covered with close vestments. Governed by laws.
- d. Asiatic. Sooty, melancholy, rigid. hair black; eyes dark; severe, haughty, covetous. Covered with loose vestments. Governed by opinions.
- e. African. Black, phlegmatic, relaxed. Hair black frizzled, skin silky; nose flat, lips tumid; crafty, indolent, negligent. Anoints himself with grease. Governed by caprice. (Pratt 32)

The last category of 'monster' includes dwarf and giants as well as man-made 'monsters' like eunuchs. The myth of European superiority is clearly expressed in this description. This systematization shows how the Europeans are described as civilized and the non-Europeans as their uncivilized counterparts. The German philosopher G. Forster hoped that the world would be governed by the 'civilized' Europeans:

Der sich ausbreitende Handel und die Entdeckungsreisen der . . . Europäer müssen notwendig zur Entwicklung einer Welt beitragen, die sich weiter zivilisieren wird . . . . Die Nachteile der überfeinerten Zivilisation und die Fehler der Barbarei werden gegeneinander ausgeglichen. Das Lokale und Spezifische und Individuelle verschwindet dann im Allgemeinen, und die Vorurteile der Einseitigkeit werden beseitigt. Das eigentümlich Europäische wird sich zur Universalität läutern. (Das Bild und der Spiegel 27)

European supremacists believed that trade and the scientific expeditions led by Europeans would ultimately lead to a more civilized world, in which European principles would dominate. The idea of European supremacy fits well in the Enlightenment philosophy, which stressed the need to bring the world into order (by the Europeans).

The purpose of travel in the nineteenth century was mainly scientific in nature. The perspective of the scientific travelers toward the non-European countries was different from that of the travelers in the Enlightenment. Earlier, people of the non-European countries were seen as "noble savages." Their lifestyle was seen as morally authentic and free from the curse of work. From a Biblical point of view, work was seen as result of fall from heaven or from God. In Europe, to lead a life of idleness was a privilege of the people who were aristocrats or nobles. But later in the nineteenth century as a result of industrial revolution, work was seen as valuable, as a sign of progress. Thus the non-laboring Orient was reinterpreted again. The non-industrial countries with agricultural economy were seen as backward and the people in these countries were seen as lazy,

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or primitive. In his book Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy (1770) James Stuart wrote :

If the soil be vastly rich, situated in a warm climate, and naturally watered, the productions of the earth will be almost spontaneous: this will make the inhabitants lazy. Laziness is the greatest of all obstacles to labour and industry. Manufactures will never flourish here . . . . It is in climates less favoured by nature, and where the soil produces to those only who labour, and in proportion to the industry of every one, where we may expect to find great multitudes. (53)

The theme of noble savage was replaced by a stereotype of a primitive man who was lazy as a result of the prosperity of nature. Industrial countries in the Europe were perceived as civilized and the other countries were categorized according to the stage of industrial development in those countries. Travel writing was done mainly by men who were scientists or ethnographers. Soldiers, missionaries or businessmen also wrote about their travel, but the aim of travel writing was still scientific-methodical description of the land visited.

#### **F. Women Travel Writers in the Nineteenth Century**

In composing travel literature, women were entering an almost exclusively male domain. On the one hand, women were breaking away from the female gender role by traveling to exotic places. On the other hand, most still tried to fulfill cultural expectations which viewed them as weak, passive and dependent. Thus, the self-representation of women travel writers is often ambivalent.

Women were expected to be selfless, sacrificing themselves for others (i.e. the man), but traveling was an act of self-assertion. Women were valuing and foregrounding their own selves by writing travel narratives. Linda Worley expands on the tension present in women's travel writing:

A woman attempting to write an account of her travels would sense that her activities were diametrically opposed to those of the nineteenth-century ideal . . . the selfless angel of the house; . . . for not only had she ventured out of the domestic circle into the wide world, but the very act of writing -- especially a travel narrative with its strongly autobiographical element -- might reveal an unwomanly preoccupation with the self.  
(40)

In early nineteenth-century Europe, gender roles were even more polarized than in the previous century and women faced restrictions in traveling and writing. Karin Hausen notes that due to the ever increasing differences between domestic and non-domestic work "the polarization of the 'character of the sexes' became increasingly widespread in the bourgeoisie" during the course of the nineteenth century (70). Philosophers, including Rousseau, Kant and Fichte, had defined the gender roles and assigned women the domestic sphere -- a place advocated for women since the Reformation. Kant wrote: "Der Inhalt der großen Wissenschaft des Frauenzimmers ist vielmehr der Mensch und unter den Menschen der Mann. Ihre Weltweisheit ist nicht Vernünfteln sondern Empfinden"(853). Kant was not the only one to think that the center of a woman's universe is man. A description of the gender roles can be seen in many other popular books at that time. A nineteenth century German writer, Wilhelm Riehl,

explains the "natural destiny of women" in his book Die Naturgeschichte des Volkes als Grundlage einer deutschen Sozial-Politik: "Der Staat ist männlichen Geschlechtes und die Gesellschaftsgruppen sind generis neutrius: wo bleiben da die Frauen? Sie sollen bleiben in der 'Familie', die ja die vorwiegende Signatur der Weiblichkeit in ihrem Geschlechtsartikel aufzeigt" (9). Women's 'proper' role was prescribed and enforced in the reproductive sphere of home and family to exclude women from professional life.

This exclusion of women from professional and public life led to their dependency on men economically, legally and socially. As a result of this dependency, relatively few women could travel alone to far away places. Even these few women who broke away from traditional gender roles were not free from societal expectations. They had to fit their act of liberation, i.e., traveling alone, within gender role expectations. As the following quote from Franz Ludwig Posselts Apodemik oder die Kunst zu reisen (1795) shows, there were certain rules for traveling women:

Die besondere Bestimmung der Frauenzimmer überhaupt oder ihr Beruf ist der Ehestand; dies ist der ihnen von der Fürsorgung angewiesene Wirkungskreis . . . . Wollen sie aber die Pflichten dieses ihres ehrwürdigen Berufs erfüllen, so müssen sie sich bemühen, gute Gattinen, gute Mütter und gute Vorsteherinnen des Hauswesens zu seyn . . . Diejenigen Frauenzimmer, welche nie heyrathen, können wenigstens an der ersten Erziehung, die Mütter ihren Kindern geben, so wie an der Besorgung des Hauswesens Theil nehmen . . . Wollen demnach Frauenzimmer von ihren Reisen Nutzen haben, so müssen sie diese beyden Zwecke oder ihre zweyfache Bestimmung stets vor Augen haben, und alles, was darauf Beziehung hat, sehen, hören und sammeln. (see Ohnesorg 156)

Posselts then sets out certain rules for women travelers. According to these rules, while traveling, women should always see and hear things, keeping their responsibilities as mothers and housewives in mind. They should meet only virtuous, sensible and understanding people and try to be like them. Women should also try to find other women who are best wives, mothers or housekeepers and learn from them how to do housekeeping or how to take care of children.

In spite of these rules and restrictions many women managed to travel and write about their experiences. A bibliography completed by Annegret Pelz and Wolfgang Griep (1995) of women travelers during the time period of 1700 to 1810 shows 600 travelogues by women. However, most of these women belonged to the upper class and were traveling as wives or daughters with their families. Improvement in the transportation systems in the nineteenth century made travel easier and more accessible to the bourgeoisie. Lydia Potts describes this change in the trend:

Im 19. Jahrhundert mit seinen umwälzenden Entwicklungen der Verkehrs- und Kommunikationsmittel, dem Ausbau der Infrastruktur, der wachsenden Prosperität des Bürgertums wird das Reisen nicht nur innerhalb Europas weniger gefährlich, schneller und bequemer. Auch Frauen der neuen Klasse wird es in zunehmender Zahl möglich, aus freier Entscheidung, aus eigenem Entschluß zu reisen. Die Zahl der 'Reisendeninnen', die sich schriftstellerisch oder wissenschaftlich betätigen, vervielfacht sich -- was durchaus im Widerspruch steht zum Frauenideal dieser Zeit. (13)

Women had traveled to the Middle East earlier as well, but this was mainly for religious reasons. As early as the third

century women were traveling as pilgrims. All this time a religious trip to the Orient was the only legitimate mode of travel for women. In the nineteenth century they were traveling mainly as companions of colonial officers, soldiers or scientists as well as self-proclaimed travelers. Billie Melman points out that in addition to the improvements in transportation, political reasons also contributed to the rise in travel to this area (12). The military defeat and decline of Turkey as a European and Mediterranean power was followed by an era of reforms characterized by westernization and modernization. This led to opening up of parts of the Middle East to Western influence.

Another reason related to this change was the policy inside the Ottoman empire of tolerance towards religious minorities and non-Ottoman Christians. This policy granted minorities religious and civil liberties in 1856 (Melman 12). These changes may not have facilitated female travel to the Middle East directly but they helped to increase interest and travel to the Middle East among the general public.

In Germany, people became acquainted with the works of women traveling to the Orient through translations of travelogues by British women authors such as Lady Mary Montagu (Briefe während ihrer Reisen in Europa, Asia und Afrika), Jemima Kindersley (Briefe eines reisenden Frauenzimmers Über Ostindien), Lady Elizabeth Craven (Eine Reise durch die Krimm

nach Konstantinopel).<sup>6</sup> Later in the mid-nineteenth century, readers had access to texts by German women in addition to these translations, e.g. Fredrika Bremers, Anna Hafner-Forneris, Maria Schuber, Regula Engel, Marie Esperance von Schwartz (Pelz, *Reisen durch eigene* 167).

These were not the first and only women to go to the Orient, but their writings become more meaningful to us as researchers because they were produced in a time period which was, as Edward Said points out, the beginning of modern Orientalism. More and more women were traveling to the Orient. Speaking of the nineteenth century Pelz notes: "In dem Maße, wie der Orient sich unter der Perspektive des Orientalismus in ein domestiziertes und systematisiertes geographisches Feld verwandelt, rückt er auch für die europäischen Touristinnen als Reiseland in erreichbare Nähe" (*Reisen* 169).

Although the number of women travelers increased during this time, it was still a departure from gender role expectations for women. The experience of travel outside Europe as well as writing travelogues were until the eighteenth century 'male experiences.' Women travel writers had to negotiate their way through the field of male dominated travel writing by using

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<sup>6</sup> The original titles of these books in English were: Mary Montagu: Letters of the Right Honorable Lady Mary Wortley Montague written during her travels in Europe, Asia and Africa: which contain, among other curious relations, accounts of the policy and manner of the Turks: drawn from sources that have been inaccessible to other travellers (1767); Jamima Kindersley: Letters from the island of Teneriffe, Brazil, the Cape of Good Hope, and the East Indies (1777); Lady Elizabeth Craven: A Journey through the Crimea to Constantinople. In a series of

various devices. Many times they used pseudonyms or mentioned in their writings that they were not writing to publish or that their writing was not worth attention. They tried to justify their act of traveling. Some women gave health as a reason to travel, some a propagandist or philanthropic purpose, such as self betterment through increased knowledge and experience and the enlightenment of others through communication of this knowledge. Travel meant escape for many women travelers in the nineteenth century. They saw this as an opportunity to enjoy and enrich themselves spiritually and mentally, without the need for male approval. But the problem was that they could not state it openly because, as Shirley Foster writes:

Such desire still smacked too much of self-pleasing and irresponsibility, and so certain strategies were employed to 'cover' it, regarding both the journeys and the published accounts. Chief of these is the insistence on 'proper' purpose, a way of validating the respectability and usefulness of the activity, especially where this could be related to current notions of womanhood . . . . They were wary of admitting too much to this enjoyment, and their accounts are full of pious reminders that they are essentially doing what God and family are asking of them. (9)

Even though women writers adjusted their travel writing according to the gender role expectations of the society, traveling itself was breaking away from the gender norms. The next chapter will focus on the situation of women in nineteenth-century Germany to understand what these gender expectations were and how they affected the participation of women in various

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letters to his Serene Highness the Margrave of Brandenburg, Aspach and Bareith (1989)

fields of life. Formulating this general background will help me situate the position of traveling women, especially the two women I am focusing on -- Ida Pfeiffer and Ida Hahn-Hahn -- in German society.

## Chapter II

### **Marginalization of Women in Nineteenth-Century German Society**

Before turning to the discussion of the representation of non-Europeans, especially women, by Ida Pfeiffer and Ida Hahn-Hahn, we should first look at the position of women in nineteenth-century German society and the ideas about women's nature that Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer might have experienced and internalized. A discussion of the social life of women in nineteenth-century Germany will show that women were marginalized in this society. It will also throw light on the self-conception of Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer. The biographical facts about Ida Hahn-Hahn and Ida Pfeiffer will help us locate their position within the margins in which most women of the time were forced to live.

Speaking about the concept of marginality, Joeres and Burkhard assert that marginality has both positive and negative connotations. It has the disadvantages of being shut out of the center, but it also has the benefits of other unique perspectives. Joeres and Burkhard point out that the paradox of marginality lies in "the passive assignation to the fringes and the use of that position to present other perspectives" (Out of Line 5). This paradox implies that "one can be simultaneously disabled and enabled by the same signifier of status" (Bulbeck 10). For Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer, marginality meant confinement to the private sphere, which was assigned to the female gender.

It meant exclusion from educational and professional opportunities. However, the marginalization of Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer provided them with an opportunity to have insight into the marginalization of non-European cultures vis-à-vis European culture. It gave them access to places, such as the harem, and offered them a chance to identify as marginalized women more significantly than as members of European hegemony. But did they remain in the margins or did they try to move toward the center of society that was occupied by men? What strategies did they use if they tried to move to the center and how did these strategies affect their travel writing? These are some of the questions that will be answered in this and the following chapters.

The social life of German women in the nineteenth century is a vast topic and thus I will only focus on those areas that are most relevant to the lives of Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer. Ida Pfeiffer was born in 1797 and Ida Hahn-Hahn in 1805. All of their travel writing, except Meine zweite Weltreise (1856) and Die Reise nach Madagaskar (published in 1861 posthumously), was done in the first half of the nineteenth century. Thus I will limit the discussion to the first half of the nineteenth century. I will deal with women from middle class and aristocratic families, since Pfeiffer and Hahn-Hahn belonged to these social classes respectively.

## **A. Life of Women in Nineteenth Century German Society**

### **1. Religion and Gender Role Division**

Compared with other European countries such as France or England, the women's liberation movement in Germany started later, not until the second half of the nineteenth century. The failed revolution of 1848 gave women an opportunity to step out of the family and participate in public life. But in the first half of the nineteenth century, women were still largely confined to their roles as mother and housewife.

The origin of gender role division can be traced back to the Bible. According to this division, the man is the breadwinner, working outside the home, and women is the mother as well as the housewife working within the home. As described in the Christian religion, Eve was created by God from Adam's rib. This was interpreted by theologians in the Middle Ages, such as Thomas Aquinas, as a sign of inferiority of women. Because of Eve's responsibility for the fall, she was morally inferior to man.<sup>7</sup> The perception of women in Germany was greatly influenced by religious teachings, notably those of Martin Luther during the Reformation period in the sixteenth century. Luther did not break sharply with tradition in his ideas about women. For him, women and men were spiritually equal, but in every other respect, women were to be subordinate to men. Luther championed marriage as the proper state for all

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<sup>7</sup> For more on the perception of woman in Medieval theology, see McCloughlin 213-66.

individuals, but particularly for women for whom marriage was the highest calling. In his sermon Vom ehelichen Leben, Luther advises men not to look down upon tasks regarding child care. However, he emphasizes the importance of woman's duties as a mother and a wife: "Also soll auch das Weib in seinen Werken denken, wenn sie das Kind säuget, wieget, badet und andere Werke in ihm tut und wenn sie sonst arbeitet und ihrem Mann hilft und gehorsam ist. Es sind alles eitel goldene, edele Werk." (35) For a woman facing death during childbirth he has following advice:

Stirbst du darüber, so fahr hin, wohl dir, denn du stirbest eigentlich im edlen Werk und Gehorsam Gottes. Ja, wenn du nicht ein Weib wärest, so solltest du jetzt allein um dieses Werks willen wünschen, daß du ein Weib wärest, und so köstlich in Gottes Werk und Willen Not leiden und sterben. Denn hier ist Gottes Wort, das dich also geschaffen, solche Not in dir gepflanzt hat. (36)

Luther argues that infertile women are weak and unhealthy, whereas fertile women are healthy and pure. He thinks: "Ob sie [die fruchtbaren Weiber] sich aber auch müde und zuletzt tottragen, das schadet nicht, laß sie sich nur tottragen, sie sind drum da. Es ist besser, kurz gesund denn lange ungesund leben" (41). Luther was not the first to differentiate between male and female gender roles. However, his influence on future generations in German society was certainly determinate.<sup>8</sup> His ideas about the 'proper' role of women influenced the perception about women for centuries to come. Taking into consideration

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<sup>8</sup> The issue of women and Reformation is further discussed in Lorenz 7-35, Wiesner (Luther and Women) 295-308, also Wiesner (Women's Response to The Reformation) 148-171.

this age-old tradition of gender role division, Annette Kuhn rightly points out that the sexual stereotypes of the late eighteenth century were only the latest formulation of the previously prescribed roles for women (42). Even during the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century, when all human beings were supposed to be equal and reason was supposed to reign, the unequal gender role division did not lose its importance.

## **2. From Enlightenment to Industrialization**

### **a. Polarization of Gender Roles**

During the eighteenth century the feudal system was waning in influence and the newly emerging bourgeois class was gaining power by controlling trade and capital. The family was no longer a self-sufficient unit producing and consuming goods for itself. It ceased to be the center of production or power. Professional life was moving outside the family, and thus the family became a private sphere dissociated from public life. With changes in the family structure the division between the public and private spheres became clearer during the Enlightenment. Speaking of these changes in the family structure in the eighteenth century, Rolf Grimminger notes:

Die Familie wird im selben Ausmaß privatisiert, in dem sie ihre politische Funktion verliert, Geburtsstätte ständischer Herrschaft zu sein, und ihre ökonomische Funktion aufgeben muß, produktive Arbeit zu leisten. Sie verwandelt sich zur 'Kernfamilie'. . . Erwerbs -und Familienleben sind 'dissoziiert', und dies kann als das wesentliche Kennzeichen der modern-privaten Kernfamilie überhaupt gelten. (92-93)

The changes in the family structure emphasized the role of women in the family. Enlightenment philosophy defined the human being as born free and equal. However, in reality, this freedom and equality were awarded only to men. Woman's task was to be a good mother and a housewife "die ihrem arbeitenden Gatten den Schweiß der Tagelast von seiner Stirn trocknet, die ihm Rosen auf die mühsamen Pfade des Lebens streut, und Hand in Hand, ihn freundlich durch die Dornen desselben hindurchleitet . . ."

(Grimmiger 96). Andrea von Dülmen describes how women were restricted more and more to the home during the Enlightenment:

Mit der Verlagerung der männlichen Geschäfte aus dem Haus in einen mehr öffentlichen Bereich geht auch die gewisse Ausgeglichenheit in der Wertschätzung der weiblichen und männlichen Rolle verloren. Immer nachdrücklicher werden die Frauen in Grenzen verwiesen, die ihnen ein öffentliches, gleichberechtigtes Leben verbieten. Gleichzeitig wird die traditionelle, vorwiegend theologisch legitimierte Unterordnung des "zweiten Geschlechts" gerade von den Spätaufklärern neu begründet und befestigt. Aus ihrer physischen und psychischen Schwäche leiten diese Männer ab, daß die Frau "nie ohne eine häusliche Obrigkeit" sein dürfte. Ihr Geist, der nie das Ganze übersehen, den Zusammenhang von Ideen erfassen kann, benötige selbst bei den häuslichen Geschäften die Führung und Aufsicht des Mannes. (29)

Along with the polarization of private and public spheres also came the polarization of gender characteristics. Men were associated with "rationality" and women with "emotionality." This polarization was evident in the literature during the Enlightenment. Immanuel Kant described the "Beautiful" and the "Sublime" as the two chief kinds of finer human feelings and associated women with the "Beautiful" and men with the "Sublime." He wrote: "Das schöne Geschlecht hat eben so wohl

Verstand als das männliche, nur es ist ein schöner Verstand, der unsrige soll ein tiefer Verstand sein, welches ein Ausdruck ist, der einerlei mit dem Erhabenen bedeutet" (270). Kant claims that the intellect of a woman is a beautiful intellect, whereas that of the male sex should be a noble intellect. He concludes that a woman will avoid the wicked not because it is wrong, but because it is ugly. He claims that she does something only because it pleases her. He further adds: "Tiefes Nachsinnen und eine lange fortgesetzte Betrachtung sind edel aber schwer, und schicken sich nicht wohl für eine Person, bei der die ungezwungene Reize nicht anders als eine schöne Natur zeigen sollen" (271). Thus, Kant contributes to the polarization of genders roles by associating women with beauty and men with rationality.<sup>9</sup> To give an example of how women internalized the gender characteristics that were defined as 'feminine' by society, Marianne Ehrmann (1755-95), author of Philosophie eines Weibes. Von einer Beobachterin (1784) wrote: "Des tugendhaften und rechtschaffenen Weibs grösste Würde ist, verborgen zu bleiben; ihr Ruhm besteht in der Hochachtung ihres Manns;- und ihr Vergnügen ist das Glück ihrer Familie" (57).

## **b. The Effects of Industrialization**

These ideas about women's roles in society were carried over into the nineteenth century. The process of change in feudal German society intensified in the nineteenth century due

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<sup>9</sup> For more on Kant's views on women see Schott.

to industrialization. The second quarter of the nineteenth-century was a period of transition from pre-industrial to an industrial economy. Cordula Koepcke describes how industrialization led to devaluation of women's work at home:

Das Haus war mehr Schlaf- als Wohnstätte. Da die Arbeit außer Haus geleistet wurde, liefen die Fäden nicht mehr im Hause zusammen, sondern von ihm fort. Und weil das Geld, das zum Lebensunterhalt gebraucht wurde, in der Fabrik verdient werden mußte, erhielt die Hausarbeit, die nichts einbrachte, einen minderen Rang, die im Hause Arbeitenden hatten minderes Ansehen, und da das die Frauen waren, wurde Frauenarbeit, ganz gleich, wo sie geleistet wurde, fortan geringer geschätzt als Männerarbeit. Die Hausfrau, von einst, die dem Hauswesen vorstand, anderen weiblichen Familienmitgliedern und dem Gesinde gebot, und eine herrscherliche Stellung einnahm, hatte jetzt gerade noch Arbeit für sich selbst. (14)

The increase in the number of bureaucrats in the nineteenth-century led to even more polarity between the public and private domains. Consequently the difference in the roles of men and women in society sharpened. Christian Wilhelm Spieker, editor of Emiliens Stunden der Andacht und des Nachdenkens (1856) wrote about the roles of men and women. The abiding popularity of this book is evident from the fact that seven editions of the book were printed between the years 1806 and 1856. He writes

Wenn der Mann mehr für die Welt lebt, so lebt die Frau mehr für das Haus; wenn sich der Mann in den Strudel der Geschäfte stürzt, so zieht sich das Weib in das stille Heiligtum ihres Herzens zurück. Der Mann soll ernst, stark und tapfer sein, lieber wild in das Leben hinein -, als scheu aus dem Leben herausfliehen; er soll das Schwert des Rechts und der Wahrheit führen, die Freiheit beschützen, die Unschuld schirmen und die Gerechtigkeit vertheidigen; er muß täglich gerüstet sein zu Arbeit und

Kampf. Das Weib dagegen soll milde, ruhig, freundlich, gehorsam, lieber scheu aus dem Leben zurück -, als wild in das Leben hineindringen; sie soll das Bild der Sitte und der Freude, friedlich und freundlich, in der Armuth reich, bei Wenigem zufrieden und in der Beschränktheit glücklich sein. In der Gemeinschaft mit Kindern und Hausgenossen und bei dem engsten Kreise des Lebens ein Glück gibt, das in dem weitesten nicht gefunden werden kann. (155)

The female characteristics were defined by a combination of biology and destiny. The primary function of the body and mind of woman was to reproduce. Thus she was regarded as receptive where as man was regarded productive. The productivity of a man was concerned with social production and that of a woman with private reproduction. Man was considered a 'citizen' of the society, who was devoted to its daily social, political and economic struggles, whereas a woman was devoted to her home and family. Woman was thus related to the matters of heart and man to the matters of reasoning.

Even within the sphere of the family women did not have equal rights with men. They had no legal rights to protect the goods they inherited after marriage. They also did not have the right to property, as men took over control of all the property after marriage. In upper class families, the father or the caretaker of the bride and the bridegroom signed a marital agreement to assure some level of support to the woman in case the husband died or became bankrupt. However, such contracts hardly offered any help to a woman since laws were not uniform in all the German states. Further, in many regions, the contracts were no longer valid after the birth of the first

child (Becker-Cantarino *Der lange Weg* 49). Thus, marriage was not a relationship of equals.

After getting married, women took over the household duties. The educational material for women was aimed at preparing them for this task and developing a traditional female character, as I will now demonstrate.

### **c. Changes in the Bourgeois Ideal**

Before starting the discussion about the education of women, it is important to note that the polarization of gender characteristics and gender roles was mainly taking place in the bourgeoisie. The middle and upper middle classes were experiencing major changes in structure and power. They had to redefine the role of family in the changing social atmosphere. The discussion about the education of women was aimed at defining an ideal for women in the bourgeoisie.

Earlier in the eighteenth century the bourgeoisie had the aristocratic house as its ideal. Sophisticated and even highly educated women were tolerated in the noble class. As Peter Petschauer notes, the ideal of an aristocratic home "gave way during the course of the century to the ideal of the middle-class home with its emphasis on the inner life of the family and low acceptance of female erudition" (289). There was ambivalence in the bourgeoisie's attitude toward the noble class. On the one hand, the bourgeoisie became critical of the family life among the nobility. The noble ladies were

considered frivolous, because child care was mostly in the hands of servants in the noble families. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie tried to imitate the leisurely way of life of the nobles as a status symbol. Herrad Schenk points out the effect of this ambivalence on the life of a middle class woman:

Die Frau aus dem Bürgertum soll einerseits müßig sein wie ehemals der Adel, d.h. sie soll nicht den Mühen und Kämpfen des Erwerbslebens ausgesetzt sein, in denen sich der bürgerliche Mann bewähren muß; sie soll aber keineswegs Muße im Sinne der verwerflichen Untätigkeit zeigen, sondern sich um das Wohlergehen ihrer Familie kümmern; genauso rastlos, wie sich der Mann im Geschäft abmüht, soll sie sich in die Zufriedenheit von Mann und Kindern, die Wohlerzogenheit der Dienstboten, den häuslichen Ablauf bemühen. (19)

Although the Enlightenment philosophers mainly criticized the nobility in order to make the bourgeois ideals stand out in a more favorable light, there was an element of truth in the criticism. Ute Frevert describes child care in noble homes during the late eighteenth century in which children in the noble families were handed over immediately after birth to a wet nurse. They lived, to a large degree, isolated from their parents and had their own royal households. Further, the education and care of children lay in the hands of others, although parents furnished governesses and private tutors (28). Married women in the noble families enjoyed the social status of their husbands. They could also have their own social circle and activities. Thus, a married woman in the noble family was relieved of her 'duties' as housewife and mother. Those who remained unmarried received endowments from the family. Their social standing might not have been as high as that of the

married women; nevertheless they enjoyed economic independence. The bourgeoisie distanced itself from the aristocratic female ideal and pursued its own ideals of gender role divisions.

### **3. Education of Women in Nineteenth-Century Germany**

#### **a. Various Opinions About Women's Education**

The theories about women's education in the nineteenth century were influenced by the theory of the "character of the sexes" in the Enlightenment. The most influential theme in the literature written during eighteenth as well as nineteenth century about women's education is the predestined role of women as helpers of their husbands, educators of their children, and supervisors of their households. Pia Schmidt summarizes the aim of women's education during the Enlightenment:

Die Debatte um weibliche Bildung steht damit im Kontext der Herausbildung des neuen bürgerlichen Familienleitbildes. Als folgenreiche Hauptströmung läßt sich festhalten, daß Mädchenerziehung restriktiv angelegt wird. Bildung für Frauen findet ihre Begründung nicht im Sinne eines Menschenrechts auf Bildung. Vielmehr hat sie ausschließlich den Zweck zu erfüllen, Frauen auf ihre Funktion in Ehe und Familie, in der Diktion der Zeit: auf ihre Bestimmung zur Hausfrau, Gattin und Mutter vorzubereiten. ((327)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau had a remarkable influence on writings about women in Germany. According to Rousseau, the upbringing of women had to be aimed at making women useful and likable to men. The purpose of their life was to serve men and that is what they should be taught to do (467). Fichte saw the reason for women's subordinate position in nature and not in

human law or social convention (135). The educators influenced by philosophers such as Rousseau, Kant or Fichte tended to emphasize woman's duties in the household, her nature as a complement to that of man and her role as mother.

Joachim Heinrich Campe (1746-1818) was one of the central figures in the discussion about women's education. His book Väterlicher Rath für meine Tochter, first published in 1791, had ten editions by 1832. He saw marriage, children, and home as the proper calling for women. He argued in this book that it is God's plan and society's needs that have placed women in their dependency. Thus, they must acquire life wisdom through experience in the house and strengthen this wisdom with skills including proper religious attitude or appropriate moral training (21-34). He wanted women to have professional training to perform their household duties. In other words, he wanted them to use their skill in the house, not outside of it.

Although few in number, opposing voices were not totally absent from the scene. The most significant of them was that of Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel, who wrote Über die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Weiber in 1792. Based on his assumptions about the universality of reason and the socio-historical determination of human character, Hippel argues for the total integration of women in the social world by giving them equal educational and professional opportunities. He argues for women's equal access to educational and occupational opportunities and emphasizes that with education women can

better serve the state. In his Nachlaß über weibliche Bildung he argues that individuals can become human beings only by their activity in the social sphere. If women are excluded from the social sphere, it would relegate them to the status of animals: "so sind die Weiber so lange müßig, als man sie zu den Trieben der Thiere, zu Tisch und Bett, zur Selbsterhaltung und Fortpflanzung erniedrigt" (49). However, Hippel's argument had little impact on the debate about women's education. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Enlightenment approach of educating the citizens for the state was no longer dominant. Instead, neo-humanist arguments by authors such as Humboldt proved to be more influential.

Humboldt argued that the purpose of education is not to create individuals to serve the state but to create autonomous individuals. Women, according to him, are by their very nature incapable of becoming autonomous individuals. In his Plan einer vergleichenden Anthropologie he finds women smaller, weaker and more delicate than men. They are inherently passive and incapable of investigating truth (364-66). Humboldt's view, not Hippel's, is most influential by the turn of the nineteenth century.

#### **b. Educational and Professional Possibilities for Women**

Both liberals like Hippel and conservatives like Campe agreed that some kind of education was necessary for women. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there were only a few

girls' schools aimed at providing an education beyond the elementary level. The number of schools providing education beyond the elementary level gradually increased in the nineteenth century as "men and women in the upper and middle classes had become enamored with the idea of education" (Petschauer [1989] 105). Yet, as James Albisetti notes, none of these institutions "offered a curriculum equivalent to that of the contemporary Latin schools for boys" (24). Albesetti describes how instruction in arithmetic and the sciences developed along the predestined female role, the "Bestimmung." For example, science instruction for girls might include both natural history, covering elementary material from botany and zoology, and descriptions of nature, including introductions to geology, chemistry and physics. Nonetheless, much of this educational material was related to nutrition or the woman's housewifely concerns (Albesetti 48). In addition to these formal schools, tutoring was also a way to get education for the girls in noble and upper-middle class.

Women were excluded from the university because the university was mainly to train men to later serve the state. There were only a few exceptions to this rule. These were mostly women whose fathers or husbands were teaching at a university. A few, Ann Maria van Schurmannn (1607-1678), Luise Adelgunde Viktoria Gottsched (1713-1762), Regina Josepha von Siebold (1771-1849) and Dorothea Christiane Leporin (1715-1825) had an opportunity to go to a university (Niemeyer 275-95).

Speaking about women's education during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Dülmen points out that even though reforms in women's education were taking place, women were still restricted to the private domain of life: "Je stärker zu Ende des Jahrhunderts die Bestrebungen für eine allgemeine Mädchenbildung werden, desto ablehnender und härter werden jene Stimmen, die Frauen rigorös in den häuslichen Kreis verweisen und 'Weiblichkeit' für unvereinbar mit einer Ausbildung des Verstandes erklären" (124). Whatever education women were given was aimed at making them good wives, mothers and housekeepers, since those were the only roles women could assume in family life. This attitude toward women's education can also be seen in the literature that was created for the female audience in the nineteenth century.

#### **4. Literary Socialization of Women in the Nineteenth Century**

Traditional literature for women, which was published partly as a continuation of the tradition from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, reinforced the bourgeois ideal of femininity. This literature consisted of devotional writing, books offering advice to young women regarding household matters, or moral writings. The content of these books illustrates the conditioning process to which women were frequently exposed in the nineteenth century. The language of these books was simple and emotional. The style was conversational and many times the books were written in the form

of letters to create the illusion of personal relationships. From the titles of some of these books it becomes apparent that the authors pose as a "Wegweiser" or a "ratende Freundin" giving "mütterlicher Rat." Günter Häntzschel points out that the purpose of women's literature, written by male as well as female authors, was to counsel and to comfort its audience:<sup>10</sup>

Der Literatur wird therapeutische und tröstende Funktion zugesprochen. Alle Autoren sehen in ihr ein Mittel der Geistes-und Herzensveredelung. Schöngeistige Bildung ist hier, dem Gedanken der ästhetischen Erziehung des deutschen Idealismus verpflichtet, ein wesentlicher Faktor zur Entwicklung einer harmonischen Persönlichkeit; in den allgemeinen, nicht geschlechtsspezifischen Anstandsbüchern dagegen lediglich noch Mittel sozialer Selbstbehauptung (29).

Women were advised against reading any literature which was philosophical or radical. Any political literature was excluded from the reading programs for young ladies. Even scientific texts were simplified for women because such texts were thought to be not suitable for their mind (Petschauer 30-38).

The anthology by Günter Häntzschel includes traditional texts for women written in the nineteenth century by various authors. In one such text, the author of Briefen an eine Jungfrau über die Hauptgegenstände der Ästhetik, Schroeer

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<sup>10</sup> An anthology by Günter Häntzschel of traditional texts for women includes texts that support this point. For example, see Roth, Elise. Die Tochter in Haus und Welt. Wegweiser zur Weiterbildung nach dem Austritt aus der Schule. (Stuttgart : Schwabacher, 1897); Lindemann, Marie von. Die rathende Freundin. Mitgabe für junge Mädchen beim Eintritt in's Leben. (Köln: J. P. Bachem, 1886); Hohenhausen, Elisa von. Die Jungfrau und ihre Zukunft in unserer Zeit, oder mütterlicher Rath einer Pensionsvorsteherin an ihre scheidenden Zögling über ihren Eintritt in die Welt. (Weimar: Bernhard Friedrich Voigt, 1854)

Tobias, writes: "Der Gelehrte Mann kann und muß . . . Alles kennen und lesen, um den ganzen Umfang der Literatur zu übersehen und überhaupt die Geschichte der Sprachbildung daran zu lernen; gebildeten Frauen kann es nur darum zu thun sein, Dasjenige zu kennen, was wahren poetischen Genuß gewährt" (32). Only texts that would provide "poetic pleasure" were deemed suitable for women.

In addition to participating in literary activities as readers, women were active as writers. As Barbara Becker-Cantarino notes, in the course of literary history women started with letter writing, and later on used other genres. She writes:

Briefe sind die Schule der schreibenden Frauen gewesen; mit diesen Texten machten Frauen seit spätestens dem 17. Jahrhundert überall in Europa ihre ersten selbständigen Schreibversuche, ehe sie dann im 18. Und 19. Jahrhundert in den von den männlichen Literaten etablierten und respektierten literarischen Gattungen als Autorinnen von Romanen, Lyrik und zuletzt auch von Dramen hervortreten können. (Leben als Text 83)

Silvia Bovenschen points out that the genre of the epistolary novel was popular among women writers because of its open form and the proximity of its subjects to the private sphere, to which most of the women were restricted (Bovenschen 216). In addition to writing novels, women also used other genres such as autobiography and drama.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> For novels see among others Meise, Schieth and Goodman. For drama see Kord. For letters and epistolary novel see Becker-Cantarino: *Leben als Text*, Hahn-Hahn, French and Runge.

Although women were allowed to get a limited education they were supposed to use their knowledge to fulfill their duties in the home. When women used their education to become writers, they were entering the public domain, and thus breaking away from gender role expectations. To be an educated woman (gebildete Dame) was accepted, but to be a learned woman (Gelehrte) was met with scorn. For example, Herder writes in a letter to Caroline Flachsland: "Sie haben Recht, daß ich auf das gelehrte Frauenzimmer vielleicht zu sehr erbittert bin; aber ich kann nichts dafür: es ist Abscheu der Natur." Later he continues by saying that a scholarly woman seems so unnatural to him that "ich immer fürs arabische Sprüchwort bin 'eine Henne, die da krähet, und ein Weib, das gelehrt ist, sind üble Vorboten: man schneide beiden den Hals ab!'" (Schauer 46).

The influence of public opinion on the women writers who had chosen a public activity that did not fit the contemporary gender ideology was inevitable. It produced conflicts in them. On the one hand, they had to maintain the bourgeois female ideal, while on the other hand, they had the desire to write, which was contradictory with that ideal. Ruth-Ellen Boetcher Joeres describes this conflict with the help of 'labeling theory':

As the labels of appropriate gender characteristics were increasingly and more widely accepted, their activity as writers might well be seen as deviant, and that judgment would be absorbed, interiorized, and possibly believed by the writers themselves. What was inevitable in this instance was a clash of these external negative representations -- initially coming from external sources, but ultimately internalized by the writers -- with the inner positive resistance of a self-representation that had caused these writers to write and publish in the first

place . . . . And in most instances it is also apparent that the women themselves acknowledged their own deviance and waged ongoing struggles to have themselves accepted as respectable despite their activities. (*Respectability* 5)

This conflict led to ramifications in women's writing, such as the topos of modesty, and reminders that their writing was spiritually motivated. Furthermore, many women writers often give as the reason for publishing pressure from friends or family. Negative public opinion about women writers was part of a cultural system that marginalized them. Due to this marginalization, women's presence in publishing, editing, and the critical establishment was minor (*Boetcher-Joeres Respectability* 9). Women's writing reveals their struggle to cope with the marginalization. However, this conflict evident in women's writing should not be taken as essential. Anita Runge points out that it should rather be seen as a result of the social condition in which they were writing. She thinks that the different quality of texts by women

ist Konsequenz der Möglichkeiten und Grenzen schriftstellerischer Kreativität von Frauen im Kontext zeitgenössischer Rollenzuschreibungen und ästhetischer Normen. Die Anerkennung dieser spezifischen Andersartigkeit als historischer Kategorie ermöglicht die Erschließung von aus dem Kanon ausgeschlossenen weiblichen literarischen Traditionen, aber auch die Analyse von Differenzen innerhalb der literarischen Produktion von Frauen eines Zeitraumes und die Gewichtung nicht-geschlechtsspezifischer Faktoren (etwa der sozialen Herkunft, des kulturellen Umfeldes, regionaler Besonderheiten etc.) für die schriftstellerische Tätigkeit von Frauen. (21)

This approach of understanding the conflicts in women's writing not as a given, but as a result of the specific socio-cultural

background of the writers is especially fruitful for studying Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer. It helps us understand how each of them dealt differently with the pressure of being marginalized as a woman. More importantly, it focuses our attention beyond gender to their different social backgrounds and commonality of being European.

Even under the unfavorable conditions that made writing by women itself a deviant behavior, some women writers were voicing their concerns about equal rights for women. Birgit Wägenbaur has recently pointed out that writers such as Fanny Tarnows protested against the social discrimination of women in the late eighteenth- early nineteenth-century. Educators such as Amalia Holst and Betty Gleim also made concrete suggestions to improve the social status of women. Renate Möhrmann's anthology Frauenemanzipation im deutschen Vormärz. Texte und Dokumente (1978) includes texts by women writers of the nineteenth century voicing their concerns about women's emancipation. It includes authors such as Fanny Lewald, Malvida von Meysensbug, Mathilde Franziska Anneke, Louise Aston, Louise Dittmar, Luise Mühlbach, Louise Otto-Peters and Ida Hahn-Hahn.

In her Memoiren einer Idealistin, Malvida von Meysenbug demands education for everyone in order to become independent: "Jedes menschliches Wesen hat Anspruch auf eine Erziehung, die es fähig macht, auf sich selbst zu ruhen; dieses Recht müßte die Gesellschaft ihm sichern, indem sie die Eltern im Fall der Not zwänge, es ihm zu gewähren, oder, bei absolutem Mangel and Mitteln von deren Seite, selber helfend einträte" (298). Louise

Otto-Peters asks for equality for man and woman before law: "Das Weib muß überall als mündig erklärt werden und vor Gericht dafür anerkannt, seine Sache selbst vertreten zu dürfen wie in gleichem Fall der Mann" (19). She not only demands equal rights for women in marriage, but she also wants women to have the right to vote. These women were the precursors of the movement for women's emancipation that became stronger in the second half of the nineteenth century.

## **Conclusion**

Educationalists, philosophers, and writers developed and popularized bourgeois gender ideology. This ideology defined women by their role as mothers, wives and housekeepers. It tied them to the private sphere of home. Socially, culturally, and economically, women were marginalized in society, although the degree of marginalization varied according to their social class. Now I will turn to the biographies of Ida Hahn-Hahn and Ida Pfeiffer to see how well they fit the profile of nineteenth century marginalized woman. Discussing the specific socio-cultural background of these authors will begin to reveal some of the complexities of women's writing that were discussed earlier.

## B. The Biography of Ida Hahn-Hahn<sup>12</sup>

Ida Hahn-Hahn was born into an aristocratic family in 1805 in Mecklenburg. She spent the early years of her life at her father's newly inherited castle in Replin, Mecklenburg-Schwerin. Hahn-Hahn received virtually no formal education, but rather she had a governess. Although her family was one of the oldest and most respected among the nobility of Mecklenburg, they suffered considerable financial ruin when her father became involved with the theater and lost most of his money.<sup>13</sup> This led to the divorce of her parents. Hahn-Hahn was pushed into a hasty marriage to her cousin Graf Friedrich Hahn at the age of twenty-one. The marriage was mainly to support her mother and sister financially. Hahn-Hahn's marriage proved to be unhappy. Her husband divorced her on the basis of falsified evidence of her infidelity in order to marry another woman. Hahn-Hahn had a daughter from the marriage, whom she handed over to private foster parents after her divorce.

Until her divorce, Ida Hahn-Hahn's life seems to have followed the life pattern of an aristocratic woman in the

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<sup>12</sup> Biographical information about Hahn-Hahn is based on Elke Fredriksen (ed), Women Writers of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland 91-95; Gisela Brinder-Gabler, Lexicon detuschsprachigen Autorinen (München: dtv, 1986) 127, Renate Möhrmann, Die andere Frau (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1977) 85-117 and also by Möhrmann, Frauenemanzipation in deutschen Vormärz (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1978) 230-235; Carol Diethe, Towards Emancipation. German Woman Writers of the Nineteenth Century (New York: Berghahn, 1998) 107-119.

<sup>13</sup> Renate Möhrmann notes that Hahn-Hahn's father built his own theater and spent generous amounts of money on the actors. This was considered inappropriate for a man of his standing and ultimately it led to his financial ruin (Andere Frau 88)

nineteenth century. She received her education through tutors and governesses as was common among noble families. Her marriage was more out of convenience than love, but as Ute Gerhart has documented, during the nineteenth century "in a marriage the issue was not personal preference but family strategy" (Women in German History 29). She was relieved of her duty of bringing up her child when she handed it over to foster parents. It is only after her divorce that she managed to pursue an independent career as a writer.

Hahn-Hahn was able to support herself financially through the endowment of 1500 Taler that she received after the divorce. Although she never remarried, she lived with a companion Baron Adolf von Bystram until his death in 1849. In 1830, she had a son from Bystram whom she gave up for adoption, and began her literary career. Her first collection of poems was published in 1835. With Bystram, she undertook a series of journeys to places that were popular travel destinations among the noble class. In 1835 she went to Italy, in 1837 to Vienna and then to Italy and Sicily in 1838. She traveled to Nice and then to Spain through southern France 1840. Her travelogues Reisebriefe and Erinnerungen aus und an Frankreich appeared in 1842. The travelogue of her journey to Denmark and Sweden in 1842 appeared an year later. In the year 1843/44 she traveled to the Middle East, and the travelogue Orientalische Briefe appeared in 1844.

Besides travelogues, Hahn-Hahn also wrote thirteen novels. Hahn-Hahn's popularity as a writer becomes evident in the attention she received in the contemporary reviews. Katrien van

Munster mentions over 100 reviews of Hahn-Hahn's works which appeared in newspapers and journals from 1835 to 1850 (170). Speaking of Hahn-Hahn's novels, Möhrmann notes that her novels are not only "in Bezug auf Autorenschaft Frauenromane, sondern auch ihrem Inhalt nach. Die Frau beherrscht ganz ausschließlich das Aktionsfeld, und zwar genau gesagt die Aristokratin zwischen fünfzehn und dreißig" ( Die andere Frau 233).

Hahn-Hahn's most famous novel, Gräfin Faustine (1840) is generally regarded as a feminist manifesto because its heroine rejects the dominant ideology of woman's place in the marital arrangement. Her heroines are self-made women from aristocratic families who reject the limitations of bourgeois values. In this novel, the central character, Faustine, says: "Wie komisch sind die Männer! Ganz ernsthaft bilden sie sich ein, der liebe Gott hat unser Geschlecht geschaffen, um das ihre zu bedienen!" (63). What Faustine asks for is that "die Männer mit ihnen umgehen wie mit ihresgleichen und nicht wie mit erkauften Sklavinnen, denen man in übler Laune den Fuß auf den Nacken stellt und in guter Lauen ein Halsband oder ähnlichen Plunder hinwirft" (63).

Hahn-Hahn expresses her concern about women's education in the novel Der Rechte (1845). She writes: "Schickt die Mädchen auf die Universität und die Knaben in die Nähschule und Küche: nach drei Generationen werdet ihr wissen, ob es unmöglich ist, und was es heißt die Unterdrückten sein" (243). However, Hahn-Hahn's concern about emancipation is limited to aristocratic

women. Hahn-Hahn is aware of these limitations, as she notes in her diary:

Wenn ich zuweilen höre oder lese, wie mich die Journalisten verfluchen, weil ich nicht schreibe fürs Volk, so denke ich immer höchst gelassen: wie kann man für etwas schreiben, das man nicht kennt? Ich kenne nicht Bedürfnis, Denk- und Lebensweise des Handwerkers, Bauern oder Fabrikarbeiters. Ich habe nie in ihrer Sphäre gelebt, in ihrer Luft geathmet, in ihre Verhältnisse mich gründlich eingeweiht; und sich nur für sie interessieren heißt noch nicht sie kennen. (see Schmidt-Jurgens 79)

Hahn-Hahn was always proud of her aristocratic origins. She writes in a letter to her spiritual advisor Archbishop Melchior von Diepenbrock of Breslau: "Aristokratisch zu sein ist mir zu jeder Zeit, in allen Verhältnissen unter allen Umständen eine Ehre gewesen" (185). The revolution of 1848 brought with it democratic ideas which repelled Hahn-Hahn. She decided to convert to Catholicism in 1850. Contributing to her decision was also the death of her long time companion, Bystram, in 1849. In Von Babylon nach Jerusalem (1851), Hahn-Hahn explains that a number of religious experiences in her travels since 1843 had led her to believe that she was "von jeher eine schlafende Katholikin" (12). After converting to Catholicism in 1850, she founded a convent for unwed mothers in 1854 and spent the rest of her life there until her death in 1880.

### C. The Biography of Ida Pfeiffer<sup>14</sup>

Born in Vienna in 1797, Ida Pfeiffer was third among the seven children of a well-to-do merchant. Until Pfeiffer was nine years old, she was the only girl among her five brothers. Her father insisted on a strict upbringing, which Pfeiffer claims helped her during her travel around the world. The family was well-to-do but the children were denied even simple wishes and were forced to make sacrifices. Pfeiffer's father did not treat Ida any differently from her brothers. She wore boy's clothes and moved around as freely as her brothers. Pfeiffer writes about these free years of her early life: "Ich war nicht schüchtern, sondern wild wie ein Junge und beherzter und vorwitziger als meine älteren Brüder" (Madagaskar 10). As a child Ida loved playing with her five brothers and did not like the games meant for girls. Pfeiffer's father encouraged her to be tough and courageous and even promised her jokingly that she could get an education in a military institution to become an officer.

However, these relatively free years in Pfeiffer's life were not to last forever. Her father died when she was nine and her mother took over her upbringing. Her brothers were sent to school but she stayed at home with her mother. Pfeiffer's mother did not agree with the way in which her husband had brought up their daughter and she tried to reinforce the

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<sup>14</sup> Bibliographical information about Pfeiffer is based on her biographical sketch by her son Oskar Pfeiffer in the beginning of her travelogue Reise nach Madagascar (Marburg: Jonas. 1980)

traditional woman's role in Pfeiffer. The first step was a change in Pfeiffer's clothes "die Hose gegen den Unterrock zu vertauschen" (Madagaskar 11), as she describes it. She rebelled by falling seriously ill and was given back boy's clothes on a doctor's advice. Sibylle Duda explains sickness as a specific feminine form of rebellion that would not free women from their social role but would at least let them defer the duties that were associated with that role (124-30). Pfeiffer succeeded in escaping her social role at least for some time. She wanted to learn violin, but her mother forced her to take piano lessons, which was considered more appropriate for women. Pfeiffer tried to avoid the piano lessons by often 'accidentally' burning or cutting her fingers.

Pfeiffer continued with this rebellion against her mother until the age of thirteen. Then a young man named Joseph Franz Emil Trimmel was appointed as her tutor and she had a change of heart mainly due to him. She describes how she changed from a tomboy to a fine young woman out of her love for the tutor:

Da ich meine Eltern mehr fürchten als lieben gelernt hatte und er, so zu sagen, das erste Wesen war, das mir mit Freundlichkeit und Theilnahme entgegenkam, so hing ich mit schwärmerischer Liebe an ihm. Ich suchte jeden seiner Wünsche zu erfüllen und fühlte mich nie glücklicher, als wenn er mit meinen Bestrebungen zufrieden schien. Er leitete meine ganze Erziehung, und obgleich es mich gar manche Thräne kostete, meinen jugendlichen Träumereien zu entsagen und mich mit Dingen zu befassen, die ich früher mit der tiefsten Verachtung betrachtet hatte, so tat ich es doch ihm zu Liebe. Selbst alle weiblichen Arbeiten, Nähen, Stricken, Kochen u.s.w. lernte ich. Ihm verdanke ich es, daß ich im Verlaufe von drei bis vier Jahren vollkommen zu der Einsicht der Pflichten meines

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and Gabriela Habinger, Eine Biedermeierdame erobert die Welt. Die Lebensgeschichte der Ida Pfeiffer (Wien: Promedia, 1997).

Geschlechtes gelangte, daß aus dem wilden Jungen eine bescheidene Jungfrau wurde. (Madagaskar 14)

After resigning to the female role, Ida started reading travel literature to satisfy her quest for adventure. She might have conformed outwardly to the expectations of her mother but deep inside she still cherished dreams of adventures. In a biographical sketch of Pfeiffer, her son Oskar Pfeiffer describes how she still wanted to pursue goals that were considered male at that time:

Wenn sie von Jemanden hörte, der große Reisen gemacht hatte, so erfaßte sie Wehmuth, daß ihr als Mädchen für immer das Glück verschlossen bleiben mußte, das Weltmeer zu durchfurchen und ferne Länder aufzusuchen. Oft lag ihr der Gedanke nahe, mit Naturwissenschaften sich zu beschäftigen; sie unterdrückte ihn aber immer wieder, weil sie darin nur Rückkehr zu den "verkehrten Ideen" witterte. (Madagaskar 15)

Pfeiffer's passion for travel might have also been influenced by her tutor, Emil Trimmel, who himself was an avid traveler and had written travelogues and travel handbooks. Trimmel proposed to Pfeiffer when she was seventeen years old. However, she could not marry this man since her mother thought of him as an inappropriate match because of the difference in their social classes.

In 1820 she ended up marrying a man much older than her because she wanted to show Trimmel that she was not marrying out of love but as a moral duty. She confesses: "Dr. Pfeiffer schien mir ein sehr vernünftiger, gebildeter Mann zu sein; was aber in meinen Augen noch weit mehr zu seinem Vorthail sprach, war, daß er hundert Meilen von Wien entfernt lebte und 24 Jahre

mehr zählte als ich" (Madagaskar, 19). Soon after their marriage, her husband lost his job and Ida faced many financial problems. Since working outside home was not acceptable for women at that time, Pfeiffer secretly earned money by giving music and drawing lessons and supported her two sons. She describes her struggle later on:

Gott allein weiß, was ich durch achtzehn Jahre meiner Ehe litt! . . . Nicht durch rohe Behandlung von Seite meines Mannes, sondern durch die drückendsten Lebens-Verhältnisse, durch Noth und Mangel! Ich stammte aus einem wohlhabenden Hause, war von frühester Jugend an Ordnung und Bequemlichkeit gewohnt, und nun wußte ich oft kaum, wo ich mein Haupt niederlegen, wo das Bischen Geld hernehmen sollte, um mir nur das höchst Nöthige anzuschaffen. Ich verrichtete alle Hausarbeiten, ich fror und hungerte, ich arbeitete im Geheimen für Geld, ich ertheilte Unterricht in Zeichnen und Musik, und doch trotz aller Anstrengungen gab es oft Tage, an welchen ich meinen armen Kindern kaum etwas mehr als trockenes Brot zum Mittagessen vorzusetzen hatte. (Madagaskar 21)

Pfeiffer needed money to support her family, but she could not work openly. Instead she was forced to tutor secretly to make ends meet. After her mother's death Pfeiffer received a modest amount of money through inheritance.

Pfeiffer separated from her husband in 1835 and moved to Vienna to provide a better education for her sons. After her sons were grown and settled, she stepped out of the role of a bourgeois housewife and started traveling on her own. She had been living more or less separated from her husband for the past ten years. However, she does not mention this as the reason why she traveled alone. Rather, she states that he was too old (68 years old) to bear the hardship of travel. She herself was forty-five years old at that time and used her age as an excuse

to travel alone. She thought that she would not be exposed to the dangers that other younger women traveling alone might face:

. . . daß ich als Frau allein in die Welt hinaus wollte, so verließ ich auf meine Jahre (ich zählte deren schon 45), auf meinen Muth und auf die Selbstständigkeit, die ich in harter Schule des Lebens erlangt hatte, als ich nicht nur für mich und meine Kinder, sondern auch mitunter für meinen Mann sorgen mußte. In Betreff des Geldpunktes war ich zur größten Sparsamkeiten entschlossen. Unbequemlichkeiten und Entbehrungen schreckten mich nicht. Ich hatte ja deren schon genug und zwar gezwungen ertragen; wie viel leichter mußten die freiwillig aufgesuchten mit einem bestimmten Ziel vor Augen zu ertragen sein. (Madagaskar 24)

Pfeiffer chose the 'Holy Land'- the Middle East- as the destination of her first journey. A religious place was easy to defend as a travel destination. This first journey in 1842 was just the beginning of a series of journeys that Pfeiffer undertook until her death in 1858. In this relatively short period of time, Pfeiffer traveled extensively all over the world. In 1845 she traveled to Iceland and Scandinavia. Her first journey around the world, one that lasted two years, started in 1846. Three years later, she undertook her second journey around the world. Her last journey was to Madagascar in 1856. Pfeiffer traveled relentlessly for almost sixteen years. She won several honors during her lifetime for her achievement in traveling. The explorer Alexander von Humboldt and the geographer Carl Ritter wrote letters of recommendation for Pfeiffer. The King of Prussia granted her the golden medal for science and art. She was also the first woman to be admitted as an honorary member to the Geographical Societies in Berlin and Paris.

Pfeiffer enjoyed freedom and independence while traveling in different countries, but once she was at home, she was forced to comply to the norms of society. Hiltgund Jehle has documented the correspondence between Pfeiffer and the publisher of her books, Bauer. Pfeiffer indicates in her letter to the publisher that she was not free to make independent decisions about publishing her book. Pfeiffer had to ask her publisher to send her manuscript back. She writes in the letter: "Sie würden mich sehr falsch beurtheilen, wenn Sie dächten, daß Mißtrauen die Ursache meiner Handlung ist. Allein wenn man etwas der Öffentlichkeit Preiß gibt und noch dazu den Namen darunter setzen soll, so werden Sie es sehr natürlich finden, daß sowohl mein Mann als meine Geschwister darauf bestehen, sich über manche Punkte genau zu erklären" (27).

Pfeiffer's youth and married life mostly followed the pattern of a middle class woman. She enjoyed some freedom from the restrictions imposed on girls in her early childhood, but was soon forced by her mother to enter the role of a young woman. Pfeiffer internalized the bourgeois woman's ideal and judged other people, especially women, based on that ideal. However, by traveling to different countries all alone, she was breaking away from these ideals. This leads to contradictions in her view about other women. On the one hand, Pfeiffer stresses the importance of education suited for feminine activities. For example, when Pfeiffer visited the United States in the last leg of her second voyage around the world,

she questioned the teaching of sciences, as well as the Latin and Greek languages, in the private schools for girls. She claims that such an education is not suited for girls:

Diese einseitige Erziehung, in welcher das Weibliche gänzlich vernachlässigt wird, möchte ich als Hauptursache jenes Hanges nach Emancipation betrachten, der die Amerikanischen Mädchen und Frauen so stark charakterisiert . . . Die Mädchen in meinem Lande studieren ebenfalls Sprachen, Musik, Geschichte u.s.w., finden aber dabei Zeit, sich auch mit den weiblichen Beschäftigungen bekannt zu machen. (Zweite Weltreise 133-34)

On the other hand, she criticizes the Royal Geographical Society because their statute's limited membership to men. She writes modestly that although she herself may not be eligible for the membership because she has too little scientific knowledge, she builds a case for other women (and indirectly for herself):

Niemand wird aber läugnen, daß es heutzutage unter den Frauen gar manche gibt, die vollkommen wissenschaftlich ausgebildet sind; und diese nur deshalb auszuschließen, weil sie Frauen sind, würde ich höchstens im Oriente begreiflich finden, wo das weibliche Geschlecht noch wenig geachtet ist, aber gewiß nicht in dem auf seine Civilisation und seinen Zeitgeist so stolzen England. (Madagaskar 89 )

Besides showing her preconception of the Orient, this shows the contradiction in Pfeiffer's views about women.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Despite the fact that Ida Hahn-Hahn and Ida Pfeiffer came from different family backgrounds, both experienced restrictions because of their gender at some point in their lives. They experienced unusual childhood experiences that must have

affected their psychological make up. The ways in which they dealt with these restrictions differed according to their social background as well as their personal convictions. Coming from an aristocratic family, Hahn-Hahn enjoyed relatively more freedom than Pfeiffer. The endowment that Hahn-Hahn received after her divorce made her economically independent. She defied social norms by living in a free relationship with a man after her divorce. Unlike Hahn-Hahn, Pfeiffer's income depended on her books. Coming from a bourgeois family, she was forced to fulfill gender role expectations.

However, neither Pfeiffer nor Hahn-Hahn remained in the margins of society. By traveling to different places and writing about their experiences they stepped into the public sphere dominated by men. In the next chapter, I will demonstrate how the differences in their lives due to class, and the commonality due to their gender and European identity, influence the travel writing of Ida Hahn-Hahn and Ida Pfeiffer.

### Chapter III

#### An Analysis of Ida Pfeiffer's Travel Writings

##### A. Introduction

##### 1. The Autobiographical Approach to Ida Pfeiffer's Travel Writing

Ida Pfeiffer was a popular travel writer during her lifetime. Several editions of her travel writings were printed, and they were translated in many other languages as well.<sup>15</sup> However, she seems to have been forgotten after her death. Only in the last ten to fifteen years have feminist critics working on women travel writers brought her back to light. Since then many of her travel writings have been republished.<sup>16</sup>

The research done on Pfeiffer by current critics has been mainly autobiographical in its approach. It is true that the autobiographical approach can be productive for the interpretation of texts, especially travel writings. Biographical information about writers helps us to situate them in their historical context and gives us clues about their self-

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<sup>15</sup> Four editions of her first travelogue, Reise einer Wienerin in das heilige Land, were printed from 1844 to 1856. Her second travelogue, Reise nach dem skandinavischen Norden und der Insel Island im Jahre 1845, had two editions. Eine Frauenfahrt um die Welt had six editions in English from 1851 to 1856. Her works were also translated into French, Dutch, Malay and Russian.

<sup>16</sup> Reise einer Wienerin in das Heilige Land has been republished in 1980 (ed. Ludwig Plakolb) and 1995 (ed. Gabriele Habinger); Reise nach dem skandinavischen Norden republished in 1991 (ed. Gabriele Habinger), Eine Frauenfahrt um die Welt in 1992 (ed. Gabriele Habinger), Meine zweite Weltreise in 1993 under the title Abenteuer Inselwelt (part 1-2) and Reise in die Neue Welt (parts 3-4) in 1994 (ed. Gabriele Habinger); Reise

perception. Travel writing, in the end, tells us more about the self-perception of the travel writers themselves than the people described in the travel writing. Biographical information about the travel writer can act as a key for understanding the self-perception as well as the perception of the Other in travel writing. Hiltgund Jehle defends the autobiographical approach to studying women's travel writing on precisely these grounds:

Bisher ist in der deutschsprachigen Frauenforschung stark biographisch gearbeitet worden,..., weil Fremdwahrnehmung auf biographisch-kulturellem Hintergrund zu erkennen ist und interpretiert werden kann. Denn als fremd wird immer das bezeichnet, was der wahrnehmenden Person nicht vertraut ist. Das Fremde ist folglich keine Eigenschaft des Anderen, sondern verweist in dieser Gegenprojektion stets auf die wahrnehmende Person zurück. Um diesen Mechanismus zu entschlüsseln, sind biographische Kenntnisse hilfreich. (Eine Kartographie 31)

Recent works by contemporary critics on Pfeiffer include Hiltgund Jehle's Ida Pfeiffer. Weltreisende im 19. Jahrhundert, which offers extensive information about Pfeiffer's life and travels. Tamara Felden compares Pfeiffer's travel writings Fanny Lewald and Ida Hahn-Hahn. The latest biographies of Pfeiffer by Gabriele Habinger, Eine Wiener Biedermeierdame erobert die Welt, as well as Eka Donner's Und nirgend eine Karawane, were published in 1997, the centenary year of Pfeiffer's birth. Michaela Holdenried and Gabriela Habinger have studied her role as an ethnographer.<sup>17</sup>

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nach Madagaskar in 1980 (Jonas Verlag) and in 1991 under the title Verschörung im Regenwald (ed. Hiltgund Jehle).

<sup>17</sup> Further works on Pfeiffer include articles by Helga Watt Annegret Pelz (1981), Heidemarie Zienteck and Elke Frederiksen. Helga Watt writes about Pfeiffer's experiences and interests as woman travel writer. Pelz focuses on Pfeiffer's life before she

While giving extensive information on Pfeiffer's life, or studying her role as traveler or ethnographer, the biographical research neglects Pfeiffer's role as a writer. Furthermore, the critics who do focus on Pfeiffer as a writer portray her primarily as an adventurous and exceptional traveler who broke away from the gender role expectations of society. I am not disputing Ida Pfeiffer's accomplishments as a traveler. Nonetheless, I would like to focus more on her travel writings to see how her writing was shaped by the socio-political circumstances of her time. Instead of looking only for the autobiographical elements in Pfeiffer's writings, I will situate her texts in a wider theoretical framework of Orientalism and colonialism (as discussed in the first chapter), as well as in the historical context of the bourgeois ideal of femininity in nineteenth century German society (as discussed in the second chapter).

As modern readers, it is hard for us to assess the reliability of Pfeiffer's self-portrayal. The extent to which her self-portrayal is mitigated by social pressures, and the extent to which it is an indication of the internalization of the bourgeois gender ideal, is hard to determine. For example, Pfeiffer states in Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land that she is traveling for religious reasons. It is uncertain whether Pfeiffer was truly a religious person or whether she projects

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traveled to find her motivation behind traveling. Frederiksen compares her with other women travelers of nineteenth century, such as Hahn-Hahn, Lewald and Montagu. Zienteck gives a brief review of all the travelogues by Pfeiffer. In addition to

herself as a religious person because of social pressure. Nonetheless, reading Pfeiffer's texts in the context of the social life of German women in the nineteenth century, along with the biographical information on Pfeiffer's life, helps us understand her self-perception. This self-perception is a key element for the way she portrays people of other countries.

## **2. Non-autobiographical Approaches to Women's Travel**

### **Writing**

In Discourse of Difference Sara Mills takes a non-autobiographical approach to the analysis of travel writing by women. Explaining how women's travel writing has been analyzed by most critics, she concludes: "The way these texts have been read has been primarily 'realist', that is, they are not analyzed as textual artifacts, but rather as simple autobiographies" (4). She notes that she wants to "take these texts seriously, not simply to reduce them to biographical studies of exceptional spinsters" (6). The aim of her analysis is to show that "women's travel writing is constructed within a range of discursive pressures and in its reception it has frequently been labeled 'autobiographical'" (12). Mills thinks that this labeling should be seen as an attempt to deny women the status of creators of "cultural artifacts."

Mills explains that women travel writers wrote under "discursive pressures" that emerged from the power of patriarchy

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these, Jutta Duhm-Heitzmann and Jürgen Ostermeyer have written biographical newspaper articles on Pfeiffer.

and the power of colonialism. The power of patriarchy acted upon women through the definition of gender role divisions, whereas the power of colonialism acted upon them in relation to the people of the countries they describe in their books. Mills' framework enables us to see different forces at work in women's travel writing. However, the assumption in Mills' non-autobiographical approach that autobiographies are not "cultural artifacts" is questionable. Mills assumes autobiographies to be "simple" or "straightforward transcripts of the lives of the woman travellers" (36).

On the contrary, autobiographies by women are far from being simple. As Catherine Goodman points out, the autobiographer writes within a situation of defining plots, texts, or conventions. She further explains: "It is unquestionably useful in reading women's autobiography to be aware of which plots, texts, or conventions were current when the autobiography was written. For, like other autobiographers, women adopt those poses and plots for their life histories which are current and socially acceptable -- or indeed intellectually thinkable" (XI). For example, while reading Pfeiffer's travelogues, one has to take into consideration factors such as bourgeois gender ideology and the preconceptions in German society about the countries visited. These factors influence the pose she adopts in her writing. Thus autobiographies are as dynamic as other non-autobiographical literature, and approaching travel literature autobiographically by no means denies women literary prowess.

However, this should not lead us to conclude that the narrator in the travel writing and the writer as a person outside the text are identical. To take an example, by traveling alone to far away places, Pfeiffer broke away from the gender role expectations of nineteenth-century German society. While Pfeiffer was able to leave the "feminine" domain of family and house, I will argue that the narrator in her texts has to adhere to gender role expectations because of social pressures.

My approach to the travel writings by Pfeiffer and Hahn-Hahn is autobiographical. However, unlike the research on their texts so far, I will distinguish between the narrator in the text and the writer as person outside the text to demonstrate the complexity of autobiographical travel writing by women. The analysis in this chapter will show how and why the (seeming) contradictions arise between the narrator in Pfeiffer's text and Pfeiffer's self outside of text. The analysis is divided into two parts. The first part will deal with the way the narrator presents herself in the text. The second part is about the presentation of the Other. It includes the narrator's perception of the people of the countries she visits. Two major questions are involved in this discussion: How does the narrator's self-perception relate to her self-representation in the text and how does it influence her perception and presentation of the Other?

This analysis focuses on Pfeiffer's travelogues Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land and Eine Frau fährt um die Welt. The first work describes her travel to the Middle East; the

second focuses on her journey around the world. Pfeiffer traveled alone on both of these, as well as her other journeys, and became famous through the publication of her travel writings. The title of her first travelogue, Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land, reveals the fact that the author is a woman; however, it was published anonymously. Emboldened by the success of her first travelogue, she published her next travelogues, including Eine Frau fährt um die Welt, under her own name.

## **B. Self-representation in Pfeiffer's Travel Writing**

### **1. Motives For Travel**

In 1842 Pfeiffer set out for her journey to the Middle East. The title of the book about this journey, Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land, itself gives us the clue about the narrator's intentions. Pfeiffer is traveling for religious reasons. She states that the aim of her journey is "Jene Stellen zu erreichen, von welchen das wahre Licht der Menschheit ausging!" (48). After arriving in the town of Cäsarea she is overcome with strong religious feelings:

Ein ganz eigenes, nie gekanntes Gefühl erweckte es in mir, auch da zu gehen, wo Christus ging. Jeden Fleck, jedes Gebäude betrachtete ich mit doppeltem Interesse. Vielleicht, dachte ich, betrete ich dieselbe Stelle, dasselbe Haus, das einst von Jesus besucht wurde. Glücklich und selig kehrte ich auf unsere Barke zurück.  
(110)

Pfeiffer is ecstatic after arriving in Jerusalem. She describes the morning in Jerusalem as "der schönste Morgen meines Lebens" (124). The emotions leave her speechless:

Ich war so in Gedanken und in Lobpreisungen versunken, daß ich nicht sah und hörte, was um mich vorging. Und dennoch wäre es mir nicht möglich zu sagen, was ich alles dachte, was ich alles fühlte . . . . Ich . . . eilte in die Kirche, um mein Herz durch ein inniges Gebet zu erleichtern" (124-25).

By stating the aim of her journey to visit holy places the narrator appears to be a religious woman. In addition she also reiterates her faith in God on various occasions to stress her piety. While leaving from Constantinople to go to Jerusalem she seeks help in God: "Alles fremd! Doch ein Blick hinauf zu den Sternen, ein Gedanke: Du bist nicht allein, solange du an Gott hältst, senkte Ruhe in meine Seele, und bald gewann ich es über mich, mit stiller Heiterkeit alles zu beobachten, was um mich vorging" (84). As her ship leaves Constantinople, she prays for help: "Ich sandte ein kurzes, aber inniges Gebet zu Gott, ich flehte um seinen Schutz auf dieser gefährvollen, weiten Reise ..." (85). In this way, the narrator is presented as a pious person traveling to religious places. Writing about Pfeiffer's motivation behind her journey to the Holy Land, Tamara Felden notes: "...diese Reise Ida Pfeiffers [stellte] eine Pilgerinnenfahrt [dar]. Sie reiste nicht, wie etwa Hahn-Hahn, primär der interessanten, "frappanten" Erfahrung wegen, sondern um biblische Stätten zu besuchen. Sie will ihre religiösen Empfindungen durch die Zugabe realgeschichtlicher Bilder steigern" (98).

However, as Ida Pfeiffer's biographical sketch in the last chapter showed, Pfeiffer had been interested in travel ever since her childhood. She states in her Reise nach dem skandinavischen Norden und der Insel Island:

Schon als zartes Kind hatte ich die größte Sehnsucht hinaus in die Welt zu kommen. Begegnete ich einem Reisewagen, blieb ich unwillkürlich stehen, und sah ihm nach bis er meinen Blicken entschwunden war; ich beneidete sogar den Postillon, denn ich dachte, er habe die ganze große Reise mitgebracht. Als Mädchen von zehn, zwölf Jahren las ich nichts mit größerer Begierde, als Reisebeschreibungen, und beneidete zwar keinen Postillon mehr, wohl aber jeden Weltumsegler, jeden Naturforscher. (11)

One has to keep in mind that Reise einer Wienerin in das Heilige Land was Pfeiffer's first travelogue. Whether her journey to the Middle East was for religious reasons or not, it is likely that social pressure forced her to present herself as a pious bourgeois woman who was not traveling for her own pleasure. Even after describing the journey as religious, Pfeiffer feels the need to defend herself by explaining that she is traveling only after taking care of her household responsibilities:

Seit Jahren lebte der Wunsch in mir, eine Reise in das Heilige Land zu machen. Jahre gehörten dazu, um mit dem Gedanken eines so gewagten Unternehmern vertraut zu werden. Als daher meine häuslichen Verhältnisse sich so gestaltet hatten, daß ich mich wenigstens auf ein Jahr entfernen konnte, hatte ich nichts eifriger zu tun, als mich auf diese Reise vorzubereiten. (Reise einer Wienerin 9)

Traveling alone in foreign countries gave Pfeiffer freedom that was denied at home. She seems to be aware of this, as one can

see in a letter to her friend. She writes the letter in Constantinople on her way back home:

Ach, was werde ich noch hören bis ich nach Hause komme, statt mich zu freuen, fürchte ich mich gerade wie ein Schuljunge der wieder nach den Ferien in das Joch muß.- Doch in den sauren Apfel muß einmahl wieder gebießen werden, und so wollen wir den Biß herzhaft thun und Ende . . . oder Anfangs November heimkehren. (see Jelhe<sup>18</sup>, Ida Pfeiffer 62)

This clearly shows that Pfeiffer sees her journey as an opportunity to experience freedom that was denied at home. It was a fulfillment of her childhood dreams. But Pfeiffer is wary of admitting her enjoyment in the first travelogue since that would not have fit the gender role expectations in society. Thus the narrator poses as a dutiful wife and insists on the "proper purpose" of religion to justify the journey. It should be noted here that love of travel and religion are not mutually exclusive motivations for traveling. However, in Pfeiffer's case, the use of a religious motive appears to be a strategy to avoid public criticism, rather than the real reason for travel.

Hiltgund Jehle draws the conclusion: "Als Kernaussage bleibt: Ida Pfeiffer lebte, um zu reisen. Da sie mit ihren Reisen auch ihre Existenz sicherte, läßt sich umgekehrt ebenso sagen: sie reiste, um zu leben" (67). Considering the fact that in seventeen years Pfeiffer traveled 150,000 miles on sea and 20,000 miles on land (Zienteck 47) it might be true that she

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<sup>18</sup> Jehle quotes from several unpublished letters by Pfeiffer that are available in various archives in Germany and Austria.

lived in order to travel. Nonetheless, in spite of all the journeys that Pfeiffer accomplished in real life, the narrator in her text has to justify her first journey by giving a socially acceptable reason.

Thus Pfeiffer's self outside the text and the narrator in her text are not identical. In the world outside the text, Pfeiffer broke away from gender norms. However, the narrator in her text is forced to hold on to these norms because of societal pressures. This leads to conflict and ambiguity in Pfeiffer's writing as I will now demonstrate.

## **2. Gender Ambiguity**

While writing about nineteenth-century women travel writers, Shirley Foster points out that as women became able to travel more widely and more independently, they were taking on the attributes of strength, initiative and decisiveness that were considered "masculine." At the same time they retained the less aggressive qualities considered appropriate to their own sex. Foster calls this a "position of gender ambiguity" (11).

As we saw in the second chapter, the female domain was related to the private sphere of family, whereas the male domain was related to the public sphere. By traveling alone to places far away and writing about those journeys, these women left the female domain and stepped into territory ruled mainly by men. In doing so, many tried to adopt the voice of the male travel

writer. Linda Worley describes the difficulty that the women travel writers faced in adopting the male voice:

Since men were assumed to possess such characteristics as activity, energy, independence, and intellectual prowess to be used in public life and the wide world, their travel and any writing based on these travels were fully in harmony with society's expectations. This situation was quite different from women for whom travel meant leaving the postulated 'female' sphere, a sphere limited to the interior realm and domestic life. Women travellers would thus most likely have felt conflict between their need to fulfill cultural expectations which viewed them as the weak, passive 'other', and their deliberate entrance, perhaps even escape, into a world of danger and difficulty, a world of travel to faraway places. Women's travel narratives reflect these tensions, tensions missing in men's narratives. (40)

Women travel writers took on the masculine attributes of strength and decisiveness to represent their rebellious selves that had broken away from the gender barriers to travel to different places. The genre of travel writing which was dominated by male writers and the situation of travel required women to the male voice. However, they were aware that the act of taking on the male voice was against societal gender expectations. In order to compensate for their deviance from the gender role, they also felt the need to express their feminine side in their writing. This conflict between the expression of masculine traits of adventure and independence on the one hand and the pressure to exhibit the feminine virtues of dependence and passivity on the other hand is reflected in their texts.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that the pressure of social expectations on women writers that lead to conflict in

their writing was not equal for all women. We should not assume that all of them necessarily wrote in a similar way because of their gender. The way they dealt with this conflict differed according to their socio-economic background. We will see in this chapter that as a bourgeois woman, Ida Pfeiffer felt pressure to conform to the gender norms. The next chapter will show that Ida Hahn-Hahn, who was an aristocrat, felt this pressure to a lesser extent.

Coming from a bourgeois family, Pfeiffer had limited financial support for her journey. The small amount of money that Pfeiffer had at her disposal made her journey more difficult and thus more adventurous. Pfeiffer collected samples of flora and fauna and sold them later on to get money for her future journeys. She was also dependent on the income from the sale of her books. Pfeiffer financed her travels, in part, with the money she earned by writing and selling her books. The pressure to sell her books might have been one of the reasons why Pfeiffer conformed to gender role expectations in her travel writing. By conforming to the gender roles Pfeiffer tries to be acceptable to the readers. I will now demonstrate how Pfeiffer tries to balance the masculine features in her travel writing with proper feminine features.

#### **a. Entering the Male Domain**

Bourgeois gender ideology in the nineteenth century emphasized the role of women in the family. It defined women as

being passive, weak and dependent. Women were expected to be religious, industrious and modest, whereas men were described as independent, brave and having willpower. Rationality was considered a masculine trait possessed only by men. By traveling alone to different places, Ida Pfeiffer entered the male domain of public life. She was seeking a place in the tradition of travel writing that was dominated mainly by men. In order to describe her adventurous experiences Pfeiffer had to take on attributes that were considered masculine.

### **(1). Objectivity**

Although the number of women travelers was increasing in the nineteenth century, they were still not considered serious travelers as were their male counterparts. Gabriele Habinger points out that:

Große Reisende, Forscher und Entdecker waren Männer -  
...Sicherlich unternahmen weniger Frauen [als Männer]  
Reisen, über die sie Berichte verfassen hätten können,  
weil ihnen die dafür förderlichen Berufe wie Gesandter,  
Arzt, Missionar, Schiffskapitän oder nur einfacher  
Seefahrer nicht zugänglich waren. Als Naturforscher kamen  
Frauen ebenfalls nicht in Frage, da das Studium der  
Naturwissenschaften nicht in dem Bereich der weiblichen  
Bildung fiel . . . . (Aufbruch ins Ungewisse 249)

Pfeiffer collected samples of plants and animals on her journey around the world (Eine Frau fährt 16,36) but she does not identify her journey as scientific. Pfeiffer's presentation of the narrator as a religious observer denies any scientific objectivity to the text that her male counterpart as a scientific observer would have enjoyed. Thus Pfeiffer has to

claim objectivity explicitly and include certain elements only for the purpose of the validation of her account. In Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land, she claims: "Ich schildere alles, wie ich es finde, wie es meinen Augen erschien, ungeschmückt, aber wahr" (25). In Eine Frau fährt um die Welt she only wants to be "wahrhaft" and "getreu" (326). In her efforts to appear objective, she avoids exaggeration. Thus, her reaction to many places and monuments is that of disappointment rather than of overwhelming emotions. Pfeiffer visits the Sultan's palace in Constantinople full of expectations. However, the palace fails to meet her expectations: "Mit der gespanntesten Neugierde begab ich mich dahin, um abermal wieder viel weniger zu sehen und zu finden, als ich gehofft hatte . . . . Meine Erwartung war bald enttäuscht!" (Reise einer Wienerin 58). Pfeiffer is also disappointed with the coffee shops in Constantinople. She expects to see elegant coffee shops, but after visiting one of them, she writes: "der Eintritt in das erste [Kaffeehaus] nahm mir aber sogleich diesen Wahn" (60). She is not even impressed by the pyramids near Cairo: "Auch hier war meine Erwartung und Vorstellung, die ich mir von ihnen gemacht hatte, viel größer gewesen; ich fand diese Riesenwerke nicht so überraschend" (288). This approach of presenting the information with restraint supports the narrator's claim of objectivity.

Pfeiffer emphasizes her own objectivity by criticizing other travel writers for exaggeration and by setting herself apart from them: "Doch sah ich genug, um mich auch hier wieder

zu überzeugen, daß Übertreibung oder Poesie so manche Feder weit über die Wahrheit hinaus leitet" (Reise einer Wienerin 187). As we will see, Pfeiffer gives numerous accounts of adventures in her texts but she doubts the truthfulness of other travel writers when doing the same: "Ich möchte beinahe glauben, daß manche Reisende Raubanfälle und gefährvolle Begebenheiten, die sie nicht erlebt haben, bloß deshalb beschreiben, um ihren Erzählungen mehr Interesse zu verleihen" (Reise einer Wienerin 231). Pfeiffer's skeptical position toward other travel writers underscores her claims of objectivity. Speaking about claims of objectivity by Pfeiffer, Michaela Holdenried notes: "In ihrem Bemühen, nicht zu fabulieren wie andere Reisende, verkehrt sich das Gesehene, ohne noch den Schock der Enttäuschung zu reflektieren, in den Jargon des pseudoaufgeklärten Reiseführers" (162). This "pseudo-enlightened" jargon can be seen as Pfeiffer writes:

Überhaupt pflegen viele Reisende in ihren Erzählungen sehr zu übertreiben; einerseits beschreiben sie oft Sachen, die sie selbst gar nicht gesehen haben und nur vom Hörensagen kennen. Andererseits statten sie die Erscheinungen, die ihnen wirklich vorkommen, mit etwas gar zu viel Phantasie aus. (Eine Frau fährt 62)

By posing as an objective narrator in her texts, Pfeiffer avoids 'emotionality', which was considered feminine.

## **(2) . Crossing the Gender Line**

Pfeiffer seems to be aware that she has broken gender stereotypes. She knows that public opinion was against women

traveling alone. She describes the reaction of her friends to her plan to travel alone to the Middle East:

Vergebens suchten meine Verwandten und Freunde, mich von diesem Vorsatz abzubringen. Höchst lebhaft stellte man mir all die Gefahren und Beschwerden vor, die den Reisenden dort erwarten. Männer hätten Ursache zu bedenken, ob ihr Körper die Mühen aushalten könne und ob ihr Geist den Mut habe, dem Klima, der Pest, den Plagen der Insekten, der schlechten Nahrung usw. kühn die Stirn zu bieten. Und dann erst eine Frau! So ganz allein, ohne alle Stütze hinauszuwandern in die weite Welt, über Berg und Tal und Meer, ach, das wäre unmöglich. Dies war die Meinung meiner Freunde. (Reise einer Wienerin 9)

When Pfeiffer starts her journey from Vienna to Constantinople on a ship, she becomes an object of curiosity: "Bald hörte man vom Schiffskapitän, daß eine Frau auf dem Schiff sei, die bis Konstantinopel zu reisen gedenke, und nun betrachtete man mich von allen Seiten" (Reise einer Wienerin 11). During her journey to Syria, Pfeiffer describes how one Englishman comes to her because he wants to meet: "eine so wackere Frau, die es wagen könne, eine so große, beschwerliche Reise ganz allein zu unternehmen . . ." (Reise einer Wienerin 101). Pfeiffer is an object of curiosity not only for the people traveling with her on the ship, but also for the native people of the country she is visiting. Later on in her journey she ascribes the curiosity of the native women upon seeing her to her gender:

Selten wohl mag eine Europäerin in diese Gegenden kommen, ich mußte daher den Eingeborenen ein ungewöhnlicher Anblick sein. Deshalb kamen auch an jedem Ort, wo wir anhielten viele Weiber und Kinder zu mir, betrachteten mich von allen Seiten, betasteten meine Kleider, setzten meinen Strohhut auf und sprachen oder deuteten beständig mit mir" (Reise einer Wienerin 212).

The reaction of the native people upon seeing Pfeiffer was typical of many native people to Europeans, but Pfeiffer views this as exceptional because of her gender. Pfeiffer's frequent references to her gender emphasize that this was not a usual journey, but a journey alone by a woman. This promises her reader implicitly a novelty in the text and makes her travelogues perhaps more marketable.

By emphasizing the fact that she was traveling alone as a woman, Pfeiffer creates expectations of potential dangers and adventures in the reader. By telling stories of other Europeans who have been killed or robbed while traveling, Pfeiffer points out the danger involved in the journey. The fear of not coming home alive is expressed at the very beginning of her journey to the Middle East : "Ich machte mein Testament, bestellte alles derart, daß im Fall des Todes, worauf ich mehr gefaßt sein mußte als auf eine glückliche Rückkehr, die Meinigen alles in bester Ordnung fänden" (Reise einer Wienerin 10). A similar threat to her life is also expressed in her journey around the world. However she does not seem to be disturbed by the prospect of her possible death. She simply writes: "Deshalb sandte ich auch so hier meine Papiere und Schriften nach Europa, daß, wenn ich ausgeraubt oder getötet würde, doch wenigstens mein Tagebuch in die Hände meiner Söhne gelangen möchte" (Eine Frau fährt 202). By caring more for journal than for her life, Pfeiffer assumes the masculine trait of intrepidity and implies that writing is more important to her than life.

### **(3). Authoritative Narrative Figure**

The expectations about tales of adventure that are awakened in the reader are fulfilled by various episodes described in the texts. The narrator in Pfeiffer's Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land and Eine Frau fährt um die Welt is a strong, determined figure who battles against extreme hardship and rarely loses face even in difficult situations. Pfeiffer has constant control over the situation as well as over the native people involved in the situation. There are numerous episodes of attacks and acts of aggression by native people in which Pfeiffer always has the upper hand. In Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land, Pfeiffer describes an incident near Jerusalem where she is attacked by a native man. While Pfeiffer is walking outside the city with another European whom she has met during her journey, a native man approaches them and asks for money. Upon their refusal to give him any money, the man attacks them. However, they manage to avoid being robbed by running away. Pfeiffer concludes from this: "daß Franken die Stadt nie allein verlassen sollten" (138). Pfeiffer describes a similar incident in Eine Frau fährt um die Welt. While Pfeiffer is in Brazil, she is attacked by a native man on her way to the German colony in Petropolis. Pfeiffer fights this man off with her umbrella and her knife. Even after getting hurt in this fight, she continues with her journey to Petropolis. She carries a gun to protect herself from future attacks. By using physical force to protect herself, Pfeiffer aligns herself

explicitly with the masculine characteristics of adventure and force.

In her journey around the world Pfeiffer describes her experiences in China. On her way to a tea factory in Canton, she confronts Chinese people who shout at her and follow her. Pfeiffer is undaunted by their protest and keeps on traveling alone: "Ich schritt furchtlos weiter, und vielleicht gerade weil ich keine Furcht zeigte, geschah mir auch nichts" (Eine Frau fährt 97). In spite of the obvious dislike of the Chinese toward Europeans, Pfeiffer forces her way into a tea factory, in a part of the city ordinarily off limits to Europeans. Apparently she feels that the Chinese pose no threat to her. The narrator thus emerges as an authoritative figure.

In Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land Pfeiffer is convinced that her willpower can take her anywhere: "Oft, wenn ich so einsam meinen Gedanken nachhänge, kann ich es selbst kaum glauben, daß mich Mut und Ausdauer in keiner Lage verließen und daß ich meinem vergesteckten Ziel Schritt vor Schrittt entgegenging. Dies dient mir zur Überzeugung, daß der Mensch mit festem Willen beinahe Unmögliches leisten kann" (257). Pfeiffer's constant control over the situations establishes her power, which leads Pfeiffer to say "Überall und jederzeit setzte ich meinen Willen durch. Ich fand, daß Energie und Furchtlosigkeit allen Leuten imponiert, sie mögen Araber, Perser, Beduinen oder wie sie immer heißen" (Reise einer Wienerin 253).

By emphasizing her belief in her willpower, her readiness to face adventures and her independence throughout the journey, Pfeiffer presents the narrator as a person with masculine strengths.

#### **b. Stepping Back to the Female Domain**

By writing travelogues, Pfeiffer enters the male domain and thus has to assume male stance to describe her adventures. However, this masculine stance of the narrator is not consistent throughout the texts. Instead, the male voice is interrupted by reminders that the narrator still believes in bourgeois gender ideology. These reminders appear in the form of various strategies, such as the use of a feminine genre, the diary, the topos of modesty, and references to topics related to the family sphere. Pfeiffer uses these strategies to make her texts appear feminine. The reminders are woven skillfully into the texts along with all the tales of adventure and suspense. As a result, the narrative stance is neither clearly masculine nor feminine. This position of gender ambiguity offers Pfeiffer a shield against public criticism that she might have faced for breaking away from gender norms.

To a certain extent, Pfeiffer's feminine narrative stance might have been a result of her internalization of bourgeois gender ideals. However, she broke away from gender role expectations by living separately from her husband and then traveling alone all over the world. This suggests that Pfeiffer

rather uses the feminine stance as a literary device in order to be accepted by society. Getting accepted in society was important for Pfeiffer because she was dependent on the income from her books. If Pfeiffer had projected the narrator only with masculine traits, then she could have been exposed to public criticism for breaking away from gender norms. This might have affected the sale of her books negatively.

I will now demonstrate the strategies which Pfeiffer uses to make her text appear feminine.

### **(1). Genre of Diary**

By traveling alone to different places and by writing about those travels, Pfeiffer was breaking away from gender norms. She was stepping outside the private domain of family and breaking the cultural taboo against women as public speakers. Sara Mills points out that during the nineteenth-century, travel writing was especially problematic for women since "by writing about traveling, the women authors were bringing upon themselves criticism for both the writing and for the travels which they represented" (41). Pfeiffer tries to lessen the criticism by choosing the form of a diary for both of the travelogues, Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land and Eine Frau fährt um die Welt.

Certain literary forms, such as letters or journals suggested a private or domestic orientation. For many women writers, these literary forms provided a way to compensate for

their deviation from gender roles. These genres were considered not only forms of expression reserved for the private sphere, but low-status genres as well.<sup>19</sup> Speaking about the form of a diary, Linda Anderson asserts that this form

has offered the woman the possibility of laying claim to writing while allaying the anxieties of actual publication. Poised ambivalently between private and public statement, it can also be seen as a process, rooted in the private dimension of living which does not take as its goal or form from its status as social and cultural artifact . . . the diary for many writers can be regarded as a symptom of restriction, giving a provisional voice to women who were denied confident access to public expression. (60-61)

The form of a diary suggests that the only audience is the author him/herself. However, when it was used as a literary device by women, the audience also included the readers. This becomes obvious in Pfeiffer's travelogues, in which she offers advice to her readers regarding food and transportation. In Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land, for example, she advises the readers:

Bevor man mit dergleichen Menschen wie Barkenführern, Eseltreibern, Trägern usw. in Verkehr kommt, tut man sehr gut, sich um den Preis zu erkundigen, den man für solche Dienstleistungen zu zahlen hat. Man [muß] die erste Gabe immer sehr klein einrichten, um noch etwas für das Trinkgeld zu bewahren. (103)

She gives tips about the food that one should bring along on the journey. She recommends: "Dem, welcher mit Kindern reist, würde ich ganz besonders eine Ziege mitzunehmen empfehlen" (Eine Frau fährt 9). She suggests remedies for

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<sup>19</sup> For more on the 'female genres' in the nineteenth century see the section 'Genre of Letters' in chapter 4.

common sicknesses related to a journey on the ship (Eine Frau fährt 74). With her suggestions, she hopes to help inexperienced readers who might want to travel (Eine Frau fährt 10).

At times, she reveals her emotions to the reader. She describes how the farewell from her friends in Vienna was hard for her (Reise einer Wienerin 10). She describes how lonely she feels during her journey from Constantinople to Jerusalem (84). Pfeiffer gives an impression that the narrator has affinity with the readers instead of authority over them. In this way, she uses the diary form as a formal device to create a private or domestic atmosphere.

## **(2). Topos of Modesty**

Speaking of nineteenth-century women travel writers, Shirley Foster discusses various approaches that they employed in order to assure the readers of their womanliness. She notes: "Most importantly, the women travel writers have to substitute self-effacement or self-mockery for more aggressive or positive assertiveness in order to demonstrate a true femininity. In the first place, they prove their modesty by claiming that they never intended to expose their writings to the common gaze" (19). For example, Pfeiffer claims in Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land that the work was never meant to be published, rather her friends insisted on publishing it: "Verwandte und

Freunde wünschten die Begebenheiten meiner einsamen Wanderung lesen. Jedem konnte ich mein Tagebuch nicht zusenden, so wagte ich es denn auf vieles Zureden meiner Freunde, meine Erlebnisse ungeschmückt zu veröffentlichen" (313). Pfeiffer's claim that she never meant to publish the journal which she had kept during her journey to the Holy Land seems to contradict the dialogue style of the journal. The dialogue style of the journal asserts that Pfeiffer must have assumed a wider audience for her journal. Thus it is likely that the claim that she never meant to publish her journal is simply a device used to prove her modesty.

Since Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land was the first travelogue by Ida Pfeiffer, she might have been genuinely uneasy about sharing her experiences publicly. However, in the light of the numerous other references to her modesty in her first as well as the other travelogue, Eine Frau fährt um die Welt, this hesitance to publish can not be taken at face value.

By the time Pfeiffer published Eine Frau fährt um die Welt, she had become a successful travel writer. In spite of her success, one sees apologetic modesty on her part instead of self-assurance. She ends her book by saying: "Meine Leser aber ersuche ich, ein mildes Urteil über mein Buch zu fällen, das mit einfachen Worten schildert, was ich erlebt, gesehen und gefühlt habe, und keine höhern Ansprüche macht, als wahrhaft und getreu zu sein" (Eine Frau fährt 326). She is not only modest about her writing, but she is also unwilling to acknowledge herself as a traveler: "Schon in mehreren Zeitungen ward ich Touristin

genannt; dieser Name gebührt mir indessen, seiner gewöhnlichen Bedeutung nach, leider nicht" (5). The term 'Touristin' implied traveling for self-pleasure. Pfeiffer did not want to confess that she was traveling to seek pleasure.

In Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land, she emphatically denies that she is an author and distinguishes herself from contemporary women writers whom she refers to as "geistreiche Frauen":

Ich bin keine Schriftstellerin, ich habe nie etwas anderes als Briefe geschrieben, mein Tagebuch kann daher nicht als literarisches Werk betrachtet werden. Es ist eine einfache Erzählung, in der ich alles beschreibe, wie es mir vorkam ...; darum ersuche ich alle meine geneigten Leser und Leserinnen um gütige Nachsicht, denn ich wiederhole es noch einmal: ferne ist mir der Dünkel, mich in die Reihen jener geistreichen Frauen drängen zu wollen, denen schon in der Wiege der Weihekuß der Musen ward.  
(313)

By denying that she is an author and refusing to categorize her travelogue as a literary work, Pfeiffer hopes to be judged leniently by her readers. Admitting that she was an author would have meant taking a center stage position in the public sphere. Although Pfeiffer is stepping out in the public domain by traveling in her real life, she wants the narrator to appear to be staying in the private domain assigned to women. She stresses that her writing is merely a subjective account of her experiences. Pfeiffer's assertion about the subjectivity of her writing contradicts her claims of objectivity. This contradiction indicates the complexity of the task, in which Pfeiffer tries to balance the projected femininity and masculinity in her texts.

To emphasize that she is not an author, she notes on several occasions her limitations as a writer. Sometimes she confesses her inability to describe nature : "Erst einige Tage später machte ich diesen Ausflug . . . und genoß da in vollen Zügen Ansichten und Bilder, die ich nicht vermögend bin zu beschreiben" (Reise einer Wienerin 36). Later, she adds: ". . . ich war glücklich beim Anblick dieser wunderbaren morgenländischen Bilder und hätte nur gewünscht, ein Dichter zu sein, um dieses Wundervolle, herrlich schildern zu können" (38); or: "Dieses herrliche Bild wird nie meinem Gedächtnis entschwinden, wenn ich gleich nicht die Kraft besitze, es zu schildern" (52). On other occasions she is unable to describe her feelings: "Und dennoch wäre es mir nicht möglich zu sagen, was ich alles dachte, was ich alles fühlte. Zu groß war mein Gefühl, zu arm und kalt ist meine Sprache, es auszudrücken" (Reise einer Wienerin 124). Rather than an indication of Pfeiffer's writing talent, these reminders are devices used by her to project her modesty.

In addition to being modest about her writing skills, Pfeiffer disclaims any political or scientific expertise. In the introduction to Eine Frau fährt um die Welt, Pfeiffer writes: "Einerseits besitze ich zu wenig Witz und Laune, um unterhaltend zu schreiben, und andererseits zu wenig Kenntnisse, um über das Erlebte gediegene Urteile fällen zu können . . . .Will ich etwas beurteilen, so kann ich es bloß von dem Standpunkt einfacher Anschauung aus" (5).

While describing the living conditions of black people in Brazil she sympathizes with them. She writes about the lack of education among black people and their exploitation by the white rulers. But she adds that these are just her speculations. She is not an expert on this subject and thus has no right to opinion: "Aber ich versteige mich in Vermutungen und Abhandlungen, die wohl gelehrten Männern zukommen, nicht aber mir, die ich die dazu nötige Bildung durchaus nicht besitze; mein Zweck ist: nur einfach meine Anschauungen darzulegen" (Eine Frau fährt 28). By disclaiming any scientific or political expertise, Pfeiffer compensates for the 'masculine' objectivity and stresses that her texts are feminine subjective observations.

### **(3). Domestic Issues**

Another way for Pfeiffer to foreground her femininity is to talk about topics that were supposed to be proper for women. These were matters related to the private sphere of home and family life. It would be questionable to argue that only women travel writers showed interest in the domestic issues and that male travel writers did not show any interest in the social customs of a foreign land. However, women writers used discussion about domestic issues as a device to express their feminine voice. They were expected to remain in the private sphere of domestic life. Thus they had to assert their interest

in the "female domain" explicitly, even if they had forced an entry into the "male domain" by traveling.

Pfeiffer's texts contain constant references to clothes and food. She provides practical advice to her readers about which clothes one should wear and what food one should take on a journey. She describes in detail the kind of food that one should expect to get on a ship journey and advises her readers:

Um sich die Kost zu verbessern, besonders bei einer längeren Reise, tut man sehr wohl, sich mit einigen Aushilfsmitteln zu versehen. Die zweckmäßigsten sind: Suppenglace und feiner Zwieback; beide verwahre man in Blechkästchen, um Feuchtigkeit und Ameisen davon abzuhalten - ferner eine tüchtige Portion Eier, die man aber, wenn die Reise in südliche Gegenden geht, zuvor in starkes Kalkwasser tauchen oder in Steinkohlenstaub verpacken muß; dann Reis, Kartoffeln, Zucker, Butter, und alle Ingredienzien zur Bereitung von Weinsuppe und Kartoffelsalat. Erstere ist sehr stärkend, letzterer sehr kühlend. (Eine Frau fährt 9)

Pfeiffer also advises the readers to bring their own bedding (Eine Frau fährt 9). She suggests that one should bring colored clothes rather than white on the journey because sailors, who usually do the laundry, are not good at it (Eine Frau fährt 9). Detailed instructions regarding matters that are related to the domestic sphere of the home project Pfeiffer as an experienced housewife. While spending time in private family homes she learns about culinary habits and describes them in detail (Reise einer Wienerin 103,114,127,167,188). She also observes how children are raised in these families. She talks about the clothes and ornaments of the native women (Reise einer Wienerin 116,150).

During Pfeiffer's stay in India, she meets a British woman. Pfeiffer praises this woman as "eine der ausgezeichnetesten ihres Geschlechtes" (Eine Frau fährt 145). Pfeiffer describes how the British woman had done charity work by collecting money for needy people in Ireland. However, it is more important for Pfeiffer that she was fulfilling her role in the family: "Außerdem ist sie die zärtlichste Gattin und Mutter, lebt nur in ihrer Familie, kümmert sich wenig um die Außenwelt und wird deshalb von der großen Menge ein Original genannt. Gäbe es doch nur viele solche Originale!" (Eine Frau fährt 145). By praising a woman whose most important role in life was of a housewife and a mother, Pfeiffer conveys the message that she believes in the bourgeois gender role division. While breaking away from gender norms, Pfeiffer tries to hold onto a proper ladylike image.

### 3. Conclusion

On the one hand, Pfeiffer's self-representation in Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land and Eine Frau fährt um die Welt is shaped by her rebellious self that breaks away from the prescribed gender roles. On the other hand, it is shaped by the societal pressure that forces Pfeiffer to adopt a feminine voice. Out of her need to be acceptable, Pfeiffer pretends to be the weaker sex and describes herself as 'die arme Verlassene' (Reise einer Wienerin 261) or 'hilflos einzelstehende Frau' (Reise einer Wienerin 39). After finding a male companion for a

part of her journey to the Holy Land she feels secure: " Und so stand ich nun nicht mehr ohne Schutz in der weiten Welt, ich war geborgen bis Jerusalem, was wollte ich mehr?" (87). However, Pfeiffer is not successful in her attempts to hide her rebellious self under the pretense of feminine weakness. As a result, her self-representation becomes contradictory.

The dichotomy in the self-presentation in Pfeiffer's texts can also be seen in the contemporary commentaries on her. It shows the commentators' need to place Pfeiffer as a woman writer and her achievement in the appropriate feminine context. In the introduction to Pfeiffer's Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land, Alexander von Humboldt praises her perseverance during the journey. More importantly, however, he finds the simplicity and modesty in her texts: "Diese Frau ist nicht bloß berühmt durch die edle Ausdauer, welche sie inmitten so vieler Gefahren und Entbehrungen zweimal um die Welt geführt hat, sondern vor allem durch die liebenswürdige Einfachheit und Bescheidenheit, die in ihren Werken vorherrschen" (7). He acknowledges her truthfulness and clarity of judgment but at the same time does not fail to mention her sensitivity and the tenderness of her emotions. By stressing the "feminine" virtues of modesty, simplicity and tenderness in Pfeiffer he makes her acceptable for the readers and for himself.

Another example of the ambivalent opinion on Pfeiffer is in W. H. Davenport Adam's Celebrated Women Travellers of the Nineteenth Century (1883). He praises Ida Pfeiffer for her courage and perseverance. He describes her as "a woman of

scarcely less heroic temper than the boldest adventurers of the other sex" (253). At the same time, he assures the readers of Pfeiffer's femininity. He confirms that despite the "masculine attire" Pfeiffer wore in Tahiti, she is not at all mannish (229).

Pfeiffer presents the narrator as a person with feminine qualities because of the pressure from society. In this sense the narrator is in part being defined by bourgeois gender ideology. This ideology defined women as the symbolic inferior Other. It placed her in a position inferior to men in the patriarchal society at home.

Away from the patriarchal society at home Pfeiffer is no longer the inferior Other. She observes and defines the non-European people in a way that secures her a position of superiority. Pfeiffer creates images of the native culture and people that are colonial in nature, as we will now see in her representation of the non-European Other in her texts.

### **C. Representation of the Other**

In travel writing, the way the 'Other' is portrayed tells us more about the preconceptions of the writer than it provides information about the Other. In this sense, presentation of the Other is, if only in an indirect way, presentation of Self to a certain extent. Ida Pfeiffer's portrayal of the non-Europeans reveals her attitude of superiority toward them.

Speaking of the relation between women's travel writing and colonialism, Sara Mills concludes that "women travellers could not wholeheartedly speak with the voice of colonial discourse, at least not consistently" (106). Mills thinks that because of women's subordinate role in western society, they had "few discursive places within western colonial institutions" (106). She argues: "whereas men could describe their travel as individuals and as representatives of the colonial power, women could only travel and write as gendered individuals with clearly delineated roles" (103).

However, Pfeiffer's description of the Other will show that her subordinate role in the patriarchal German society at home did not hinder her from assuming a superior position over the non-Europeans. Once she was away from home, she assumed her European identity and adopted a colonial stance towards the Other.

### **1. Moral Superiority**

Pfeiffer establishes her authority through demonstrations of moral superiority. She finds the Tahitians "ausgelassen und sittenlos" (Eine Frau fährt 80) and their dances indecent. After watching the Arabs perform a dance she concludes that they are backward in many areas of life:

Oft, wenn Windstille eintrat, lagerten sich unsere Araber auf den Boden, bildeten einen Kreis, sangen Lieder, die aber so eintönig und harmonielos klangen, als man es sich nur denken kann; dazu klatschten sie in die Hände und erhoben zeitweise ein hölzernes Gelächter dazu. Ich fand nicht nur nichts Anziehendes an dieser Unterhaltung, im Gegenteil, es machte auf mich einen melancholischen

Eindruck, zu sehen, wie weit diese guten Menschen noch in allem zurück sind. (Reise einer Wienerin 110)

By describing the Arabs as backward, Pfeiffer distances herself from them and consigns them to another time sphere which belongs to the past. Pfeiffer is influenced by the European idea of progress that considered Europe as modern and thus progressive, whereas the non-Europeans, especially the "Orientals," were seen as primitive and thus at a lower stage of improvement. The industrial countries in Europe were considered civilized, whereas the non-European countries with agricultural economies were seen as backward.

Pfeiffer portrays the other places she visits in terms of abhorrent smells, filthiness and poverty to differentiate them from her homeland. She complains about Constantinople saying that: "Schmutz und Gestank, die man überall antrifft, die engen, häßlichen Gassen, das ewige Bergauf- und Bergabsteigen auf den schlechtesten Wegen verleidet nur zu schnell den Aufenthalt in dieser Stadt" (Reise einer Wienerin 47). After coming to Jaffa, she finds: "Die Stadt gleicht an Schmutz, Unebenheiten und dergleichen allen bisher gesehenen" (Reise einer Wienerin 112). People in the other nations are presented as inferior to Westerners -- they have neither decency, cleanliness nor moral principles.

Even when the native people are described in a positive way, the qualifiers in such description modify the positive description. On her way from Damascus to Baalbek, Pfeiffer is accompanied by native people. She finds them friendly and good-

natured. However, she refers to them as 'Naturmensch' and accuses them of stealing: " Der Charakter dieser Naturmenschen ist im ganzen recht gemütlich. Freundlich und gefällig betrugen sie sich gegen uns . . . Nur der Begriff von mein und dein scheint ihnen nicht immer deutlich zu sein (Reise einer Wienerin 223-4). Speaking about the native people in a village on her way to Baalbek she notes: ". . . wohl aber in diesen Tälern, wo die Natur alles beut, was der Mensch bedarf . . . stiehlt dies freie Volk hier so gut wie die Beduinen und Araber" (Reise einer Wienerin 237). The native people are described as "Naturmenschen," implying that they are ruled by laws of nature rather than reason. They are characterized by a lack of rational order.<sup>20</sup>

Pfeiffer produces personalized accounts of relations with the native people only to show her superiority to them. While staying with an Arab family, Pfeiffer tries to teach discipline and cleanliness to the family members. The natives are described as underdeveloped and uneducated people who are ready to be enlightened by her: "Sie ließen sich gerne belehren, sahen ihre Fehler ein und gaben mir stets Recht, wenn ich ihnen etwas sagte und erklärte" (Eine Frau fährt 267). Pfeiffer is not only observant but she tries to "correct" their ways. This shows that she is clearly influenced by the missionary movement. This movement represented another important aspect of European "superiority" -- Christianity. The missionary movement saw it

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<sup>20</sup> For more on the topos of 'Naturmensch' and the 'noble savage' see the discussion about Hahn-Hahn's description of the Bedouins

as the duty of Christians to convert the "heathens". It was thought to be a religious and moral duty to bring civilization to the 'primitive' people.

Pfeiffer encounters many missionaries on her journey around the world. She writes about her idealistic understanding of the missionary movement:

Nach meiner Meinung stellte ich mir die Missionäre als halbe, wo nicht als ganze Märtyrer vor, und dachte sie mir von dem Eifer und dem Wunsche, die Heiden zu bekehren, so beseelt, daß sie gleich den Jüngern Christi ihre Bequemlichkeiten und Bedürfnisse ganz vergäßen, daß sie nur mit dem Volke leben, mit ihm unter einem Dache wohnten, aus einer Schüssel äßen usw. ( Eine Frau fährt 281)

But Pfeiffer is unsatisfied with the ways the missionaries work in reality. She thinks that their European clothing and their elegant living style create fear and caution instead of love and friendship towards the missionaries in the hearts of the native people. She suggests: "Die Missionäre müßten wie Väter, wie Freunde mit und unter dem Volk wohnen, mit ihm arbeiten, kurz seine Mühen und Freuden teilen, es durch einen musterhaften, bescheidenen Lebenswandel an sich ziehen und nach und nach mit einem fäßlichen Unterricht belehren" (Eine Frau fährt 282). Pfeiffer criticizes the missionaries not for their purpose of converting the native people, but for the ways the missionaries work. She shares their belief in the superiority of Christianity and hopes that they can "improve" the native people: "Welch schönes Feld stände den Missionären offen, wenn sie sich dazu bequemen wollten, unter diesen Menschen zu wohnen

und zu leben und ihre Fehler mit Liebe und Geduld zu bekämpfen!"  
(Eine Frauen fährt 268).

Pfeiffer considers this white man's burden to be literally a white *man's* burden only. She thinks that European women are unfit to do missionary work. She writes:

. . . das europäische Mädchen, das sich zur Missionärin bildet, wählt diesen Stand häufig nur, um so schnell als möglich versorgt zu werden. Hat die junge europäische Frau einige Kinder, wird sie schwach und kränklich, dann kann sie ihrem Beruf nicht mehr nachkommen und bedarf einer Luftveränderung, wohl gar einer Reise nach Europa. Auch die Kinder sind Schwächlinge und müssen ...ebenfalls dahin gebracht werden . . . Und wer bezahlt dies alles? - Oft arme, gläubige Seelen in Europa und Nordamerika . . .  
(282)

She suggests that a missionary should marry a native woman so that the money that is spent on the European woman missionaries can be saved. Pfeiffer's harsh judgment about the European women missionaries shows that she is more concerned about the missionary movement than about a chance for the members of her own sex to step outside family life.

Similar to Pfeiffer's criticism of the missionary work is her criticism of the British rule in India. Referring to the Britisher's treatment of Indian people she notes: "Wo der Europäer hinkommt, will er nicht belohnen, sondern nur herrschen und gebieten, und gewöhnlich ist seine Herrschaft viel drückender als jene der Eingebornen" (Eine Frau fährt 162). This shows that Pfeiffer is aware of the European colonizing mission. In her criticism, her sympathy is with the native people because they are treated unjustly by the British. But

she does not question the colonial rule. She criticizes the means, not the goal of the British rule: "Ach, wenn doch die Europäer wüßten, wie leicht sie diese guten Naturmenschen durch Nachsicht und Freundlichkeit gewinnen könnten! Leider aber wollen sie durch Gewalt herrschen und behandeln das arme Volk mit Verachtung und Härte" (Eine Frau fährt 194).

While portraying the non-Europeans, Pfeiffer occasionally sympathizes with them. However, her feeling of superiority over them overshadows her sympathy for them. Although Germany was not a major colonial force and did not have colonies until the late nineteenth century, Pfeiffer's statements are in tune with colonial ideology that portrays the native people as in need of control and governance by colonial powers. The description of the native people falls within a scientific network of the nineteenth century that classified and systematized not only plants and animals but also human beings. This systematization is hierarchic in nature and places the native people at the bottom of the order.

## **2. Description of Women**

Because of their gender, European men did not have access to the harem but they had expectations about the image of the "Oriental" women that were based on the literature about the harem. This literature built a stereotypical image of a sensual

"Oriental" woman.<sup>21</sup> Billie Melman notes this fascination of the Western audience with the harem:

From the earliest encounters between Christians and Muslims till the present, the harem as the *locus* of an exotic and abnormal sexuality fascinated Westerners. It came to be regarded as a microcosmic Middle East, apotheosizing the two characteristics perceived as essentially oriental: Sensuality and violence. (60)

Pfeiffer replaces the stereotypical sensual "Oriental" women by yet other stereotypes and objectifies the Oriental women in her attempt to do so. She notes how her impression of Oriental women differs from their stereotypical picture as she describes women in Jaffa:

Sie tragen die Wasserkrüge auf dem Kopf oder der Achsel, geradeso wie vor mehreren tausend Jahren, so wie man sie auf den ältesten Bildern gezeichnet findet. Aber von Grazie im Gang, von Anmut in ihren Bewegungen und von Schönheit des Körpers oder Gesichts, wie manche Schriftsteller behaupten, sah ich leider nichts; dagegen Schmutz und Armut, und zwar mehr, als ich erwartete" (Reise einer Wienerin 116).

Her description of Turkish women is: "Lebhaft, große Augen, blasse Wangen, breite Gesichter, viel Korupulenz, und die Dame ist gezeichnet" (Reise einer Wienerin 41). Pfeiffer refers to the Turkish women as 'Sylphengestalte', but she is not using this term to describe their grace or beauty. Her further description shows that she is using this term ironically:

Nur in der Kirche und im Innern der Häuser ward mir das Glück zuteil, diese Sylphengestalten näher zu betrachten . . . Allein die Weiber von sechsundzwanzig bis achtundzwanzig Jahren sind schon sehr verblüht und häßlich, so daß man in den tropischen Ländern immer eine sehr große Zahl garstiger Gesichter und nur hin und wieder

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<sup>21</sup> For more on the stereotypical image of the Oriental woman created by male writers, see Kabbani and Melman.

gleich einem Meteor etwas Hübsches hervorschimmern sieht  
(Reise einer Wienerin 152).

Her description of women is undifferentiated. She finds them  
all equally filthy and poor:

Die Tracht der Samariterinnen und Galiläerinnen usw. ist  
überall gleich arm, schmutzig und einförmig; sie tragen  
nichts als dunkelblaue lange Hemden. Der Unterschied  
besteht nur darin, daß sie in manchen Orten mit bedecktem  
und in andern mit unbedecktem Gesicht gehen. Übrigens  
könnten sich alle ver mummen, denn von schönen, reizenden  
Mädchen und Frauen ist wahrlich so wenig zu sehen, daß man  
sie wohl mit der Laterne suchen könnte. Sie haben alle  
eine braune, garstige Haut, struppige Harre und nicht so  
volle Gestalten wie die Türkinnen (Reise einer Wienerin  
176)

Although Pfeiffer describes the women as poor, her comments do  
not exhibit any sympathy toward them for their plight. This  
characterization of the women as filthy and poor demystifies  
them and in a sense de-orientalizes them. However, Pfeiffer  
replaces the exotic images of Oriental women with other  
stereotypical images that are as unrealistic as the exotic  
images.

Because of her gender, Pfeiffer is able to visit places  
such as a harem that were not accessible to male travelers. She  
visits a harem in Turkey and becomes an object of curiosity of  
the women in the harem. Pfeiffer criticizes them: "Unwissend  
und neugierig sind die Orientalinnen im höchsten Grad; sie  
können weder lesen noch schreiben, von Kenntniss einer fremden  
Sprache ist schon gar keine Rede" (Reise einer Wienerin 195).  
The curiosity of Oriental women is connected with their lack of  
knowledge, whereas Pfeiffer's curiosity gives her the power to  
observe them. Pfeiffer's double standard can be ascribed to her

understanding of herself as a superior European and looking down upon the Oriental women as inferior to her.

While describing the women in the harem Pfeiffer takes on the role of an observer and classifies and systematizes them. Gazed upon, the women in the harem are denied the power of the gaze.

Ich wurde in einen anderen Teil des Hauses geführt, dort trat ich dann in ein mittelgroßes Gemach, dessen Boden mit Matten und Teppichen überdeckt war und an desse Seiten Polster lagen, auf welchen die verschiedenartigsten Schönheiten, vermutlich aus allen Weltgegenden zusammengerafft, zwölf bis fünfzehn an der Zahl, saßen . . . Die Kleidung dieser Damen war geradeso, wie ich sie and den Töchtern des Konsuls in Jaffa beschrieben habe. Von ausgezeichneten Schönheiten, wenn man die hier sehr verehrte Beileibtheit nicht dafür hält, sah ich nicht viel, wohl aber eine Einäugige, eine in diesem Land nicht ungewöhnliche Erscheinung. Sklavinnen erblickte ich da von allen Schattierungen. (Reise einer Wienerin 195)

Pfeiffer describes these women in a group rather than looking at them as individuals. She groups them together under "verschiedenartigste Schönheiten." To describe the way they are sitting Pfeiffer uses the word 'bunched up' (zusammen gerafft), which turns them into inanimate objects rather than individuals. To further demystify the women in the harem she describes a woman with one eye. Pfeiffer concludes that the women in the harem are not capable of having any strong emotions since their facial features lack any definite character. Her "knowledge" about these women is based on visual observation that treats them as objects to be viewed. She takes the external appearance of these women as an indicator of their internal character:

Überall traf ich dieselbe Unwissenheit, Neugierde und Trägheit. Im ganzen mögen sie glücklicher sein als wir Europäerinnen; dies schließe ich teils aus ihrer

Beleibtheit, teils aus ihren ruhigen Gesichtszügen. Ersteres stellt sich doch gewöhnlich nur bei ruhigen oder zufriedenen Gemütern ein, und ihre Züge sind so ohne allen bestimmten, ausgesprochenen Charakter, daß ich sie unmöglich großer Empfindungen und Leidenschaften, weder im Guten noch im Bösen, fähig halte. (Reise einer Wienerin 197)

This description shows that Pfeiffer does not feel any solidarity with Oriental women. She aligns with her identity as a European individual rather than her identity as a woman. Oriental women are represented as opposites to Western women. They are described as uneducated and living in a world of ignorance and poverty. This representation is in contrast to the implicit self-representation of Pfeiffer as educated, having control over her own body and having freedom to make her own decisions. Criticizing Pfeiffer's Eurocentric attitude toward the Oriental women, Stefanie Ohnesorg questions: "Es ist ebenfalls wichtig die Frage zu stellen, ob nicht ein Teil dessen, was im Hinblick auf die Frauen-Reisen des 19. Jahrhunderts die emanzipatorische Komponente ausmachte, nur auf Kosten einer Verlagerung der Unterdrückungsstrukturen auf das kulturell Andere erkaufte wurde" (271).

Pfeiffer proclaims her alliance to the European identity as "wir Europäerinnen" (197) and differentiates herself from the Oriental women. The native people also stress her being European rather than her being a woman. She is treated as a 'Fremde' rather than a woman. During Pfeiffer's stay in Constantinople she goes to a temple. She describes how the Turkish people treat her: "Ohne große Bemühung ließ man mich als

Fremde in die ersten Reihen, eine Gutmütigkeit und Artigkeit der Türken, die manchen Franken zu empfehlen wäre. Und doppelt ist diese Eigenschaft an diesem Volk zu rühmen, da es für mein Geschlecht keine Achtung hat und uns armen Wesen seiner Meinung nach sogar die Seele abspricht" (Reise einer Wienerin 42). She mentions her gender is only to show that the narrator is an exception within it. She claims that she is being viewed as a 'foreign woman' rather than just as a 'woman'. It shows that she is aware of the difference between her identity as a European and as a woman.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The identity of the narrator in Pfeiffer's texts is multi-layered. Trinh T. Minh-ha views identity as multiple. It is not fixed once and for all. The markers of identity shift according to context. Trinh rejects the uniformity and unchangeableness of identity. She writes:

Die mißliche Situation, die durch das Überschreiten von Grenzen entsteht, kann nicht einfach geleugnet oder akzeptiert werden. Man muß sich ihrer Widersprüchlichkeit stellen. Es gibt wenig Hoffnung, diese gleichzeitige Existenz von außen/innen in einfachen, polarisierenden Schwarzweißbegriffen ins Leben zu reden. (153)

On the one hand, Pfeiffer takes on a masculine identity to express her rebellious and adventurous self. On the other hand, she feels the need to be accepted by society. To counterbalance her masculine identity she takes on a feminine identity that complies with bourgeois gender ideology. A part of her feminine

identity might be the result of the internalization of the bourgeois gender ideals. However, the biographical facts about Pfeiffer lead me to believe that Pfeiffer's feminine identity is more a strategy to avoid public criticism than the result of internalization of the gender ideals. Pfeiffer rebelled in her childhood against her mother who tried to instill feminine values in her. After fifteen years of Pfeiffer's marriage, she started living separately from her husband. Most of all, she traveled alone to different places around the world. This indicates that Pfeiffer hardly internalized bourgeois gender ideology. However she projects herself in her texts as a believer in that ideology. As a result of the simultaneous adoption of masculine and feminine identity, Pfeiffer's self-presentation becomes ambiguous.

In her relation to non-Europeans Pfeiffer takes on European identity. Pfeiffer's allegiance with her identity as a European provides the basis for the "colonial discourse" in her writing. It is the discourse which objectifies the other culture and its people. Helga Watt describes Pfeiffer as a "simple woman who has known hardship" (346). Watt thinks that Pfeiffer "looks at the world with unsentimental eyes. She has no part in the establishment, in the politics of nationalism, of economic, and military conquest. She feels no obligation to anyone but reports the truth as she sees it" (346). Pfeiffer might not have any direct part in the establishment. She might not have visited the foreign countries as an agent of a colonial power, as many of her male counterparts did. Nonetheless, this

does not prevent her from presenting images of the Other that are colonial in nature.

## Chapter IV

### An Analysis of Ida Hahn-Hahn's Travel Writings

#### A. Introduction

A leading female author during the first half of the nineteenth century, Hahn-Hahn launched her literary career by writing poetry and later wrote more than a dozen novels.<sup>22</sup> She wrote five travelogues about her travels through Europe and the Middle East. Her first travelogue, Jenseits der Berge (1840), documents her journey through Italy by way of Switzerland. Reisebriefe (1841) is a collection of letters that Hahn-Hahn sent to her relatives and friends during her travels in the South of France and Spain in 1841. She also wrote Erinnerungen aus und an Frankreich three months after her return from France. Letters that Hahn-Hahn wrote during her travels in Sweden were published in her travelogue Ein Reiseversuch im Norden (1843). Her last travelogue, Orientalische Briefe (1844), is a collection of letters sent during her travels in the Near East and Egypt to her mother, brother, sister, and her friend, Emy Gräfin Schönburg-Wechselburg.

Hahn-Hahn's popularity as a writer is evident in the attention her work received from contemporary critics.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Hahn-Hahn had published three volumes of poems before she started writing novels. She wrote thirteen novels and five travelogues in all before converting to Catholicism in 1850. After her conversion to Catholicism she kept on writing novels and tracts related to religion.

<sup>23</sup> In 1929 Katrien von Munster mentioned over 100 of the reviews of Hahn-Hahn's works which appeared in the newspapers and journals from 1835-1850 (170). A more recent account of

However, her popularity did not guarantee favorable reviews or respect from her fellow writers and critics. On the contrary, she was mocked by many writers, including Heinrich Heine, Gottfried Keller, Joseph von Eichendorff and Theodor Fontane. Fontane describes her as "bodenlos eitel und die Verneinung jeder Moral. Die Karikatur des Individualismus" (20). Alluding to Hahn-Hahn's loss of the left eye, Heine demonstrates his biting humor when he writes: "Wenn sie [die Weiber] schreiben, haben sie ein Auge auf das Papier und das andre auf einen Mann gerichtet, und dieses gilt von allen Schriftstellerinnen, mit Ausnahme der Gräfin Hahn-Hahn, die nur ein Auge hat" (453).

Speaking of Hahn-Hahn's reception by contemporary critics, Renate Möhrmann notes: "Wohl selten hat eine Schriftstellerin heftigere und widerspruchvollere Reaktionen hervorgerufen und die Gemüter ihrer Zeitgenossen stärker bewegt als diese mecklenburgische Gräfin" (Die andere Frau 85). This assessment of Hahn-Hahn's reception in the nineteenth century as controversial seems to be true. On the one hand, Hahn-Hahn was praised as "die Vorkämpferin der Frauenemanzipation" and a German George Sand (Prutz 254). On the other hand, she was criticized as an author with "krankhafter Emanzipationssucht und so exklusive-aristokratischen Tendenzen" (Barthel 560).

In reception among modern critics Hahn-Hahn is mentioned as one of the few privileged and enlightened women during the Vormärz who wrote novels dealing with women's issues

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Hahn-Hahn's reception is given by Möhrmann (85-90) and Geiger (17-31).

(Beutin 251-55). She is discussed in more detail by Friedrich Sengle in his Biedermeierzeit. He calls her a "melancholische Kreuzung von Kurtisane und Klosterschwester" (234). He denies her originality by describing her as "ein schwer definierbares Ragout aus Byron, Jean Paul und französischen Einflüssen" (881). Modern feminist critics such as Renate Möhrmann and Gerlinde Geiger have discussed the emancipatory nature of Hahn-Hahn's novels.

More recently her travel writings have been the focus of attention from feminist critics such as Annegret Pelz, Elke Frederiksen and Patricia Howe.<sup>24</sup> Both Pelz and Frederiksen emphasize Hahn-Hahn's interest in the equality of women. Patricia Howe compares Hahn-Hahn with other women travel writers, Ida Pfeiffer and Fanny Lewald. She concludes that all three writers exhibit ambivalence in their travel writing by virtue of their gender. The feminist critics focus on gender and conclude that Hahn-Hahn's travel writing shares features with other women travel writers.

However, this analysis will show that Hahn-Hahn's aristocratic family background and her success as a writer prior to the publication of her travelogues give her ammunition against the gender role expectations of society. Her stance in Orientalische Briefe is colonial and does not indicate ambiguity

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<sup>24</sup> Besides these feminist critics, Elke Marquart provides biographical information about Hahn-Hahn and discusses the depiction of Middle Eastern women in Hahn-Hahn's Orientalische Briefe. Patricia Herminhouse looks for the reason Hahn-Hahn might have converted to Catholicism. Carol Diethe gives biographical information about Hahn-Hahn.

in her self-representation which is evident in Pfeiffer's travel writings.

In this analysis, I focus on the travelogue Orientalische Briefe, which is a collection of letters written by Hahn-Hahn describing her journey through the Middle East. The analysis is divided into two parts. The first part includes Hahn-Hahn's self-representation and the second part focuses on the presentation of the Other. The analysis of Hahn-Hahn's self-representation includes a discussion about her motivation for travel, her use of the genre of letters and her authoritative narrative stance in the travelogue. The discussion about the presentation of the Other deals with Hahn-Hahn's presentation of the Orient and the non-Europeans.

## **B. Self-representation in Hahn-Hahn's Orientalische Briefe**

In August 1843 Hahn-Hahn and her companion Baron Adolf Bystram set out on a journey to the Middle East that would last for almost nine months. However, she rarely mentions Bystram in any of the letters sent to her relatives and a friend. This might be because Hahn-Hahn felt it improper to mention him since they were living together without being married. Another possibility is that Hahn-Hahn wanted to give her readers the impression that she was traveling alone on her journey. This would have made her account of the journey unusual and thus more interesting.

When Hahn-Hahn set out on her journey she was divorced from her husband, had handed her two children over to foster parents, and was receiving alimony from her ex-husband. She had written several books and was established as a successful author. Her success as an author, her aristocratic origin and her financial independence differentiate her self-perception from Pfeiffer's understanding of herself. The gender ambiguity in Pfeiffer's self-representation is absent in Hahn-Hahn's Orientalische Briefe. Her stance in the letters is mostly masculine and colonial. That is, she portrays the narrator as having traits, such as objectivity and self-assertiveness, that were considered masculine in bourgeois gender ideology. Rarely is there evidence of strategies to make the writing appear feminine. The following discussion will show in what ways Hahn-Hahn's narrative stance is different than Pfeiffer's. It will also show that in spite of the differences in their self-presentation, both authors create images of native people that are colonial in nature.

### **1. Motives for Travel**

In the first letter in Orientalische Briefe, which is addressed to her mother, Hahn-Hahn writes about the motive behind her journey:

Wer das Reisen wie eine oberflächliche Zerstreuung betrachtet, der gehe nicht in den Orient. Vergnügen bietet er nicht, nur Lehren und Offenbarungen. Das habe ich vorausgesetzt, sie gesucht und gefunden, und darum bin ich vollkommen mit meiner Reise zufrieden, nur freilich wieder in meiner Art und Weise: ohne Ekstase und Übertreibung. (16)

Hahn-Hahn insists that she is not undertaking this journey for her personal enjoyment. She claims that she is searching for 'teachings' and 'revelation,' which gives her journey a religious character. She writes to her friend, Gräfin Schönburg-Wechselburg, from Constantinople about her search for the 'divine light':

Am Gestade des Meeres, dem Gebirg gegenüber, unter dem freien lichten Himmel, kann ich doch ungestört an meinen Gott denken: denn da ist Licht ringsum, und nirgends jener beängstigende dunkle Wust: da ist seine Offenbarung unverzerrt durch die Hand, ungetrübt durch die schwache Erkenntnis des Menschen. O diese Sehnsucht nach Licht! Sie zieht mich in den fernen Orient, sie führt mich über Meere und Berge, sie drängt mich dahin wo jemals Wundertaten und Wunderwerke niedergelegt sind, welche einen Strahl des Lichts umschließen, wie die Frucht den Kern zugleich umgibt und aus ihm geboren wird. (64)

Search for the 'divine light' is the aim of her journey. She hopes to find the 'divine truth' in the Orient. This seems to be a strategy used by Hahn-Hahn to justify her journey because a religious journey was the most accepted form of travel for women. However, Hahn-Hahn notes that she is not overzealous about her piety.

In contrast to Pfeiffer, Hahn-Hahn does not express feelings of overwhelming joy upon visiting religious places. She differentiates herself from the tradition of religious women travelers when she writes to her brother: ". . . mit nichten [bin ich] gesonnen eine Pilgerfahrt im Sinn mittelalterlicher Frömmigkeit mit freiwilligen Entbehrungen und Kasteiungen durchwebt anzutreten. Was die Kasteiungen betrifft, mein lieber

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Dinand, da bin ich zu sehr ein Kind meines weichlichen und bequemen Jahrhunderts; ich scheue sie vom ganzem Herzen" (89).

Although Hahn-Hahn appears to be pious while writing to her mother in her first letter, she reveals to her mother later on that she is not very passionate about religion. She describes her muted reaction after coming to Jerusalem. She notes: "Unsere Zeiten sind alt und kalt geworden, unfähig solcher Ekstasen" (177). She concedes that nobody can remain indifferent after coming to Jerusalem. However she insists: "Aber kopfüber stürze ich mich nicht hinein" (177).

The missionary zeal in Pfeiffer's attitude toward people of other religions is rarely seen in Hahn-Hahn's remarks about non-Christians. While going to Constantinople on a ship, she sees some Turkish people praying according to their Muslim faith. As she watches them pray, she questions if all the religions are not equal in front of God:

Wenn man das [Gebet] so in der Nähe sieht, fragt man sich wie es möglich ist, sich um dieser Formen willen zu hassen oder zu verachten, da ja alle dem Grundgedanken entsprungen sind die Seele reiner und höher zu stimmen. Aber allerdings fragt man sich auch, ob denn eine Form besser sei als die andere. Kniet nicht der Katholik wie der Mohammedaner? Liest nicht der Protestant wie der Hebräer? Ist nicht Kniebeugung wie Gebet-oder Gesangsbuch Ausdruck der nämlichen Andacht, dem nämlichen Gott zugewendet? Wir können wohl finden, daß eine Form mehr als die andre grade unserer eigentümlichen Innerlichkeit entspricht, und daher für uns wahre ist; allein ob sie vor Gott die einzigwahre, ist doch wohl mehr wie zweifelhaft. (23)

Later on we see that the tolerance that Hahn-Hahn shows toward the religion of the Turkish people does not translate into tolerance toward their culture. Hahn-Hahn claims that she

has no prejudice against Muslims because of their religion. She writes to her friend from Constantinople:

Ich bin im Gebiet und unter dem Gebot des Islam. Ich bin hergekommen ohne Vorurteile für oder gegen ihn: ich bemitleide nicht den Mohammedaner um seines Glaubens willen, und ich bewundere ihn nicht. Es ist sein Gesetz, das sein Prophet ihm gebracht: das scheint mir kein Grund weder für Verehrung noch für Verabsetzung. (57)

Hahn-Hahn's lack of zealousness for Christianity, her muted reaction upon reaching holy places and her refusal to associate herself with other religious travelers show that Hahn-Hahn is not trying to justify her travel by stating religion as the motive. She claims that she is undertaking the journey to gain knowledge. In a letter to her mother, she writes:

Was ich noch nicht kenne -- gerade das möchte ich kennenlernen; denn kennen ist wissen und Wissen ist eine noch schönere Sache als Freude über den St. Stephan, über die bacchantischen Jubelwalzer von Strauß und über die Venetianischen Meistergemälde im Belvedere. Allein ich kann nun einmal nicht anders als streben und immer streben, und daher geht mir der Drang zur Erkenntnis über das, was ich bereits erkannt habe. (16-17)

Hahn-Hahn does not disguise the cause of her journey with religion as do many other women travelers including Pfeiffer. Here Hahn-Hahn contrasts knowledge with art, something that women were supposed to be interested in, and states that the pursuit of her journey is to gain knowledge. To undertake a journey to seek knowledge and moreover to state it openly in the travel writing was quite extraordinary for a woman traveler in nineteenth century German society. Hahn-Hahn is setting out on a journey to educate herself. Speaking of the tradition of the

"Bildungsreise" in the eighteenth century, Albert Meier points out that pursuit of knowledge and usefulness of the journey for society were two important features of "Bildungsreise" (284). In addition to self-education, Hahn-Hahn also sets as the aim of her journey the search for hope for European society. Thus, her journey becomes a "Bildungsreise" with an added social dimension. In a letter to her brother written from Constantinople Hahn-Hahn explains that she is undertaking this journey to learn about an ancient civilization:<sup>25</sup>

Nach allem was ich hier höre, kommt mir überhaupt vor, als müsse man sich recht fest einprägen und immer vor Augen halten, weshalb man sie [die Reise] macht, um nicht häufig herabgestimmt und enttäuscht zu werden. Ich mache sie um die Stätten kennen zu lernen, auf denen einst große Zivilisationen gleich Blüten aus dem Kern ihrer Religion hervor- und untergingen, als der Samenstaub jener Blüten taub ward. Ich mache sie um die Stätte zu sehen, wo unsere Zivilisation, die vielseitigste von allen die je gewesen, ihren Ursprung hat. (88)

Hahn-Hahn takes on the role of a traveler setting out to seek knowledge from the "Oriental past" that will give hope to Europe. She writes: "Hoffnungen will ich, nur Hoffnungen! . . . nicht für mich, nicht für andere, aber für uns alle . . . Also nicht um mir Erinnerungen -- sondern um Hoffnungen zu sammeln, Hoffnungen die sich nicht im geringsten auf mich oder meine Person beziehen, mache ich diese Reise" (88-9).

Hahn-Hahn seems to be disturbed about the socio-political situation in Europe. Always aware of her aristocratic origin,

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<sup>25</sup> Hahn-Hahn's description of the Orient as an ancient civilization in the past in contrast with the modern civilization in Europe is discussed in more detail in the next section (20-26).

Hahn-Hahn could not reconcile herself with the ideals of the revolution of 1848. She hopes to find a solution for the situation in Europe by turning to the Orient. The Orient reminds her of the historical process in which the European civilization was formed from the ruins of the ancient Oriental civilization. She hopes that the historical process will continue and from the uncertain situation in Europe, a new phase will begin:

Bin ich aber im Orient, betrachte ich die Ruinen des Sonnentempels zu Balbek, oder die Omars-Moschee über dem Tempel Salomons, oder den Sand über den Wunderwerken von Memphis und Theben- bedenke ich dabei, daß so viel Größe, Macht und Herrlichkeit untergehen, und daß dennoch unsere ganze große okzidentalische Bildung frisch und neu ihnen folgen konnte; so gibt diese Betrachtung mir Zuversicht für eine bis jetzt noch unbekannte aber gewisse und in ihrer Art vollkommene Phase, die neu über den Trümmern unsrer Welt beginnen wird. (88)

Thus Hahn-Hahn presents herself as a traveler who has set out on her journey for her personal quest of knowledge. She further ennobles her journey by setting as her aim a search for hope for a restless European society.

## **2. Genre of Letters**

In the mid-eighteenth century letter writing became a popular literary activity conducted by women. Renate Möhrmann describes how popular letter writing became in the eighteenth century: "In allen Lebenslagen begannen die Frauen plötzlich, Briefe zu schreiben, ja der Briefwechsel wurde zu einer ihrer wichtigsten Angelegenheiten überhaupt. Hier schien sich ein

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jahrhundertlang zurückgehaltenes Formulierungsbedürfnis gewaltsam Bahn brechen und austoben zu wollen" (Die andere Frau 20). Reinhard Nickisch notes that letter writing was mainly popular among the educated bourgeois and aristocratic women (390). It must have given these women an opportunity to form contacts and friendships. Beyond that, it also gave them a chance to engage in a literary activity without stepping conspicuously into the public domain.

Barbara Becker-Cantarino points out that these letters were rarely meant to be read by the receiver alone (Leben als Text 85). Reading the letters aloud in the circle of friends and family was a popular form of entertainment, especially during eighteenth century. Becker-Cantarino explains that the intimate form of letters was especially suited for women:

. . . der Brief [war] wegen seines Inhalts und seiner Form wichtig. Seine offene, 'natürliche' gesprächsnahe Form . . . und sein lebensnaher, oft privater, zeitgenössischer Inhalt hatte gerade dieses Ausdrucksmittel den Frauen zugänglich gemacht . . . . Die Briefform ermöglichte eine direkte Anrede und damit Beteiligung der Leserin an den jeweiligen Lebensfragen, ein wichtiger Aspekt der Briefliteratur als Kommunikation. (99)

By writing letters women had access to public expression and yet it appeared justifiable that they remained in the private domain because of the intimate nature of letter writing. Thus, they were able to disguise their entry into the public domain by using the genre of letters.

However, it is important to note that the letter form was not used exclusively by women writers. Annette Deeken and Monika Bösel point out: "Briefe und Tagebücher sind keineswegs

ausschließlich weibliche Ausdrucksmittel, . . . Zur Zeit der Romantik und des Jungen Deutschland gar wird die Briefkultur von Feuilletonisten wie Heine und Börne bis zum Überdruß gepflegt" (64). Even though letter writing was often used by male writers, Deeken and Bösel concede: "weibliche Autoren allerdings weisen eine größere Kontinuität im Gebrauch der betont subjektiven und ungezwungenen Formen des Schreibens auf, und dies gilt insbesondere auch für die Reiseliteratur" (64). It can be said that both men and women used the genre of letters, although women used it more frequently than men. Women mostly used it as a disguise to enter the public domain of writing, especially travel writing, because in travel writing they were breaking the taboo against traveling as well as writing.

Like many other women travelers, Hahn-Hahn chooses the genre of letters for Orientalische Briefe. However, she does not seem to be using it to disguise her entry into the public domain of writing. Prior to publishing Orientalische Briefe, Hahn-Hahn was already a successful author. She had written three volumes of poems and several novels. Orientalische Briefe was her fifth travelogue. She might have chosen this genre because of the structural connection between Hahn-Hahn's travel writing and the genre of letters. In Orientalische Briefe Hahn-Hahn reports relatively isolated and unconnected episodes describing her journey. By writing letters to different addressees about these episodes Hahn-Hahn is able to fit these unconnected episodes in the framework of journey without having one central theme.

Another reason for Hahn-Hahn to chose the genre of letters might have been the intimate setting which it offered. For example, if Hahn-Hahn had chosen the form of an essay to report about her travel, her travelogue would have lacked the dialogue character of the letters. The narrator would have emerged as a figure who knew more than her readers, and this would have created distance between the readers and the narrator. By writing letters Hahn-Hahn had a more direct contact with her readers because the letters created a bond between her and the readers. Speaking about the intimate atmosphere created by travelogues in letter form, Elke Frederiksen points out that travel writing in the form of letters is like a conversation that reduces the distance between the traveler and the friends who have stayed back home (Blick in die Ferne 111). The conversational style is evident in many of Hahn-Hahn's letters. With this style she creates an impression that she is taking her readers along with her to the places she visits.<sup>26</sup>

When Hahn-Hahn enters into a dialogue with her addressee she is also communicating with the readers. In a letter for her friend, Emy Schönburg-Wechselburg, she writes: "Meine liebe Herzens Emy, ich komme ja gar nicht dazu Ihnen zu schreiben! Bis jetzt auf der ganzen Reise einen einzigen Brief! Ich denke immer: es ist für Euch alle, gleichviel an wen adressiert . . . ." (122). Hahn-Hahn does not refer to her readers directly as 'Leser' or 'Leserinnen' in this or any other letters.

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<sup>26</sup> In a letter to her brother she urges him to come along with her to the slave market (49). She invites her mother to join

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Nonetheless, 'Euch' in this letter, presumably used for her other addressees (including her mother, brother and sister), can also be for her readers. Hahn-Hahn does not indicate either in her letters or in the introduction that these letters were meant only for a private audience. Therefore the reader also becomes one of the addressees.

Nevertheless Hahn-Hahn chooses the topics in her letters according to her designated addressees. She writes to her female addressees about the historical places that she visits, reporting about the customs of the people as well as nature and art. Letters to her mother are mostly enthusiastic and joyful. She writes to her mother in the introduction: "Meine liebe Herzensmutter, da sind nun meine sämtlichen Briefe beieinander, und ich bringe sie Dir jetzt alle, weil sie Dir das größte Vergnügen machen werden . . . Herzensmutter, wenn Dir die Briefe ein Paar angenehme Stunden machten -- wie froh wär' ich!" (15-16).

Hahn-Hahn dedicates the collection of all the letters to her mother and hopes to bring joy to her. She tries to bring her joy by giving her colorful descriptions of her surroundings and people.<sup>27</sup> By writing joyful letters to her mother as well as other female addressees, Hahn-Hahn indirectly conforms to the

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her to see Constantinople (28).

<sup>27</sup> See for example pages 20, 26-29, 95-96 in which Hahn-Hahn describes different cities.

idea that the function of literature for women was only to provide poetic pleasure to them.<sup>28</sup>

On some occasions she expresses her concern about not appearing "ladylike" to her mother. For example, Hahn-Hahn describes in a letter to her mother how she is forced to give up European customs:

Ich fürchte wirklich, daß Du Dich in Gedanken ein wenig meiner schämst. Trinken aus der Flasche eines arabischen Halbbanditen! Essen ein Stück Brot und Käse im Sattel sitzend! Ja, Mamachen, und dazu zog ich meine Bluse gar noch aus und ritt in Hemdärmel, weil die Hitze mich erdrückte. Das alles klingt bei uns unerhört, erschreckend, untunlich, weil es eben bei uns nicht vorfallen kann (183)

While writing to her friend, Emy Schönbürg-Wechselburg, Hahn-Hahn describes how she tries to be more practical than 'ladylike'. She writes to her about her new costume:

Das Klügste was ich seit langer Zeit getan, ist, daß ich aus Konstantinopel meine gezierte Kammerjungfer zurückschickte, weil dergleichen Leute nicht für den Libanon und die Wüste taugen; und daß ich mir in Wien einen vollständigen nicht Männer- aber Knabenanzug machen ließ, ein *costume de gamin* von größter Einfachheit, Bluse und Pantalon von staubfarbenem Wollenstoff, rot und weiß gestreifte Hemden, runder Strohhut, geknöpfte Schuhe von *coutil*- ganz namenlos bequem für diese Reise, wo man im Zelt, also in Kleidern schläft, und sehr steile und steinige Wege zu Fuß bergauf oder bergab macht. Das lange Reitkleid und unser gewöhnliches Kleid sind beide vollkommen unpraktisch . . . . (123)

Hahn-Hahn describes her lady-in-waiting as "affected" and incapable of surviving in the desert. Hahn-Hahn, in contrast to her lady-in-waiting, is strong and practical. Rather than

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<sup>28</sup> See the section on educational and professional possibilities for women in Chapter 2, especially page 49.

trying to appear "ladylike," Hahn-Hahn describes how she is ready to wear masculine clothes.

Instead of focusing on the topics that were related to the private sphere of family, Hahn-Hahn also writes about topics, such as the history and politics of the country she visits, geographical places and the architecture of the buildings that she sees. For example she writes to her sister about the Dead Sea (193) and the Nile (240). She writes about politics in Europe as well the countries she visits (202, 240, 258). In a letter to her mother she writes: "Jeder der von seinen Reisen erzählt, hat ein Steckenpferd worauf er sich mit besonderm Vergnügen tummelt; das meine ist die Architektur" (250). By not restricting herself with the topics related to house and family, Hahn-Hahn steps into the masculine public domain.

Hahn-Hahn's brother is the only male addressee of her letters. It is interesting to see that when Hahn-Hahn first visits a harem or a slave market, she chooses her brother as the addressee. These were the places to which Hahn-Hahn had access because of her gender. Speaking about Hahn-Hahn's letters to her brother, Patricia Howe notes: "In Briefen an ihren Bruder kommt die Konkurrenz zwischen Geschwistern zum Ausdruck, denn sie schildert ihren Besuch im Harem und ihr Besteigen der großen Pyramide von Cheops in neckendem Ton, der das Gefühl der Überlegenheit nicht überhören läßt" (316). Hahn-Hahn's "teasing" tone in the letters to her brother is not just out of sibling rivalry as Howe states. By addressing the description of the harem to her brother, Hahn-Hahn is indirectly addressing

it to the European male audience. As I will demonstrate later, Hahn-Hahn tries to demolish the image of the harem based on male fantasy and provides the reader with her own description of Oriental women.

### 3. Authoritative Narrative Figure

The narrator in Hahn-Hahn's letters appears authoritative for two main reasons. The first is the absence of any strategies to make her text appear feminine and the second is her frequent claims of objectivity. As we saw earlier, Hahn-Hahn does not disguise her motive for traveling. She writes her travelogue in the genre of letters, which were considered feminine. However, the topics in her letters are not limited to the private sphere family. Thus Hahn-Hahn might have chosen a feminine *form* for her travelogue, but she does not try to make its *content* appear feminine. Hahn-Hahn is not apologetic or modest about her writing. In dedicating the collection of letters to her mother she writes:

Ferner bist Du so daran gewöhnt, Nachsicht mit mir haben zu müssen, daß Dir die manigfachen Unvollkommenheiten, Widersprüche und Inkonssequenzen, die untrennbar von einer solchen Briefsammlung sind, nicht störend auffallen werden... Denn wenn ich auch bereit bin meinen Briefen tausend Unvollkommenheiten anzuerkennen, so muß ich doch die scheinbaren Widersprüche und Inkonssequenzen ein wenig in Schutz nehmen, weil sie wirklich nur scheinbar sind.  
(15)

Although it might seem that Hahn-Hahn is accepting shortcomings in her writing, she is doing so only indirectly.

She is not really admitting to any shortcomings in her writing but only to their appearance.

In a letter to her sister she exclaims: "Gott, was ist es für ein Glück schreiben zu können!" (176). She admits that writing is "eine äußerst angenehme Beschäftigung" (176). In contrast to Pfeiffer, who distances herself from other women writers and claims that she is not a writer, Hahn-Hahn openly admits the joy of writing.

Hahn-Hahn establishes herself as an independent and self-assertive person. She writes to her mother:

Dafür, daß ich meinen Glauben, meine Ansicht, meine Meinung mit der vollkommensten Unbefangenheit, ohne Hehl und ohne Rücksicht bei jeder Gelegenheit ausspreche, bitte ich Dich nicht um Gnade; denn obwohl Du auf der weiten Gotteswelt die einzige Person bist, die mich imponiert, hast Du mich dennoch immer meine eignen Wege gehen lassen, so fern und fremd sie den Deinen sein mögen, und mir eine selbstständige Entwicklung gegönt, deren Resultat mein Glaube und meine Meinungen sind. (15)

Hahn-Hahn is not apologetic about having her own independent opinions. She portrays the narrator as an independent person who has chosen her own way of life and has formed her own opinions. She values freedom more than life. Pitying an eagle kept in a cage she writes: "Ich meines Teils bin für Freiheit, für schmale Kost und kurzes Leben" (19). By denying feminine modesty and emphasizing her independence Hahn-Hahn presents herself as an authoritative person.

This authority is further strengthened by her explicit claim of objectivity and the implicit claim of trustworthiness. Elke Frederiksen thinks that the genre of letter itself creates

the aura of authenticity, in the sense of reliability, in its content: "Durch seinen scheinbar intimen Charakter weckt der Reisebrief die Neugierde des Lesepublikums und verleiht ein größeres Maß an Authentizität" (Blick in die Ferne 111). Letter writing is a dialog between the author and the recipient (the reader). The appearance of one-on-one contact between the author and the readers gives reliability to the authorial perspective and the content of the letters. In the context of the reputation for unreliability that travel writing always had,<sup>29</sup> Hahn-Hahn tries to differentiate herself from other travel writers by creating trust among her readers. In addition to this intrinsic reliability, Hahn-Hahn tries to make her texts even more reliable by claiming objectivity. She wants to see everything with a "gutes unbestechliches Auge" (97) and describes it "ungeschminkt wie sie [die Situation] ist" (222). She assures her mother that her descriptions are always true because she is "zu gewissenhaft um es zu schreiben, wo es nicht der Fall ist ..." (212). She writes to her mother:

Ich hoffe, daß all meine Beschreibungen von Konstantinopel sehr der Wahrheit treu sind, weil ich ganz wie ein Neuling, ohne Vorurteile für oder wider, hergekommen bin. Das ist in Europa fast unmöglich! Auf irgend eine Weise interessiert man sich dort bereits lange vorher für das Land in das man reist; aber dieses ist uns im Grunde gänzlich fremd, oder war es wenigstens mir dermaßen, daß

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<sup>29</sup> Speaking about development of the genre of travel writing, Peter Brenner notes: "Reisende genießen seit je einen schlechten Ruf. Nicht nur Reisende lügen, aber ihr Verhältnis zur Wahrheit wurde stets im besonderen Maße angezweifelt. Der Reisende als Lügner und der Reisebericht als eine Gattung, deren Wahrheitsgehalt wenig Vertrauen verdient, gehören zu den Topoi, welche die Reiseliteratur seit ihren antiken Anfängen begleitet haben" (14).

ich nicht weiß, ob schon irgend jemand eine Beschreibung von Konstantinopel gemacht hat. (94)

Hahn-Hahn denies any previous knowledge of Constantinople. Gabriele Habinger thinks that this denial of "Vorwissen und Bildung" is "Zugeständnis an das bürgerliche Weiblichkeitsideal" by Hahn-Hahn (Anpassung und Widerspruch 181). By denying any previous knowledge of the Orient, Hahn-Hahn might appear to be conforming to the bourgeois ideal of femininity. Nonetheless, it is logical to conclude that Hahn-Hahn is denying any previous knowledge of Orient to stress her objectivity, which was considered a masculine trait. Conforming to bourgeois ideals does not seem to be her primary concern.

#### **4. Conclusion**

It is likely that Hahn-Hahn's self-presentation in Orientalische Briefe is shaped by her awareness of her success as an author and by her aristocratic origin. Because of her financial independence she is not greatly subjected to the societal pressures which forced other women writers like Pfeiffer to adopt a feminine voice. The gender ambivalence in Pfeiffer's text is almost absent in Hahn-Hahn's letters. Hahn-Hahn presents the narrator as having traits that were considered masculine by gender ideology. Hahn-Hahn's masculine stance becomes clear by the narrator's emphasis on her independence and her claims of objectivity and authenticity.

Hahn-Hahn does not limit her description to the topics that were considered proper for women. She treats a wide variety of subjects such as politics, history and architecture that were outside the private sphere of home and family life. Whereas Pfeiffer disclaims any political expertise, Hahn-Hahn freely writes her thoughts on these subjects. Instead of self-effacement Hahn-Hahn displays assertiveness. She is not modest about her writing.

Hahn-Hahn assumes a self-assertive masculine stance in her self-presentation. However she does not try to show that she possesses the masculine traits of strength and endurance as Pfeiffer does. Pfeiffer tries to mix an element of adventure in the description of her journey, perhaps in order to appeal to reader expectations. Hahn-Hahn, on the other hand, mentions in several letters that her journey has been completely safe without any adventures.

There might be several reasons for Hahn-Hahn to depict her journey as safe and free of hazards. Firstly, as a member of an aristocratic family Hahn-Hahn had adequate financial resources to have a relatively comfortable journey. She had access to more people and places with the help of the several recommendation letters that she carried with her. Not only could she live in better places than Pfeiffer, but she could also afford the services of an interpreter during most of her journey and was able to have conversations with other people. Unlike Pfeiffer who was traveling alone, Hahn-Hahn was traveling with her companion. Thus her experience of the journey might,

in fact, have been more comfortable and less treacherous than Pfeiffer's journey.

In addition, Hahn-Hahn might be trying to show her control over the situation by stressing that nothing can pose any danger to her. In the very first letter that is addressed to her mother she describes how safe her journey has been, contrary to her own expectations:

Wie ganz unter meiner Erwartung die Beschwerden, Gefahren, Drang-und Mühsale dieser Reise gewesen sind, kann ich Dir gar nicht genug wiederholen. Ich muß immer lachen, wenn man mich jetzt überall wie eine von den Toten Erstandene empfängt, mitleidvoll nach großen Fährlichkeiten fragt, die mir nicht wiederfahren sind, und den Mut bewundert, den ich nicht Gelegenheit gehabt habe, zu zeigen. Weder Unfälle, noch Störungen, noch Krankheiten haben uns getroffen. (15-16)

Hahn-Hahn shows how her own expectations, as well as the expectations of other people, about a journey to the Orient were full of apprehension. However by describing how different her experience was from these expectations, she makes her travel writing unique. She writes to her friend after reaching Lebanon: "Da sitze ich so ruhig und wohlbehalten am Fuß des Lebanon, . . . , keine Gefahren hab' ich auf der weiten Reise überstanden, keine Schrecknisse haben mich bedroht, kein Finger hat mir weh getan" (103). Nothing can threaten Hahn-Hahn. She feels safe and secure during the journey. She writes to her sister that she remains in good spirits : "Wo es überall von Räubern wimmeln soll und wo ich keine Stecknadel verloren habe, hatte ich und habe noch jetzt den besten Mut" (166). Later on she writes to her mother that she has not encountered a single

adventure: "Auch inzwischen (werde ich) Dir meinen Reisebericht machen, der vier Tage umfaßt, aber nur sehr wenig was des Erzählens wert wäre, und nicht ein einziges Abenteuer!" (177). Hahn-Hahn's frequent references to the lack of dangers in her journey emphasize her control over the situation.

Hahn-Hahn's self-presentation is more consistent than Pfeiffer's in its masculine stance. However, her presentation of the Other is not qualitatively different from Pfeiffer's. In her presentation of the Other she shows awareness of her identity as European. She assumes a position of superiority toward the non-Europeans and defines them in a way that is colonial in nature.

### **C. Representation of the Other**

Hahn-Hahn investigates topics such as the harem, the slave market, and the native people in other countries. In her description of the Other she is aware of her European identity. When she sets out for her journey she writes to her mother: "Bald nun werde ich wissen, wie der Orient sich im Auge einer Tochter des Okzidents abspiegelt" (17). She claims to be objective and without prejudice. However, her presentation of the Other shows that her perception of the non-Europeans is based on her own sense of superiority. She constructs images of the Other that define the (better) self of the white Europeans. Hahn-Hahn's depiction of the Orient echos the dominant ideas about the Orient in the nineteenth century. She views the

Orient as static and belonging to the past and the non-Europeans as primitive people. Her attitude of superiority toward Oriental women is more shaped by her European identity than by her gender.

## 1. Description of the Orient

Hahn-Hahn's presentation of the Orient oscillates between enchantment and disappointment. Hahn-Hahn is dissatisfied with conditions in Europe<sup>30</sup> and she hopes to find a solution in the Orient. She writes: "In Europa sieht es so hoffnungslos aus, so unruhig. Keinem ist wohl auf seinem Platz, und er sucht in der Stille oder öffentlich einen anderen. Alles was besteht soll umgeändert, oder umgebildet, wenn nicht gar umgestoßen werden" (88). She is unhappy with the lack of freedom in Europe: "In Europa gibts keine freie Luft weder physisch noch geistig -- und darum keine Freiheit" (202). She comes to the Orient in search of hope.

Hahn-Hahn sees the Orient as the source of civilization which represents Europe's past. She has the preconceived notion of the Biblical Orient in her mind. Therefore she interprets even the scenery in the same way. She describes a small village on the way to Bethlehem as "unglaublich passend für die biblische Idylle der Ruth, als Schauplatz für die Kinderspiele

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<sup>30</sup> Hahn-Hahn was unhappy with liberalism and against the ideals of the Revolution of 1848. In Von Babylon nach Jerusalem Hahn-Hahn characterizes the three centuries from the Reformation to the revolution in 1848/49 as the worst Germany has ever known (50). For more on Hahn-Hahn's move toward conservative

des Hirtenknaben David, und als eine grüne Wiege für das gottgesegneteste aller Kinder" (210). With a biblical view of the Orient she writes:

Von dem Weltteil der *ist*, will ich zu dem, der *war*; aus der europäischen Gegenwart in die orientalische Vergangenheit. Da müssen Traurigkeiten, Wüsten, Ruinen, Desolationen herrschen, und einzeln und einsam, wie Sterne aus dem Wolkenhimmel, müssen hier und da majestätische, trostereiche, segenvolle Erinnerungen auftauchen, an welche der Geist seine Hoffnungen knüpft, und dasjenige was *sein wird* aus dem was *gewesen ist* herausspinnt" (88).

The Orient is presented as "past" whereas Europe represents the "present." The Orient is full of sadness and desolation and ruins. However, the Orient offers hope to Hahn-Hahn because she recognizes the historical process through which the Occidental world emerged out of these ruins. Although Hahn-Hahn is unhappy with the socio-political situation in Europe, she is certain that a new phase will begin from the uncertain situation. Europe has the potential for a future whereas the Orient is fixed in the past. The presentation of the Orient, as a place full of ruins and lifeless deserts, a place belonging to the past, builds a contrast to the presentation of Europe as a place belonging to the future where new life can begin. Her argument describing a fictional conversation between the Orient and the Occident clearly describes this contrast. The Orient is stagnant but the Occident is flowing, moving forward:

Der Orient spricht: 'Du wärest tot ohne mich! Das Prinzip alles Lebens: das Licht - der Keim jeder Gesinnung: Die Religionen gehen von mir aus, wie der Sonnenstrahl.' - Und der Okzident spricht: 'Ich aber habe das Prinzip

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political views see Möhrmann (Die andere Frau 151-54) and Herminhouse (261-68).

verarbeitet, den Keim zur Blüte gebracht. Du bist tot wie die Blume, welche dahinwelkt nachdem sie ihren Samen gestreut hat. Ich lebe, denn in mir ist Bewegung'. (25)

Hahn-Hahn represents the typical European point of view, especially Hegelian, in her presentation of the Orient.<sup>31</sup> She pictures the Orient at an earlier stage of development than Europe. Thus her description of the Orient as the "origin of civilization" does not redeem the Orient from its image as a stagnant place. Speaking of the depiction of the Orient in nineteenth century German travel writing, Veronika Bernard points out: "Was im diskutierten Orientbild allerdings fehlt, sind die zukunftsorientierten Elemente. Man erwartet keine neuen Impulse, sondern das Wiederfinden, die Wiederbelebung bereits dagewesener, an die man sich lediglich nicht mehr erinnert hat" (122). Hahn-Hahn's presentation of the Orient lacks any references to the future.

Hahn-Hahn's depiction of the Orient is based on her previous knowledge about it. Her knowledge is partly based on the popular book Arabian Nights as well as travelogues.<sup>32</sup> It has been generally assumed that the Arabian Nights were first introduced to the West in 1704 when the Frenchman Antoine Galland published the first volume of his book. Melman asserts that the Western audience became familiar with the imaginary,

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<sup>31</sup> See the first chapter, especially pages 16-17 for more on Hegel's view on the Orient.

<sup>32</sup> Hahn-Hahn indicates that she is familiar with the travelogue by Mary Montague, Letters from the East (Orientalische Briefe 89).

exotic Orient through the Arabian Nights (63). The Arabian Nights conjured up images of harems and veiled Oriental women.

Hahn-Hahn expects to find a fairy-tale-like atmosphere in the Orient. Even before going there she associates the Orient with a fairy tale and contrasts it with European civilization and culture. Prior to her journey, during Hahn-Hahn's stay in Vienna, she visits Byron Carl Hügel who has a collection of articles from India, the Middle East, as well as China. Hahn-Hahn is fascinated to see his collection of aromatic plants, birds and lamps. The collection seems to her like a fairy tale from Arabian Nights: "Wie in Märchen aus Tausend und einer Nacht war es [die Sammlung]; auch doppelt feenhaft erschien es neben all dem Komfort europäischer Zivilisation und Bildung" (19).

This shows her expectations and previous 'knowledge' about the countries she is about to visit. It also contradicts her claim of objectivity. She wants to be true to the reality in her description but she already has a preconceived notion about the Orient, based on popular sources such as the Arabian Nights that painted a very unreal picture of the Orient.

This association of the Orient with a fairy tale continues throughout her journey. Hahn-Hahn often describes her first impressions of cities as in a fairy tale. They seem to be magical, mystical, idyllic -- almost dream like. Upon coming to Constantinople, Hahn-Hahn writes to her mother: "Jetzt in den stillen Mondabend hinaus zu schauen, das ist wie ein Traum, den eine freundliche Fee mir geschenkt haben könnte" (20). She describes a morning in Belgrade: "Auf alles was sich aus dem

nebligen Silberschaum emporhob, warf die Sonne ihre rosigen Frühstrahlen, . . ., und wie aus rosenfarbenem Marmor auf einer Basis von Perlmutter gebaut, lagen die anmutigen Gebäude da, ganz wie man es in Feenmärchen liest" (95). Cairo seems to be a city from the Arabian Nights to her: "Überhaupt -- Kairo und nur Kairo ist in meinen Augen die echt orientalische Stadt, mit ihren Formen und Anlagen and die Bilder aus Tausend und einer Nacht erinnernd . . ." (243). The city of Luxor has a "mythologischen Charakter" as it seems to be engulfed in "träumerischen Duft" and "idealischen Färbungen" (313).

By describing the Orient as magical and mystical, Hahn-Hahn is referring to the stereotypical images of the Orient that are already familiar to readers in nineteenth century Germany. However, Hahn-Hahn deconstructs these stereotypes with descriptions of poverty and filth in the cities that immediately follow the idyllic descriptions. Luxor appears mythical and dreamlike from far. However, as Hahn-Hahn comes near the city, it appears disgusting: "In der Nähe verschwindet Luxors Zauber durch die ekelhafteste aller ekelhaften Wirklichkeiten" (313). Belgrade loses its charm with the rising sun: "Und endlich [kam] die ganze mächtige Masse der Stadt [zum Vorschein]-- die man eigentlich nur in der Ferne sehen müßte, wenn man nichts als bezaubert von ihr sein wollte. Betritt man sie -- Illusion ade! Das ist keine Feenstadt, sondern eine Schmutzstadt . . ." (96).

She is even more dramatic while describing Constantinople. She compares the beauty of the city to a scene in the theater: "Stell Dir eine Theaterdekoration vor, von Künstlerhand mit dem

größten Geschmack gemalt: Du bist entzückt, hingerissen von der unvergleichlichen Szenerie, immer von neuem schauest Du sie an, kannst nicht satt werden zu bewundern." However, just like a theater scene this beauty is only illusory. The reality is hidden behind the feigned beauty: "Und jetzt führt man Dich hinter die Szene. Hilf Himmel! Latten, Sparrwerk, schmutziges Papier, Stricke, Ölflecke, grobe Leinwand: - so, aber genau ist Konstantinopel" (28). Hahn-Hahn describes the chaos in the city, the stray dogs and horses, as well as the rush on the narrow streets:

Mehr noch als die fürchterliche Unsauberkeit fällt mir die fürchterliche Unordnung auf. Hier weiden Schafe, da warten Esel, dort schnattern Gänse und krähen Hähne; auf diesem Fleck trocknet man Wäsche, auf jenem arbeitet ein Tischler; während von der einen Seite ein Zug Kamele daherschreitet, naht von der anderen ein Leichenzug; da spielen Kinder, da beißen sich Hunde, da ist das gleichgültigste Treiben der Welt. (29)

The contrast between the fairy tale imagery and the descriptions of filth and poverty make the imagery of chaos and anarchy even more effective. Hahn-Hahn raises the expectations of readers with the fairy tale imagery. However, the descriptions of poverty and filth frustrate those expectations. With this description Hahn-Hahn conjures up images of total chaos and anarchy in the Orient. These images call for restoration of order that can be brought by Germans as Hahn-Hahn suggests later on.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> See pages 142-43 in this chapter.

## 2. Description of non-Europeans

Hahn-Hahn describes non-Europeans with an awareness of her own identity as a European. While she might seem to be critical of Europe at times, this does not in any way diminish her allegiance to her European identity or her sense of superiority over non-Europeans. It is telling that she starts her description of the non-European world from a tower -- a position above this world. She offers her mother a panoramic view of Constantinople: "Nacht schwebt über der Tiefe; aber sie wird erheitert durch die zahllose Menge von Lichtern, die aus all den winzig kleinen Häusern auftauchen, welche meinem europäischen Auge zwerghaft wie Kartenhäuser vorkommen" (20). Hahn-Hahn has what David Spurr calls a "commanding view" over the city. Spurr points out that a commanding view offers aesthetic pleasure on one hand, information and authority on the other. According to him this view conveys a sense of mastery over the unknown and what is often perceived by the Western writer as strange and bizarre (15). As we see in Hahn-Hahn's description, the commanding view diminishes the non-European city around Hahn-Hahn and offers her visual command over the surroundings. Hahn-Hahn's sense of superiority is based on the Eurocentric views that were expressed in the texts by authors, such as Herder, Schlemiel and Hegel.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> See the section "Orientalism and its Criticism", especially page 17 in the first chapter for more on the Eurocentric German views in nineteenth century.

The non-Europeans are seen as people at a primitive level of cultural and historical development. Just as Hahn-Hahn sees the Orient as the origin of Western civilization, she sees the native non-European people at an earlier stage of development than the European people. She describes Turks as lifeless, stagnant and lacking intellect:

Mir, ich gestehe es, ist diese Regungslosigkeit ganz unsäglich zuwider, sobald sie nicht aus einer Herrschaft der Intelligenz über den Körper entspringt. In Momenten tiefster geistiger Arbeit ist der Leib zuweilen wie paralytisch; das begreift sich. Aber Leute, denen die Welt der Ideen hermetisch verschlossen ist, erscheinen mir stupid und mitnichten würdevoll. (22)

To describe the laziness of the Turks she writes: "Ein Türk und jagen! Ein Türk und Vergnügen an starker, schneller Bewegung finden! Nein! . . . . Des Türken Genuß, Vergnügen und Zerstreuung ist Ruhe" (53).

According to David Spurr the colonizers' insistence on differentiating themselves from the colonized establishes a notion of the savage as Other, the antithesis of civilized value (Spurr 7). Hahn-Hahn insists on her radical difference from the native people as a way of legitimizing her superior position. She describes the non-Europeans as "barbarians," implying a primitive level of cultural and historical development. After seeing a gypsy in Turkey, she remarks: "Als ich neulich einem wunderschönen jungen Zigeuner in phantastischer Tracht mit einer Zither unter dem Arm begegnete, stand ich still, sah ihm nach

und dachte: der gebildete Mann braucht Intelligenz, der Barbar Schönheit." (57).

Hahn-Hahn maintains her distance toward the native people throughout her journey. As she comes in a village called Zedadani, the villagers offer her a place to stay. However, she declines it: "Allein weder ihre [der Dorfbewohner] eigene noch ihrer Häuser Nähe ist wünschenswert - wegen Ungeziefers - und wir ritten zum anderen Ende des Dorfes, wo wir auf den Trümmern einer kleinen Moschee . . . halt machten" (135).

While describing people in a village on the river Nile, Hahn-Hahn dehumanizes them: "So ist hier das Volk -- in der Art wie sein Vieh, Kamel und Esel, ohne Zaum und Zügel, gar nicht zu lenken, nur zu treiben." (274) By comparing the villagers with animals, Hahn-Hahn implies that they had little historical development from animals. She shows similar attitude toward Armenian people. She describes an Armenian woman as a "schönes, wildes Tier" (45). Speaking of an Arab camel drover Hahn-Hahn remarks: "Ich war im höchsten Erstaunen -- nicht daß er das Kamel küßte, das paßte diesen Halbwilden -- aber daß er überhaupt etwas vom Kuß wußte" (220). Hahn-Hahn's remarks show that she considers the non-Europeans, in this case the Arabs, as primitive people.

The Armenian people are also described as 'childish': "Da schaukelte noch die junge Armenierin, da treibt noch der Gaukler seine Possen, da wurde noch Zuckerwerk feilgeboten, und alles ging nach hergebrachter Weise im kindischen Treiben, ohne Intelligenz, ohne Idee, so fort" (48). Not only the non-

European people but the whole non-European world as such is made infantile. A good example is Hahn-Hahn's description of a village near Cairo:

Diese stillbelebte kindliche Welt, die üppig und reich aus den Wassern auftauchte und nur von harmlosen Tieren bevölkert war, kam mir vor wie am Schöpfungsmorgen; so merkwürdig friedlich und unentwickelt! Ich stand zuweilen still und sah mich um; eine solche Kindlichkeit unserer alten Erde kann man sich unmöglich vorstellen! Wie über Nacht geboren und in der Wiege liegend. Ich sage gar nicht, daß es wunderschön war. Ein Kind in der Wiege ist keineswegs schön, nur merkwürdig, weil es die erste Stufe des Menschenlebens ist, und hier war die erste des Naturlebens.(232)

The native people are also described as powerless and lifeless. After seeing the Sultan in Constantinople, Hahn-Hahn describes his face as "bleich" as well as "regungslos" and his eyes as "starr" and "glasig" (30).<sup>35</sup> She describes the whole Turkish empire as decaying and lifeless: "Ich stelle mir vor, daß das Reich an der Abzehrung langsam, langsam dahin stirbt, wie das immer den entnervten Orgasationen ergeht . . . Ich kann mir nicht vorstellen, daß die Türkei eine andere Zukunft haben könnte als in sich selbst zu vermodern" (46-47). The people and the Empire are also depicted as corrupt.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore Hahn-Hahn criticizes the Turkish people for being passive and depending on fate (114).

By depicting the non-European world as childlike as well as childish, non-intellectual and stagnant, Hahn-Hahn sets the stage for the Europeans to step in to control them and teach them. She regrets that the non-European people -- in this case

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<sup>35</sup> See pages 54, 292

<sup>36</sup> See pages 47, 68, 154, 185, 255

the Arabs -- are not learning anything from the Europeans: "Da er (der Araber) glaubt, nichts von ihnen [den Europäern] lernen zu können, so lernt er auch nichts, während seine Talente ihm doch sehr dazu befähigen. Daher ist es unerhört schwer mit ihm zu leben . . ." (159). Hahn-Hahn thinks that "industrious" and "efficient" Germans could improve these lazy uncivilized people: "Ach, liebes Herz, wäre das türkische Regiment ein zuverlässiges, ich meine ein solches, das Ordnung halten könnte in seinem eigenen Reich: dann ein paar tausend tüchtige, fleißige, arbeitgewohnte, brave deutsche Hände hierher zu schaffen . . . das könnte etwas Gutes werden"(129). Hahn-Hahn is arguing that the Germans could improve the conditions in Turkey.

Most of the time the non-Europeans are pictured as uncivilized barbarians, but the Bedouins are an exception to that. Perhaps attracted by the relatively free life style of the Bedouins -- their moving from place to place, their living in tents -- Hahn-Hahn idealizes them. Speaking of them she notes: "Es ist mir außerordentlich angenehm von Menschen umgeben zu sein bei denen das Geschöpf Gottes mir gefällt . . . . Ich nenne so den rohen Menschen - ich meine roh, wie man sagt rohe Seide, nicht präpariert . . ." (196). Hahn-Hahn sees the roughness of Bedouins in a positive way. She praises their simplicity: "Es war ein Stückchen paradiesischen Lebens: Menschen in den einfachsten befriedigendsten Verhältnissen, deren Wünsche und Bedürfnisse vollkommen der Sphäre entsprechen, welche sie ausfüllen sollen . . ." (199). Hahn-Hahn-Hahn

acknowledges that the Bedouins are "wild," but she praises their way of life:

Ach, die Beduinen! Friede über ihre Zelte, und Gott erhalte sie immer so wild und frei! Denn wild sind sie natürlich, und gebildet gar nicht . . . . Von der Geburt bis zum Grabe ist das Leben nie eine Last, nie ein Kampf, und ist es auch mit kleinen Mühen und Sorgen verwebt, so kennt es doch durchaus keine Qualen: keine Unruhe für die Zukunft, kein Mißvergnügen mit der Gegenwart, keine Reue über die Vergangenheit, kein Grübeln ins Nichts, kein Fliegen durchs All. Eine gelassene Zufriedenheit ist der volle, kühle Bach, der von einer Generation zur andern ein gesundes, frisches, tüchtiges Leben ausströmt. Daher ist auch jede Generation frisch, als sei sie eben aus der Hand des Schöpfers hervorgegangen, nicht welk, nicht grau, nicht matt wie bei uns . . . . (200-01)

For Hahn-Hahn the life of the Bedouins represents everything that nineteenth century Europe is not. Hahn-Hahn idealizes the Bedouins in relation to European society. Hahn-Hahn notes: "Der Bedouin ist der individuellste Mensch . . . . Davon hat der Europäer gar keinen Begriff". The simple and carefree life of Bedouins, their ease and harmony with the natural surroundings offer an antithesis to German society. Hahn-Hahn presents the Bedouins as "noble savages." Speaking of the European image of the "noble savage" Gerd Stein notes:

Das Bild vom edlen Wilden [hat] eine fatale Funktion, denn unaufkündbar ist es der ungeheuren Arroganz der Weißen gegenüber den Wilden verbunden. Wenn die Wilden 'auch' Menschen sind, ...dann gibt es weiterhin gleichwohl zwei Sorten von Menschen, nämlich Menschen und Auch-Menschen, und es bleibt prekär, der letzteren Spielart anzugehören. Trotz aller Gutwilligkeit verliert die eigens zugestandene Menschlichkeit nicht ihren gönnerhaften und damit herrschaftlichen Charakter. (10)

Although Hahn-Hahn idealizes the Bedouins she still refers to them as wild. In the light of Hahn-Hahn's negative description

of the non-Europeans as primitive people, the singling out of Bedouins as the "noble savages" seems even more patronizing. Hahn-Hahn simply projects her unfulfilled wishes on the Bedouins. The idealization of the Bedouins appears to be what David Spurr calls "imaginary wish fulfillment" (127) by Hahn-Hahn. Thus this idealization falls short of being a gesture that turns its back on European society in order to accept some alternative mode of being.

### **3. Description of Women**

As seen from the discussion of Hahn-Hahn's life in the second chapter, Hahn-Hahn recognized that women were denied equality in German society because of their gender. Hahn-Hahn discussed the situation of women in German society in her novels Gräfin Faustin and Der Rechte and demanded more freedom and equality for women. However, while describing non-European women Hahn-Hahn prioritizes the issue of race over the issue of gender: that is, she views these women more as 'non-Europeans' than as 'women' and she views herself more as a 'European' than as a 'woman'.

In her description of Oriental women Hahn-Hahn contests the stereotypical image of sensual and exotic Oriental women. She notes that the popular stereotypical picture of Oriental women is unreal and that sensual Oriental women exist only in the male fantasy: "Ich will durchaus die orientalischen Schönheiten finden, welche uns die Keepsakes in so reizenden

Stahlstichen vorführen, und die Dichter so anmutig mit Gazellenaugen und Gazellenbewegungen beschreiben. Bis jetzt habe ich außer in Smyrna keine gefunden" (131). She describes that in reality Turkish women are unattractive:

In der Wirklichkeit, in der schönen freien Natur, sind sie etwas leblos und plump, denn ich finde dieses ewige Kauern auf der Erde höchst ungraziös, ich möchte sagen monströs, weil man die menschliche Gestalt immer nur zur Hälfte sieht. Aber wohl den Frauen, wenn man sie nur sitzend erblickt! Welch ein Gang, welch krummen Beine, welche einwärts gekehrten Füße! Nicht einen Tanzmeister- nur einen Exersiermeister möcht' ich ihnen gönnen, damit sie nicht so gräßlich einher watschelten. (32)

Hahn-Hahn criticizes the unrealistic picture the of Oriental women: "Die orientalischen Dichter entlehnen von der Gazelle tausend Grazien um die Geliebte damit zu schmücken: die großen Augen, der leichte Gang, der zarte Fuß, die anmutigen Bewegungen. Bei der Gazelle habe ich das alles auch ganz richtig gefunden, jedoch noch nicht bei den arabischen Frauenzimmern" (165). The debunking of stereotypes by Hahn-Hahn underscores her claims of objectivity. The reader (in nineteenth-century Germany) is led to believe that Hahn-Hahn is uninfluenced and unbiased by the popular notions in German society about Oriental women.

Hahn-Hahn finds the Turkish women lifeless: "Wie Fleischklumpen sehen sie aus, die sich nicht aufrecht halten können, und in sich selbst zusammen sinken" (56). To emphasize their lifelessness she describes them as "welk, schwammig" and "aufgedunsen" (56). In an Arabian wedding which Hahn-Hahn attends, the bride seems to be rigid and stiff to her: "In

diesem schwarzen Anzug saß sie nun da, steif und starr, mit herabhängenden Armen, mehr einer Mumie als einem lebenden Wesen ähnlich" (121). Watching Turkish women in Damascus, they remind her of puppets: "Ich dachte zuerst immer an Marionetten, die sich durch Kunst bewegen" (143). By emphasizing the lifelessness and rigidity of non-European women and by comparing them to puppets, Hahn-Hahn seems to be suggesting that these women had no control over their life.

Hahn-Hahn's idea of beauty is influenced by European standards. Measuring the non-European women with this standard, she often compares them to animals. While describing women in Nubia she compares them to monkeys: "Die breiten blaugefärbten Lippen, der klaffende Mund, die grell weißen großen Zähne, die rollenden Augen -- der Affe ist fertig" (278). She describes the Turkish women as "braune Bären" (56), an Armenian woman as "wildes Tier" (45) and the women in the slave market in Constantinople as "Viehherde" (49) and one as a "Pferd" (51). Besides revealing Hahn-Hahn's bias about the lack of beauty in non-European women, these comparisons also show that Hahn-Hahn thinks that the non-European women are in the primitive stage of development.

Hahn-Hahn not only judges the physical appearance of the Turkish women but she also accuses them of immorality:<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Hahn-Hahn accuses not only the Turkish women but the Turkish people in general of immorality. Speaking of the story-tellers in the cafes in Constantinople, she writes: " Je lasziver diese Erzählungen, umsomehr gefallen sie, und hauptsächlich müssen sie Weiber zum Gegenstand haben; ... Und außerdem hörte ich, daß, wenn sich die Türken je auf eine Unterhaltung einlassen, so sei

Die Frauen sollen besonders trotz Schleier, Gitterfenster und Eunuchen, Liebeshandel genug anzuspinnen wissen -- hauptsächlich beim Besuch des Besestan. Daher existiert auch ein Gesetz, daß sie nicht in die Buden hineingehen dürfen, sondern vor derselben (sic) ihre Einkäufe machen müssen. Ferner ein anderes, das den Kaufleuten befiehlt möglichst unschöne Kaufdiener in ihrem Laden zu haben. Das alles zeugt nicht von wundervoller Sittenreinheit - sollte ich meinen. (55)

Hahn-Hahn's descriptions of the non-European women are mostly addressed to the European male audience as a corrective to their stereotypical image of the Oriental woman. Especially her letters with the description of the women in a slave market and in the harems are addressed to her brother. By going to the slave market where Europeans were usually not allowed and the harem where men were not allowed, Hahn-Hahn enters the interior spaces of the non-Europeans and observes them at a close range. Speaking about the description in Western literature of the interior spaces of non-Europeans, such as a night club in Saigon or sacred caves in India, David Spurr notes: "In these interiors the confrontation of cultures takes place face to face, or rather eye to eye, and it is here, at close range, that the gaze of the writer can have its most powerful effect" (20). Hahn-Hahn penetrates into the interior spaces of the Middle Eastern people such as the harem and the slave market. Although Europeans were not allowed to visit the slave markets, Hahn-Hahn manages to get inside one of them by offering money. She invites her brother to join her:

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sie beständig über Frauen, und in jener Manier. In den Vergnügungen eines Volks liegt so viel Charakteristisches!" (54).

Mein lieber Dinand, heute gedenke ich Dir ein ganz  
besondres Vergnügen zu machen, und Dich einzuladen mit mir  
den Sklavenmarkt zu besuchen. Wohlverstanden den  
Sklavinnenmarkt, den Blumenflor von Georgien und  
Zirkassien, und voll schwarzer äthiopischer Schönheiten -  
alles zu kaufen wie die schönste Viehherde! . . . Jetzt  
treten wir ein in das Paradies voll Houris,<sup>38</sup> gespannt,  
neugierig, erwartungsvoll (48-50)

Hahn-Hahn plays the role of an expectant and excited  
voyeur. She expects to see beautiful women in the slave market  
but is appalled at the sight of the black women who appear  
terrible to her European eyes: "O Entsetzen! Schauderhafter,  
abstoßender Anblick! Nimm Deine Einbildungskraft zusammen,  
stelle Dir Monstra vor, und Du bleibst noch weit hinter den  
Negerinnen zurück von denen sich Dein beleidigtes Auge mit  
Widerwillen abwendet" (50). Hahn-Hahn describes how the women  
are measured and probed by those people who intend to buy them.  
Instead of feeling compassion or sympathy for the slaves, Hahn-  
Hahn notes: "Ich muß ehrlich gestehen, daß mich bei der ganzen  
Prozedur nichts so anwiderte als ihre Häßlichkeit, und daß mir  
der majestätische Königsgeier zu Schönbrunn mehr Mitleid mit  
seiner Gefangenschaft einflößte als die Sklaverei dieser  
Geschöpfe" (51). Hahn-Hahn denies them the status of  
individuals and views them as objects:

Ich fragte mich heimlich: "Ist es möglich, daß eine  
Sappho, eine Aspasia, eine Maria Stuart, diese und  
ähnliche Weltwunder von Geist, Liebreiz und Schönheit,  
desselben Geschlechts sein konnten?" - und mit großer  
Zuversicht antwortete ich mir selbst: "Nein! Denn ein Weib  
ohne Intelligenz ist kein Weib mehr, sondern nur noch --  
Himmel, nun habe ich kein anderes Wort, als: ein Weibchen,  
und das klingt wie ein Schmeichelname der Zärtlichkeit!  
Aber ich meine: *une femelle*. Die Rassen! Von deren

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<sup>38</sup> Houris is a beautiful virgin in paradise in Muslim religion.



Verschiedenheit wird man durchdrungen, wenn man im Geist eine solche Schwarze neben eine Aspasia stellt; und die Kluft, welche diese beiden Wesen trennt, kann kein Philanthrop ableugnen. Wir sind von Staub und wir gehen zum Staub; aber für die paar Jahre, die ich lebe, danke ich denn doch meinem Schöpfer, daß es ihm gefallen hat, mir eine weiße Staubeshülle zu geben. (51)

Hahn-Hahn seems to be aware of the perishable nature of human life. She refers to her skin as 'Staubhülle' indicating that she considers her existence to be ephemeral. Nonetheless, in her perishable existence she is thankful to be a white person. Hahn-Hahn's comments about the black women reveal that her notion of race placed the Europeans at the top and the Africans at the bottom of the racial hierarchy.

In her description of the harem, Hahn-Hahn tries to contrast the stereotypical European image of Oriental beauty. However, she does this at the expense of the non-European women by describing them as objects rather than individuals. In nineteenth-century German society and in Europe in general, the harem was considered to be an exotic place associated with sensuality. Hahn-Hahn desexualises it by describing it as an institution that brings out the worst in a woman. In a letter to her mother written before she had visited any harem, Hahn-Hahn describes her expectations of the harem. She describes it as a place that makes women jealous, bitter and hateful:

Immer von Nebenbuhlerinnen umgeben, immer bewacht und umringt von diesen Scheusalen, den Eunuchen, immer unbeschäftigt, muß Eifersucht, Neid, Bitterkeit, Haß, Lust an Ränken, grenzenlose Gefallsucht als helle Flamme aufschlagen. Man will die gehaßten Nebenbuhlerinnen besiegen -- das liegt in der Natur jedes Weibes! (39)

Hahn-Hahn speculates that the popular belief in the happiness of women in the harem is wrong because their instinct must be struggling against the institution of harem. Hahn-Hahn makes a distinction between "instinct" and "consciousness" and concludes that the women in the harem are capable of having instinct but not a consciousness. As shown earlier, Hahn-Hahn is suggesting that these women have little historical development from animals:

Ja, sie treten in das Joch des Harems, und dessen Form ist ihnen zur Gewohnheit geworden; aber gegen den Inhalt sträubt sich ihr Instinkt -- ich will nicht sagen ihr Bewußtsein, denn das mag bei wenigen erwachen -- Nur der Instinkt, der unabweisliche, allmächtige. Da keine Geistes -- und Seelenbildung ihn bändigt und regelt, wie sollte es da nicht zu den heftigsten Ausbrüchen, zu den tiefsten Gemeinheiten, zu den größten Grausamkeiten kommen. Der Harem ist die wahre Anstalt um den Charakter der Frau zu verderben, und es ist wohl schade, daß er für europäische Augen mit undurchdringlichen Schleiern umgeben ist. (39)

In these comments Hahn-Hahn seems to criticize the institution of the harem which, according to her, leads to the degradation of women in the harem. Later on Hahn-Hahn's curiosity about the harem is satisfied after she visits the harem of Rifat Pascha. She describes the harem to her brother: "Mein lieber Bruder, so reizend Du Dir einen Harem vorstellen mögest, - ich muß Dir aufrichtig sagen: hat man zwei besucht, so sehnt man sich nicht nach dem dritten . . . ." (78) She contrasts the myth of the beautiful Oriental women in the harem by saying: "Wie sie aussehen, wirst Du ganz neugierig wissen wollen; und da tut es mir wahrhaft leid sagen zu müssen, daß wir auch nicht eine Spur von Schönheit gefunden haben" (80-81).

Hahn-Hahn participates in the activities of women in the harem by eating with them and having conversations with them through an interpreter. She finds their eating excessive, irregular and undisciplined. She thinks that the topics of their conversations show their indulgence of the flesh and she connects this with their physical and mental degeneration. She concludes from her visits: "Mehr noch als der Leib, wohnt hier der Geist im Käfig" (86).

Hahn-Hahn's second visit to the harem of an Arabian man in Damascus confirms her opinion of the harem: "Der Harem ist eine Wiese, die den Bedürfnissen des animalischen Lebens genügt" (153). She criticizes the women in this harem for their curiosity: "Sie (die Weiber) lärmten, lachten, schrien um mich herum, betrachteten mich, faßten meine Hände an - die Wilden der Südsee können nicht wilder in ihrer Neugier sein. So eine Masse roher Weiber zu sehen ist mir schrecklich. Lieber sehe ich eine Herde Kühe oder Schafe" (152). The curiosity of the women in the Harem is unacceptable to Hahn-Hahn because there is no intersubjective relation between Hahn-Hahn as the observer and the women in the harem as those being observed. There is no sense of common humanity shared between the 'I' and the cultural 'Other'. As a result any time a 'role reversal' happens, it is unacceptable to Hahn-Hahn. Hahn-Hahn always remains the observer, not the one to be observed.

In discussing the travel writings on the Middle East by British women in the nineteenth century, Billie Melman posits that women travelers "normalized and humanized" the harem (62).

That is, they participated in the ordinary activities and the rituals in the harem. She thinks that the relation between the women writers and the harem is intersubjective because women travelers are participant observers. She concludes: "This kind of participant observation, as a part of an intersubjective process, distinguishes harem literature from the more general discussion in Europe, on the exotic" (62). It is true that Hahn-Hahn participates in the activities of the women in the harem. However that participation does not make Hahn-Hahn's description of the harem 'harem literature' in Melman's sense because Hahn-Hahn lacks an empathy toward the women in the harem (and non-European people in general).

After seeing the harem and meeting the women living in the harem Hahn-Hahn writes: "Ach, welche eine Wonne, zu den alten sogenannten nordischen Barbaren, zu den Völkern germanischen Stammes zu gehören, bei denen bis in die graueste Vorzeit hinein das Weib den Platz einen Menschen einnahm" (153). Hahn-Hahn is glad to be European because she thinks that even primitive Europeans treated women as humans in contrast to non-European cultures, where women are confined to harems.

In her novels Hahn-Hahn shows that she was aware of the discriminatory treatment that women received in nineteenth-century German society. She criticizes German society when she is within this society. As soon as she is with non-Germans she aligns with her German identity by differentiating herself from the rest of the people and assigning hierarchical or ethical value to the distinction.

#### D. Conclusion

Pfeiffer and Hahn-Hahn offer their readers distinct presentations of their narrative selves. Their different backgrounds shape their texts differently. In spite of these differences, critics such as Annegret Pelz and Tamara Felden cannot resist comparing these two authors and passing evaluative judgment on their writing. Comparing Pfeiffer's Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land with Hahn-Hahn's Orientalische Briefe Pelz writes: "Im Vergleich zu Hahn-Hahns bewußter Symbolik sind Pfeiffers Texte prosaisch. Ihre Texte sind Fragmente, die sich unendlich verstreuen und ihren Bewegungen bis in den Tod auf der Reise folgen" (Europärinnen und Orientalismus 214). Tamara Felden concludes: "Generell zeichnet sich der Text Hahn-Hahns durch seine Direktheit und die offensichtliche Involviertheit der Autorin aus, während Pfeiffer gerade eine solche Beteiligung intellektueller wie emotionaler Art vermissen läßt" (102).

Not only was Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land Pfeiffer's first travelogue but she was also forced to be modest about her writing because of societal pressure. It is true that Pfeiffer and Hahn-Hahn traveled to the same part of the world (Middle East) at around the same time. However they could not be more different in background as writers. Helga Watt is right to point out that we should study Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer "without the need for proving one superior and the other lacking" (344).

Hahn-Hahn's awareness of the marginal position of women in nineteenth-century German society gives her a unique perspective of an outsider within Western culture as she observes the people in the Middle East -- the subordinate Other of Western culture. This gives her an opportunity to recognize the similarities between the marginal position of women within German society and the colonized position of Orient vis-à-vis the West, and form a common bond of empathy between herself and the Oriental people. Anngert Pelz thinks that travelogues by women describing their journey to the Orient is "die Begegnung zweier Weiblichkeitsbilder, er [der Reisebericht] beschreibt eine exzentrische Bewegung von einer Peripherie in die andere, die die Chance mit sich bringt, Selbst- und Fremdbilder aufzubrechen und neu zu schreiben." (Frauen Literatur Politik 206). However Hahn-Hahn fails to create new images of Self and the Orient that are non-hierarchical. She recognized that women were denied equality because of their gender in nineteenth-century German society. However the recognition of her gender marginality does not translate into the recognition of cultural marginality of the Orient, or women within that culture, vis-à-vis the West.

Speaking of women travelers in the nineteenth-century Shirley Foster claims:

The woman writer often represents foreigners sympathetically, as individuals with whom she tries to identify rather than as symbols of an alien 'otherness'. In her concern with relationships, rather than with larger political or social issues, she blurs the demarcation between 'them' and 'us' and may be less assertive than her male equivalent in her establishment of a subject position. (24)

However, Hahn-Hahn's writing shows a clear demarcation between "us" and "them." Hahn-Hahn's aristocratic origin, her success as an author and her financial independence give her more freedom in writing as compared with Pfeiffer. Hahn-Hahn uses this freedom to establish the narrator as an independent person not obliged to conform to the gender expectations from society. Hahn-Hahn frees herself from the gender category but she is unable to step outside her racial identity.

## Chapter V

### Conclusion

Speaking of the writing process for female anthropologists Ruth Behar notes: "When a woman sits down to write, all eyes are on her. The woman who is turning others into the object of her gaze is herself already an object of the gaze. Woman, the original Other, is always being looked at and looked over. A woman sees herself being seen" (2). This self-conscious process of writing by women anthropologists also applies to the travel writers Ida Hahn-Hahn and Ida Pfeiffer. As women travel writers in nineteenth-century Germany, they were indeed turning the people of the countries they visited into objects of their gaze. At the same time they were themselves objects of the gaze by nineteenth-century German society. Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer were aware of their status as "objects of the gaze" in German society. They were aware of their marginality in society due to their gender. The question is: how did their awareness of gender marginality influence their self-representation as well as the representation of the Other in their writing?

This dissertation answers that question by studying the travel writings on the Orient by Ida Hahn-Hahn and Ida Pfeiffer. It shows that Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer recognized their gender marginality in patriarchal German society. Their awareness of their marginal position offered them a chance to recognize the cultural marginality of the non-European Other vis-à-vis Western society. However, Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer embraced their roles

as Europeans, thereby escaping their gender roles. Belief in their superiority as Europeans led to a belief in the inferiority of non-European people. Contrary to the assertions made by many feminist critics, the depiction of the Other in the travel writings of Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer is colonial in nature.

The focus of this dissertation was on the depiction of the Orient in the travel writings of Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer. The Orient has been one of the West's images of the Other. Edward Said's basic thesis asserts that Western writers, especially since the eighteenth century, have constructed the Orient as the Other. Said calls the Western style of dominating, restructuring or having authority over the Orient "Orientalism." Orientalism was practiced in Germany as well as in other European countries such as France and Great Britain in the nineteenth century. It served as a tool for the colonial endeavors in France and England and justified the treatment of the colonized people by the Europeans, whereas for Germany it was a substitute for real colonies.

Germany did not have any direct nationalist interest in the Orient at this time. However, it shared an intellectual authority over the Orient with England and France. The idea of the Orient in Germany had little to do with real observation or historical data. On the one hand, the Orient was seen as a place for idealistic escape from rationalist European society. On the other hand, it was shown to be at a more primitive stage of development by philosophers like Hegel. Germany's intellectual authority over the Orient is evident in the idea of

"Oriental despotism." This idea was strengthened by Hegel's Lectures on the Philosophy of History, in which he presented the notion of the absence of subjectivity in the Oriental world. Hegel's notion of lack of subjectivity creates an image of the Oriental people as passive and lacking in desire.

There are striking similarities in the way both the Orient and women are defined by setting the 'civilized' European man as the norm. The Orient, as well as the woman, is objectified whereas the European man retains the subject position. Thus, the position of the Orient, as well the woman, vis-à-vis the European man is the same. Nonetheless, this does not necessarily mean that the non-European Other and the European woman would form a coalition to oppose colonialism. The power relationship between white European women and the non-European men and women is unequal. The inequality in this relationship shows that experiences of the Other cannot be defined just in terms of women's experiences.

I chose the texts Eine Frauenfahrt um die Welt and Reise einer Wienerin ins Heilige Land by Ida Pfeiffer, and Orientalische Briefe by Ida Hahn-Hahn to study their self-presentation as well as the presentation of the Orient. While maintaining an autobiographical approach to the texts, I point out the complexity of autobiographical writing by distinguishing the narrator in the text from the writer as a person outside the text. For example, by traveling alone to far away places, Pfeiffer broke away from the gender role expectations of

society. However, the narrator in her texts has to adhere to those gender role expectations because of social pressure.

The self-representation of Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer reflects the position of women in nineteenth-century German society and the ideas about women's nature that Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer might have experienced and internalized. Educators, philosophers, and writers developed and popularized a bourgeois gender ideology in the nineteenth century that defined women by their role as mothers, wives and housekeepers. It tied them to the private sphere of home. Socially, culturally, and economically, women were denied equal access and thus marginalized.

Pfeiffer broke away from gender norms by leaving the female domain of family and traveling alone to places far away. However, she could not completely disregard the pressure to recognize those norms. Coming from a bourgeois family Pfeiffer felt more pressure than Hahn-Hahn to conform to bourgeois gender ideology. In addition, she was dependent on her income from the sale of her books which might have forced her to appear acceptable to her readers.

On the one hand, Pfeiffer presents herself as a person with masculine strengths by emphasizing her belief in her willpower, her readiness to face adventure and her independence. She claims to be objective in her description. She portrays the narrator as an authoritative figure, who always has control over the situation. Pfeiffer is aware of the fact that she has crossed over the gender line. She often refers to her gender to emphasize that her journey was unique because it was a journey

made alone by a woman. This might be a strategy used by Pfeiffer to make her travelogue more marketable.

On the other hand, Pfeiffer feels the pressure to conform to gender norms. She often reminds her readers that she still believes in bourgeois gender ideology. Pfeiffer uses various strategies to appear feminine. She disguises her motive to travel under religious reasons because a religious journey was the most accepted form of travel for women. She tries to appear modest by denying political or scientific expertise. In order to deny that she is an author, she asserts that she never intended to publish her writing and emphasizes her lack of writing skills. As a result of these strategies, the narrator in Pfeiffer's writings appears feminine. Assuming the masculine voice and conforming to the bourgeois ideal of femininity simultaneously makes Pfeiffer's self-representation contradictory as well as gender-ambiguous.

The extent to which Pfeiffer internalized the bourgeois gender ideals or the extent to which she was using the strategies to appear feminine in order to avoid any public criticism is difficult to determine. Pfeiffer rebelled at an early age against her mother who tried to reinforce the traditional woman's role in Pfeiffer. She lived separately from her husband and above all she traveled alone to places far away. This biographical information about Pfeiffer leads me to believe that her efforts to appear feminine were more designed to compensate for her breaking away from the gender norms than the internalization of those norms.

Ida Hahn-Hahn came from an aristocratic family. By the time she set out on her journey to the Middle East, she was divorced from her husband and living with her companion Baron Adolf Bystram. As she was getting alimony from her husband, she was financially independent. The popularity of her novels and travelogues had established her as a successful author. Hahn-Hahn's awareness of her aristocratic origin, her financial independence, and her success as an author give her ammunition against the pressure to conform to gender expectations of society.

Hardly using any strategies to appear feminine, Hahn-Hahn portrays herself as an independent and self-assertive person. Unlike Pfeiffer, Hahn-Hahn does not limit her description to topics that were considered feminine. Refusing to be modest about her writing skills, she openly admits the joy of writing. She does not try to justify her travel by stating religion as the motive. Instead, she asserts that she is setting out on the journey to educate herself and to find hope for a troubled European society. Like Pfeiffer, Hahn-Hahn claims to be objective and authentic in her description. The gender ambiguity in Pfeiffer's self-presentation is almost absent in Hahn-Hahn.

Although the differences in their backgrounds, intentions, and accomplishments make their self-representation different from each other, their representation of the Other is not distinct. Both Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer formulate images of the Other that are Eurocentric. It shows that their gender

marginality within European society has its own margins, where they place culturally marginal non-European Other. The gender of Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer placed them in a position inferior to men in the patriarchal society at home. When Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer were away from home, they assigned the non-Europeans a symbolic place inferior to them. The gender marginality of Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer and the cultural marginality of the non-European Other are two distinct constellations of power.

Speaking of women's part in anti-Semitism and racism in Germany, Birgit Rommelspacher asserts: "Auch Frauen haben ihre Wünsche nach Ausbeutung, Unterwerfung und Eroberung" (120). She concludes: "Das Geschlechterverhältnis und die gesellschaftlich-politische Verortung von Frauen [sind] zwei verschiedene Bereiche, die ihre eigene Dynamik und ihre eigene Gesetzmäßigkeit entfalten, auch wenn sie nur in ihrer Beziehung zueinander zu verstehen sind" (120). The gender relations in a society and the socio-political orientation of women are independent of each other. The gender relations between men and women in a society might be colonial. That alone does not guarantee that those women will necessarily have a non-colonial attitude toward others who have an inferior position in relation to that society. More than gender, what contributes to the colonial or non-colonial attitude is an awareness of a power relationship between the Self and the Other and the willingness or unwillingness to show solidarity with the marginalized group. Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer were aware of the power that they had

over the non-European Other. Their unwillingness to show solidarity with the non-Europeans makes their stance colonial.

While defining the non-European Other Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer retain the subject position for themselves and objectify the Other. Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer establish their authority over the non-Europeans through demonstrations of moral superiority. Their sense of superiority is based on the Eurocentric views prevalent in the nineteenth century. The idea of European supremacy presented a world view in which the trade and the scientific expedition led by Europeans would ultimately lead to a more civilized world, in which the European principles would dominate. They describe the Arabs and the Turks as backward and lazy. The non-Europeans are seen as people at a more primitive stage of cultural and historical development than the European people. Pfeiffer seems to be influenced by the missionary movement which saw as its duty to convert the "heathens" into Christians. She shares their belief in the superiority of Christianity and hopes that they can "improve" the native people. By depicting the non-Europeans as childlike, non-intellectual and stagnant, Hahn-Hahn sets the stage for the Europeans to step in to control them and teach them.

Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer describe the Orient in a way that reconfirms its stereotypical image in German society. Pfeiffer portrays the other places she visits in terms of abhorrent smells, filthiness and poverty. Hahn-Hahn sees the Orient as a stagnant place belonging to the past. Her depiction of the

Orient lacks any references to the future. In her description she conjures up images of total chaos and anarchy in the Orient.

Their description of the Oriental women deconstructs the stereotypes of sensual and exotic Oriental women created by male writers. However, they replace them with new stereotypical images that are equally negative. By denying human qualities to these women, Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer objectify them. They describe them as lifeless and having little control over their life. Hahn-Hahn's and Pfeiffer's idea of beauty is influenced by European standards. Hahn-Hahn often compares the Oriental women to animals, suggesting that they are in a primitive stage of development. This representation of Oriental women by Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer is in contrast to their implicit self-representation as educated and having freedom to make their own decisions.

The description of harems by Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer is an attempt to demolish the stereotypical erotic images of harems. They desexualize the harem by emphasizing the lack of beautiful women there. Hahn-Hahn describes it as an institution that brings out the worst in a woman. She describes the women in the harem as jealous, bitter and hateful. Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer show little sympathy toward the Oriental women. The depiction of the Oriental women by Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer shows that the assumption of women as an already constituted and coherent group is problematic. One has to take into consideration differences not only between the genders but also within the gender itself. Gender is only one of the many factors that form the identities

of Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer as travel writers. More than their female gender, their identity as European influences their presentation of the Other.

Besides going to the Middle East Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer traveled to many other places. Pfeiffer, for example, traveled to Brazil, Tahiti and Madagascar. Hahn-Hahn traveled to places in Europe such as Italy and France. It would be useful to investigate the preconceived notions in German society about these countries which Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer visited and how the notions might be reflected in the writings of Hahn-Hahn and Pfeiffer. This dissertation contributes to the discussion about relationship between feminism and colonialism and shows that with these two writers colonialism was not an exclusively male enterprise.



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