

beschreiben. Zumindest aus ihren Texten spricht eine gewisse aggressive Abwehrhaltung, vergleiche zum Beispiel "staatliche gewalt / stattliche gewalt / alle gewalt den gewaltigen / alle gewalt den gewählten vergewaltigern . . ." (148). Zum anderen ist ihre Einstellung nicht im lesbischen Sinne als antimännlich zu verstehen, dagegen sprechen die Traumsequenzen wie die Einforderungen nach sexueller Befriedigung durch das andere Geschlecht in einer großen Anzahl von Texten. Einen expliziten Affront gegen lesbische Konzepte nimmt die Autorin im Text "die verletzte frau" (168-170) ein.

²⁰ In ähnlicher Weise argumentiert auch Ricarda Schmidt: "The body becomes the location of truth, the originator of words" (159).

²¹ In den Oktober- und Novemberwochen des Umbruchjahres 1989 engagierte sich Stötzer-Kachold in der Initiative "frauen für veränderung." Sie hielt diesen Rede-Text im Rathaussitzungssaal von Erfurt am 8. 11. 1989.

²² Zu den Schwierigkeiten vom "ddr deutschen" zum "bundesrepublik-deutschen" zu werden, hat sich die Autorin nicht nur in den Amsterdam-tagebuchnotizen (197-211) sondern auch in einem persönlichen Gespräch mit mir bekannt.

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Gender, Class, Jewishness, and the Problem of Self in Fanny Lewald's *Jenny*: Jenny's "schielender Blick?"

Thomas Mast

Denn wie sehr mein Sinn auch auf Unabhängigkeit und das Leben in der Welt gestellt war, so hing ich doch noch so fest mit dem Vater und dem Vaterhause zusammen, daß alles was ich erreichte, mir seinen wahren Wert erst durch die Gedanken an die Wirkung empfing, welche es auf meinen Vater machen würde. (Fanny Lewald)

Wie die befreite Frau aussehen wird, das ist heute mit Sicherheit und Vollkommenheit nicht vorstellbar, lebbar schon gar nicht. Um in diesem Zwischenraum, im 'nicht mehr' und im 'noch nicht' zu überleben, ohne verrückt oder toll zu werden, muß die Frau den schielenden Blick lernen, d.h. die Widersprüche zum Sprechen bringen, sie sehen, begreifen und in ihnen, mit ihnen leben—und Kraft schöpfen aus der Rebellion gegen das Gestern und aus der Antizipation des Morgens. (Sigrid Weigel)

The second passage, taken from Weigel's influential essay "Der schielende Blick" (1983: 105), which has greatly affected feminist critical discourse within German Studies during the 1980s, highlights the double existence of women (writers) in a patriarchal society and their attempt to find their social, political, and aesthetic identity. It describes both the problem facing women writers and a utopian outlook for dealing with this situation. While Weigel focuses on textual production by women from the 18th to the 20th century, her approach has been very helpful in analyzing the texts of 19th-century German women writers in particular. In fact, Weigel's quotation offers itself as a commentary on the first passage, taken from Fanny Lewald's autobiography *Meine Lebensgeschichte* (1861/62).¹

It was in the 19th century that women writers emerged in growing and documented numbers and joined literary discourse, assisted by the Romantic aesthetic's rejection of mimetic principles in favor of a more fragmented way of writing (Weigel 92). Elizabeth Friedrich, for instance, lists more than 4,000 women writers in her encyclopedia *Die deutschsprachigen Schriftstellerinnen des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts*. The attempts of women writers to emancipate themselves from the aesthetic constructs set up by the norms of patriarchal poetry, to use Gertrude Stein's term, were not homogeneous and not always successful. The literary production of women was characterized by various forms of contradictions. Among them, Weigel perceives contradictions

zwischen Öffentlichkeit und Befreiung, zwischen verschiedenen Gattungen des Schreibens, zwischen Emanzipationsprogramm und fiktionaler Phantasie, zwischen intellektueller Emanzipation und Liebesglück, zwischen äußerer Anpassung und subversivem Ausbruch. . . . ("Der schielende Blick" 88)

Despite, or rather because of these contradictions, one has to agree with Weigel that fictional and non-fictional texts of women—with all the texts' problems, weaknesses, and failures—are a testimony to the process of women writers' emancipation and therefore an important and necessary part of (a feminist) literary history ("Der schielende Blick" 84).

While Weigel's contributions in "Der schielende Blick" are still central to feminist critical discourse, it is worth noting that her poetics is almost exclusively structured by a binary opposition based on a center-margin, male-female concept. In light of feminist criticism informed by poststructuralist influences, such a position needs to be expanded in order to adequately describe female identity—both the discursively constructed one and the historically material one. For instance, with her concept of positionality, Leslie Adelson, although focusing on 20th- and not 19th-century women writers, provides an interesting elaboration on Weigel's thoughts. Adelson contends that female identities "cannot be surgically isolated from the simultaneously operative and differing factors of class and ethnicity" (115), and she concludes: "In order to account for 'difference' . . . we will need more than doubled vision to see either in terms of male-female, German-Jewish, [upperclass-lowerclass] . . ." (124).

Such an insight is also pertinent with regard to Fanny Lewald's

second novel *Jenny*, published anonymously in 1843. The two-part structure of this autobiographically influenced text has been overlooked by critics so far, possibly because there is no formal division as such. Part I of the novel depicts the development of Jenny Meier, a young upper-middle class Jewish woman. Despite her conversion to Christianity, she breaks off her engagement to her gentile fiancé, a theology student who stands socially below her, because she is unwilling to comply with both his religious demands and his notion of a passive, subservient wife. In Part II, after the broken engagement, Jenny devotes time to her father and to herself, but subsequently enters a new relationship with the nobleman Graf Walter, which ultimately also fails.

Previous readings of the novel from a feminist perspective, namely by Renate Möhrmann and Margaret Ward, have focused on two areas: Möhrmann reads the text against the background of the literary movement "Junges Deutschland" and views Jenny as the "Typus der Jungdeutschen Frau" (135), while Ward's intertextual approach stresses Goethe's literary paternity in Lewald's early novels and shows how starting with *Jenny*, Lewald distances herself from traditional concepts of love and marriage (62-66). In contrast to these interpretations with their primary emphasis on a male-female nexus, I suggest that one should read Lewald's text, with all its inherent contradictions, on two levels: first, as Jenny's search for identity at the intersection of class, gender, and Jewishness; and second, as a reflection on the situation of middle-class Jewish women (including Lewald herself) within 19th-century German bourgeois society.

II

Despite her popularity among the reading public and comparisons with George Sand, Fanny Lewald was hardly acknowledged by the male literary establishment during her lifetime and soon forgotten after her death. Rediscovered by feminist critics in the late 1970s, Lewald and her literary achievements have received divided responses. According to some critics, like Gisela Brinker-Gabler, the sociopolitical and religious issues in the early novels still deserve attention today (74f.),³ while Regula Venske and others are much more critical in their evaluation.⁴ Weigel, who belongs to this latter group, clearly privileges the 19th-century contemporary Louise Aston over Lewald: "E-

wimmelt in ihren [Lewald's] Texten von männlichen Erzählern und Frauenbildern, die der Männerliteratur entlehnt sind," ("Der schielende Blick" 97f.) while Aston's texts "nicht nur in der Fabel und den entworfenen Frauenbildern . . . außergewöhnlich [sind]" ("Dreifachcharakter" 363).

But Weigel's statement about Lewald is somewhat biased and too simplistic. She overlooks the following: first, according to Michel Foucault a writer's way of writing is "tied to the legal and institutional systems that circumscribe, determine, and articulate the realm of discourses" (130); among other discourses, *Jenny* is embedded in the discourse of marriage of convenience and, as Lewald herself pointed out, in the political and legal efforts of liberal circles of the 1830s and 1840s against reactionary tendencies in Prussia toward Jewish emancipation.⁵ The motto of the novel, taken from a pro-emancipatory text by Lewald's lawyer-cousin Heinrich Simon,⁶ shows this clearly:

Ein Stamm, aus dem der Erlöser, die Madonna, die Apostel hervorgegangen, der nach tausendjähriger Verfolgung dem Glauben und den Sitten der Väter treu geblieben, nach tausendjährigem Drucke noch hervorragende Größen für Wissenschaft und Kunst erzeugt, muß jedem anderen ebenbürtig sein.

Second, there is Patrocino Schweickhart's postulate based on Adrienne Rich's essay about Emily Dickinson that a women writer "must be read in light of her own premises, that the 'exclusions' and 'necessities' she endured, and, therefore, her own choices, were conditioned by her own world" (53). Consequently, before examining Lewald's novel, it is imperative that we look at the author's life prior to the publication of *Jenny* in 1843.

Fanny Lewald (Marcus) was born in 1811 in Königsberg as the oldest daughter of a Jewish merchant. She grew up knowing that she was Jewish and experiencing it as a stigma: "Daß wir Juden wären, und es schlimm sei, ein Jude zu sein, darüber war ich aber mit fünf Jahren, noch ehe ich in die Schule gebracht wurde, vollkommen im Klaren" (*ML* I 48)). This experience of otherness seems to have intensified after strong anti-Jewish sentiments in 1819 in Southern and Central Germany, sparking the desire within Fanny "an der allmählichen Emanzipation des [jüdischen] Volkes mitzuarbeiten" (*ML* I 98).⁷ It is noteworthy, however, that her encounter with the Jewish faith occurred through relatives who lived in a separate apartment in the paternal house and not through her enlightened yet conservative father,

who was not a practicing Jew. Biographical evidence also suggests that Lewald's mother had a strong desire for the family to convert to Christianity, the motivation behind which might well have coincided with Heinrich Heine's statement, "Der Taufzettel ist das Eintrittsbillet zur europäischen Kultur" (VI: 622). Fanny's conversion took place one year later than that of her brothers', and she would later regard this step as self-denial. Her parents, on the other hand, never seem to have converted, although they changed their name from Marcus to Lewald in 1831.⁸

Despite showing intellectual promise in her early school years, during which she and her two brothers attended a private school influenced by pietist ideas, she was not allowed, in contrast to her brothers, to receive a thorough education. Instead, her father, whom Fanny loved obsessively, tried to domesticate his daughter into a marriageable match by outlining her daily routine,⁹ controlling her social contact, and selecting her reading—Goethe and Schiller in particular. It is therefore not surprising that Fanny's feelings of marginality during her formative years arose because of two reasons: on the one hand for being Jewish and on the other hand for not being a boy. It is noteworthy in this context that Fanny's frustration at the experience of inadequacy as a young woman was never blamed on the father. At the age of fifteen, after reading Goethe's *Die natürliche Tochter*, Fanny's decision never to agree to a marriage of convenience took shape. Influenced by her Aunt Minna, who underwent a similar experience, Fanny carried through her position despite the expectations of her father.¹⁰ In retrospect, Lewald writes about the effects of this decision as follows: "Ich habe manche Herzenskrankungen erfahren, aber sie taten nicht so weh, denn sie kamen mir nicht von einem Vater, den ich mit einem wahren Kultus liebte" (*ML* II 136). At the same time, however, Lewald also points out: "All der Jammer, all die Kränkung, all die zornige Empörung, welche aus tausend Frauenherzen den Aufschrei hervorgebracht haben, ich habe sie seit jener Stunde an nicht zu empfinden aufgehört . . ." (*ML* II 137). During the winter months of 1832, Fanny experienced the stimulating intellectual climate of her uncle's house in Breslau, which contrasted significantly with that of her paternal home in Königsberg. There she had the opportunity to read works by Heine, Börne, and Gutzkow. Still, the influence of Lewald's father over her continued into the 1840s,¹¹ during which she was already active as a writer, living in Berlin. This was reflected in his

insistence that she write in secrecy and publish her work anonymously. While trying to 'write herself free' from the limiting atmosphere at home and to define and assert herself both as a woman and a writer, Lewald inhabited the conflicting and oscillating characteristics of many 19th-century women writers.

III

Already the opening of Part I of the novel, set in a large German trade city in the year 1832, articulates aspects of class, gender, and Jewishness. During an after-theater party in the best restaurant in town, the young male elite of the city celebrates the performance of the acclaimed actress Giovanolla with champagne. The narrator has the painter Erlau exclaim:

Sie soll leben und blühen in ewiger Schönheit . . . und möge es mir vergönnt sein, die Feueraugen und den Götternacken dieses Mädchens immer vor meinen Augen zu haben, wie sie sich mir bei der gestrigen Sitzung zeigten. Ihr seht sie alle in der falschen, täuschenden Beleuchtung der Bühne und könnt nicht ahnen, wie schön ihre Farben, wie regelmäßig und vollendet ihre Züge und wie üppig ihre Formen sind. Ich sage Euch, sie ist der Typus der italienischen Schönheit.¹²

Erlau's description of Giovanolla as an eternal beauty with the eyes and neck of a goddess coincides with the traditional male image of woman as muse who inspires him to strive toward artistic achievement and who at the same time is the object of representation. Subsequently, the expression 'Italian beauty' is used in a derogatory way as synonymous with Jewishness by the young, rich merchant son Horn, who responds to Erlau, "wenn sie nur nicht so verdammt jüdisch aussehen würde" (27). Similarly, Jenny is also referred to as "Das Schöne Mädchen mit dem dunklen Flammenblick" (31), with dark being equated also with exotic and sexual stereotypes, against which Horn sets a blond, subdued, almost Aryan ideal. His additional anti-Jewish remarks are tied to his belonging to patrician circles which, like in reality, wanted as little social contact with Jews as possible. This becomes evident when an English cousin of his, who has seen Jenny in the theater, expresses his wish to be introduced to the Meier family, and Horn exclaims "Nicht doch William, . . . meine Mutter würde das ungerne sehen . . ." (29).¹³

The setting of the second chapter changes from the public place of the restaurant to the home of the Jewish banker Meier, where the issue of Jewish-gentile relationships is also discussed. Mr. Meier comments on his son's struggles to become accepted both as a professional (he is a physician¹⁴) and as an individual by the Christian majority in town. With regard to a future Jewish wife of Eduard, he also briefly brings up the issue of the position of Jewish women within the context of 19th-century German bourgeois society—the issue which is at stake in the novel as far as Jenny's fate is concerned.

Jenny, of whom the reader so far has only heard, is also introduced in this chapter along with the theme of marriages of convenience. Jenny's position toward this subject is diametrically opposed to the conventional patterns of behavior of young women in the 1830s, thereby challenging and undercutting patriarchal authority. In a confident, assured manner she replies to parental intentions to marry her to her nephew Joseph:

Den Joseph heirate ich niemals. Niemals, Mutter!—Sage ihm das und auch dem Vater. Ich weiß, daß ihr es wünschet, daß Joseph es erwartet und mich nur erzieht, um eine gute Frau an mir zu haben; die Mühe kann er sich sparen. . . . Man kann mein Herz brechen, aber es niemals zu schmähhlichem Nachgeben, zu schwanken—der Gesinnung überreden—und das schwöre ich dir, lieber will ich sterben als Josephs Frau werden. (36f.)

What is also surprising about Jenny's statement is that it comes from the mouth of a fifteen year old girl who seems to possess a strong sense of self. This strong personality, combined with an extraordinary intellectual gift and a pronounced wit, was already characteristic of the eleven year old Jenny. Still, Lewald has her narrator take on a male mask and reveal this information through the eyes of Eduard, her older brother: "er . . . konnte [es] sich aber nicht verbergen, daß die übergroße Liebe seiner Eltern in Jenny eine Herrschsucht, einen Eigensinn entstehen gemacht hatten . . . und sich in Jenny zu viel Selbstgefühl und eine fast unweibliche Energie zeigten" (45). The male narrative perspective in this passage is conventional and is evidence of Weigel's observation in "Der schielende Blick" about women writers who hide behind a male mask. Yet at the same time the omniscient narrator shows Eduard as troubled by Jenny's personality development, a fact that destabilizes patriarchal concepts regarding women.

In her relationship with her gentile tutor Reinhard, a good friend

of Eduard's from their mutual university years, we also see Jenny's multifaceted personality. The reader perceives Jenny, overcome with love for Reinhard, in a subordinate position towards the male throughout most of the relationship—an impression that is undercut several times, however. At first, Jenny's "unfemale" qualities disappear. We come to know that there has been a "vorteilhafte Veränderung in Jennys Wesen" (51) and that she has developed into an "erblühende Schönheit" (52) at the age of sixteen.

Despite their feelings for each other, neither Jenny nor Reinhard is completely convinced of his or her love for the other. One obstacle that stands between them is their different religious beliefs. An interfaith marriage is out of the question, primarily but not only because of Reinhard's plans to become a minister.¹⁵ Subsequently, Jenny's decision to convert from Judaism to Christianity removes the religious barrier between the two lovers, and after her father consents to the engagement, the relationship between her and Reinhard seems to move toward a happy ending, which is also echoed and reinforced by the narrator. Nevertheless, the characters' actions and feelings subvert the narrator's comments. This is particularly true of Reinhard and his developing doubts, because he is quite aware of the dual, oscillating nature of Jenny. He loves and admires her outgoing and vivid personality, "und doch fühlte er eine Scheidewand zwischen sich und der Geliebten; doch konnte er die bange Ahnung nicht unterdrücken, es stehe ein Etwas trennend zwischen ihm und ihr" (65). The terms "Scheidewand" and "etwas Trennendes" are not only a reference to the outcome of the relationship between Reinhard and Jenny, but they also highlight Jenny's unconventional and potentially subversive nature. Within Jenny there is a quality that prevents her from being fixated and one-dimensionally described by both the narrator and the reader. At one point in the novel Reinhard's mother refers to her as "unheimlich, ja fast dämonisch" (179) and in another scene Reinhard himself can not help but state that Jenny does not merely embody the conventional image he has of her: "Aber in Jenny ist noch ein zweites, fremdes Wesen, das mich kalt zurückstößt, wenn mein Herz ihr offen und warm entgegenwaltet" (87).

The issue of class also separates Reinhard from Jenny. Raised in the upper-middle class and accustomed to a well-provided and care-free life, Jenny stands in contrast to Reinhold, whose pietist, yet also self-centered position rejects any material luxury. While this contrast

lies dormant for much of their relationship, it escalates to the point where Jenny's father grants permission to the marriage only if Reinhard either finds a position which allows him to provide well enough for himself and Jenny or if he accepts a dowry from Jenny's parents to compensate for a possible lack of income, an offer with which Reinhard is uncomfortable. Mr. Meier's conviction is partly shaped by his genuine care for his daughter and partly by the demands of his class status when he tells Reinhard:

Ich will nicht, . . . daß Jenny ohne allen Grund sich Entbehrungen auferlege; und ebensowenig als ich von Ihnen verlangen kann, ihre Stellung von Ihrem Gehalte zu verschaffen, ebensowenig können Sie von mir fordern, daß ich meine einzige Tochter in einer Hütte wohnen und sich mit ungewohnter Arbeit quälen lasse, während ich und wir alle uns hier im Schoße des Wohllebens befinden. (143)

An extension of her upper-middle class status is Jenny's artistic creativity and aesthetic pleasure. These two aspects set her distinctly apart from Reinhard and distinguish her also from most of the other characters in the novel, except for the artist Erlau, with whom she shares a love for art and a flexibility and brilliancy of spirit:

[T]rotz ihrer sittlichen Seele [hatte sie] das Gefühl für die Sittenlosigkeit mancher Verhältnisse verloren. . . . Der Figaro, Don Juan und vieles andere waren ihr Dinge, an denen sie sich von Kindheit erfreut hatte, ohne an das Gute oder Böse zu denken. Und das war ein Zustand, in den weder Eduard noch Reinhard sich versetzen mochten. (60f.)

It is also noteworthy that this statement includes not only Reinhard but also Eduard. By alluding to the fact that Eduard, who is otherwise overtly portrayed as a mover and shaker for Jewish emancipation, has an area where he is not his sister's equal or superior, the text highlights Jenny's singular position even more. Jenny is capable of blurring the distinctions between subject (audience) and object (music), of creating some kind of unity between them because she is able to indulge freely in the pleasures of music.

Jenny also possesses the gift of artistic vision, which enhances her ability as a painter: "Ich bedarf dieser sinnlichen Anhaltspunkte nicht, um mich deutlich und mit Vergnügen an Orte zu versetzen, die mir durch irgend etwas teuer sind" (162). Her artistic creativity is highlighted toward the end of the novel when the reader sees her drawing behind an easel. It is important to recognize that Jenny not only has

an affinity for art, but that she herself is now an artist. Being a (female) painter does not comply with the traditional image of women, while being an actress, as the Giovanolla figure shows, complies with that stereotype.¹⁶ Consequently, Jenny subverts the traditional image of women as a muse for male inspiration evoked in the beginning of the novel in the Erlau/Giovanolla relationship.

Contrasting Jenny with other women in the novel, especially Clara Horn, reveals her independent nature. Already as a young girl Clara was formed into a submissive, obedient woman, a characteristic which became "der edelste Schmuck der schönen Jungfrau" (66). While both Mr. Meier and Mr. Horn consider their daughters as their property, it is noteworthy that only Jenny, embodying Weigel's concept of "der schielende Blick," undermines paternal power, while Clara complies with it when she rejects a marital relationship with Eduard because of the interreligious nature of their relationship. Clara, an upper-middle class Christian woman, occupies various identity positions in the novel, and religion and class obviously place her in a privileged position. Nevertheless, she remains, after her brief controversial relationship with Eduard, a rather flat female character who accepts the status quo in terms of gender and class. Still, it needs to be mentioned here that Jenny's partial independence is a utopian projection on Lewald's part, because in her lifetime she very much complied with her father's wishes.¹⁷ In the context of this novel it is also noteworthy that Jenny's conversion from Judaism to Christianity is carried through while Eduard's is not; it is only briefly contemplated seriously, but long before his relationship with Clara Horn. Consequently, he renounces personal happiness for the sake of the principle of Jewish emancipation.¹⁸

Torn between her love for Reinhard and the recognition that she does not believe in Christian dogma, Jenny finds herself in a conflict of almost existential proportions after her conversion. Not only does she feel excluded from her ethnic and cultural roots—"sie [kommt] sich manchmal wie ausgeschlossen oder verstoßen von den Ihren vor" (208)—but she does not feel any closer to her fiancé either. Instead of plunging with closed eyes into a labyrinth in which both Reinhard and she could lose themselves, Jenny writes Reinhard a letter, after a fierce internal struggle, to let him know about her true feelings for Christianity. Through her rational decision—"Ich kann nicht anders! Diese Überzeugung ist stärker als meine Liebe" (212)—Jenny *nolens*

volens breaks off the engagement and seems to gain what Ward perceives as self esteem (72) and what Möhrmann regards as Jenny's genuine departure from the conventional woman character.¹⁹ I concede that such an assessment holds true for most of the novel, but certainly not for Part I; while there is no formal division in the text, the narrator refers to it, trying to fill out "den Zeitraum von acht Jahren, . . . der zwischen der ersten und zweiten Hälfte unserer Erzählung liegt" (221). Both critics seem to have overlooked a passage toward the end of Jenny's letter to Reinhard, where she takes on a submissive position,²⁰ looking up to Reinhard as if he had omnipotent powers: "und mit dem Gefühl der tiefen Liebe . . . werfe ich mich an deine Brust. Du sollst mir sagen, wie ich Frieden mache zwischen Liebe und Glauben, wie ich mich wiederfinde in dem Gefühl des Kampfes" (212f.). And some pages later she exclaims with regard to Reinhard: "Ich fühle keinen Stolz, . . . nur das Bedürfnis seiner Liebe, die mein höchstes Gut ist" (218). So once again there is a tension between the narrator and Jenny when the narrator has Jenny undercut her previous utterances. These examples demonstrate that Jenny, despite her frankness and honesty, is not yet an emancipated woman, for in terms of gender relationships she clearly defines herself through the male. At the end of Part I Jenny's identity is still split: the conversion to Christianity has not proved to be the answer to her longing for personal fulfillment; rather, it has reinforced her self-division, because in terms of religion she is no longer Jewish, but she is also not perceived and accepted as a Christian by the gentile majority. Her relative Joseph put it succinctly relatively early in the novel: ". . . aber Du wirst niemals Christin sein noch Jüdin" (84).

The second part of the novel is set eight years after the separation between Jenny and Reinhard, who, as it turns out, became engaged to Therese, Jenny's conventional and seemingly content yet hypocritical female companion. In addition to the time difference between the first and second part of the novel, we also encounter a change in locale. The novel is not set in Jenny's hometown anymore but in Baden-Baden, and one could take this aspect as an indication that Jenny has undergone a change. Also, she is no longer seventeen but twenty-five years old. At first, however, the narrator creates a different impression in a retrospective narration. Jenny has remained under the influence of her father, for it is he who decides that she has mentally recovered from her unhappy relationship and suggests a trip to France and

Italy. Despite several marriage proposals over the years, Jenny has remained single and decided after her mother's death to live with her father and keep him company. This kind of thinking, though, is quite conservative, since Jenny seems to suppress her own desires by projecting them onto her father. However, when the novel continues, there is reason to believe that Jenny is on her way to a new identity.

This notion is reinforced by the renewed contrast between Jenny and Clara. Throughout the novel Jenny has been compared with several female characters, notably Therese and Clara, but the juxtaposition of Jenny and Clara in Part II shows how much the latter complies with the traditional female image of housewife and mother and how much Jenny deviates from it. The narrator does not fail to emphasize that the two women have grown apart, despite their former friendship and regular correspondence: "sie [waren] einander in ihrer gegenwärtigen Entwicklung fremd and wußten sich nicht recht zu einander finden" (229). Clara's life as wife and mother, her attitude and thinking, reflects the restricted realm of a traditional, married female who has abandoned any desires and interests outside of the house as far as she herself is concerned, "denn sie lebte doch eigentlich nur in ihrem Manne und in ihren Kindern" (230). Clara also professes, "wir Frauen sind so sehr gewöhnt, uns nur innerhalb unseres Hauses zu denken, daß wir erschrecken, wenn wir uns außerhalb desselben handelnd erblicken" (233). While the narrator does not directly refute this character's utterance in this novel, it is one of Lewald's achievements in her non-fictional writings to point out the correlation between the position of women in society and their traditional role at home, encouraging a departure from these traditional roles by demanding a professional life for women.²¹

Lewald's text, with its subversive quality, offers different responses to the social roles of middle-class women in the 19th century. In Jenny, for instance, Lewald offers the model of what Weigel has referred to as double existence: on the one hand she occupies the role of housekeeper and daughter and on the other she has created space and time for herself and her own activities. Jenny has not accepted the limitations that were placed on women because she tries within the confinement of her environment to develop her personality:

[S]ie [hing] an den Plänen und Hoffnungen Eduards, nicht um seinetwillen allein, sondern weil sie auch die ihren geworden waren. Geistige und künstlerische Beschäftigungen füllten die größte Zeit

ihres Tages aus, und mit ihrer gewohnten Lebhaftigkeit strebte sie nach neuen Kenntnissen, nach höherer, vielseitiger Ausbildung der Anlagen, die sie ungenützt in sich fühlte. (230)

For numerous women, both historic and fictional, aesthetic and artistic activities became complements to day-to-day activities. While Bettina von Arnim, or for that matter Lewald herself, turned to writing in her double existence as a woman, Jenny gradually turns to painting and drawing, as Part II of the novel shows.

Jenny's otherness is also manifest in her disregard for social conventions. This attitude separates her from both male and female characters of her own social class and the one above her. This is already indicated in the first part of the novel when she takes care of a poor family, and it is highlighted even more toward the end of the novel when Jenny, in accordance with her slogan "Tue was du sollst, komme was mag" (233), takes in a baby and her lower-class mother whom she found sick and unconscious on the side of the road. Lewald's interest in and concern for the socially disadvantaged is also evident in other texts. In *Das Mädchen von Hela* (1859), Lewald focuses on the female servant issue by depicting the fate of the maid Katharina. *Die Familie Darner* (1887), a novel based in Königsberg, includes a scene on Christmas Eve, when the Jewish Flora Lindsheim visits a homeless gentile laundress. Jenny's own crossing of class and religious boundaries, motivated by genuine human concern for mother and child, highlights her partial independence from societal conventions and expectations:

Ich konnte doch unmöglich die Frau allein und hilflos liegen lassen, bis ich von hier oder aus der Stadt Beistand geholt hatte. Zudem hatte ich das schreiende Kind doch mit mir nehmen müssen und endlich weißt du, liebes Clärchen, daß mir die Urteile der Menge sehr gleichgültig sind, wenn ich das, was ich tue, vor mir und meinem Vater verantworten kann. (232)

Despite the reference to her father, the emancipatory element in Jenny's utterance should not be overlooked since Clara Horn and Graf Walter, for instance, do not wholeheartedly approve of Jenny's action.

During a soirée given by the Geheimrätin von Meining—not coincidentally the protagonist from Lewald's first novel *Clementine* (1843)—Jenny gives an overwhelming vocal rendition of Byron's "Mädchen von Juda." This scene, like the previous woman-and-child episode, incorporates issues of class, gender, and Jewishness and highlights Jenny's individual and controversial nature with her partial re-

luctance to comply with traditional norms of behavior in public. The ambivalent reaction of the predominantly noble audience to Jenny's eulogy reveals this clearly: "Einige priesen ihre Schönheit und Anmut, andere fanden ihr Auftreten abstoßend und stolz, zu ernsthaft und selbstbewußt für ein Frauenzimmer . . ." (258). Within a gentile noble circle a different social code of behavior is expected from a Jewish, bourgeois woman. The reaction of a 'Stiftsdame' to the song but also to Jenny's status as a convert underscores this in particular: "es mag unangenehm genug sein, dem jüdischen Volke anzugehören, indes ist es doch nicht unsere Schuld, daß Fräulein Meier Jüdin ist und sich dessen schämt . . ." (258). This quotation is representative of what Sander Gilman writes about Ludwig Börne's conversion experience and is applicable to Jenny's situation: "Class and Language are the markers of the Jew. . . . Why does he [she] feel himself [herself] always seen as a Jew? Why can he [she] not hide even in the church? Because he [she] is inherently a Jew, at least in the eyes of the Christian World" (162). While the aspect of class in conjunction with Jewishness is emphasized in this novel—all Jewish characters are middle- to upper-middle-class and occupy stereotypical professions—the aspect of language, the hidden language of Jews to use Gilman's term, is not obvious at all in the novel: all members of the Meier family speak standard German and only their friend Dr. Steinheim seems to use discourse in one or two instances that is vaguely tinged with Yiddish. As for Lewald's use of language as a female German-Jewish writer in mid-nineteenth century Germany, the absence of Yiddish elements in this novel is indicative of two things: first, of a strong assimilative tendency on Lewald's part not to be recognized as a Jewish writer and second, of compliance with male dominated literary discourse, because by rejecting Yiddish she rejects an individual voice of her own.

Before the enlightened and tolerant Count Walter, a friend of the Geheimrätin, experiences his epiphany-like feeling of love for Jenny, his perception of her is not entirely different from that of his peers at the reception. In a letter to his uncle, who has heard rumors of his nephew's misalliance, Walter's ambiguous attitude surfaces with regard to aspects of gender:

Es ist wahr, sie ist schön und liebenswürdig in hohem Grade, aber eine gewisse Jugendlichkeit, das weiblich Weiche fehlt ihr, das man an Mädchen ungern vermißt. . . . [S]ie würde, wie mich dünkt, nicht das Geringste tun, die Meinung oder Gunst eines Mannes zu

erwerben. Gestehen Sie, das ist eigentlich nicht die Art, welche wir an einem Mädchen lieben. Es liegt etwas Männliches darin, das interessant ist, . . . unser Vertrauen, unsere Freundschaft weckt, aber Liebe erzeugt es nicht. (234)

What is interesting in this male statement is not only the irony that undercuts the statement when Jenny's "unwomanly" qualities ultimately spark Walter's love for her. In addition, the words of trust and friendship, uttered almost in passing, are quintessential components in a gender relationship that is built around the individuality and equality of the partners. In another passage of Walter's letter, aspects of class and Jewishness are highlighted:

Es würde Sie selbst ergreifen, wenn Sie Jenny mit Stolz von dem Unglück sprechen hörten, das sie mit Tausenden teilt und für alle empfindet; denn obwohl sie lange zum Christentum übergetreten, ist sie von Grund der Seele Jüdin geblieben. . . . Also unbesorgt mein väterlicher Freund! Finden Sie mir in unseren Kreisen eine liebenswürdige Gattin. (234f.)

Although she loves Walter, Jenny consciously rejects a marriage to him at first. On the one hand, she doesn't want to involve him in conflicts of social status (an anticipatory element in terms of the novel's conclusion), an aspect which is also brought up by Jenny's father when he is reluctant to accept Walter's request for the hand of his daughter: "Aber die gräflich Waltersche Familie könnte vielleicht die Tochter eines Juden nicht der Ehre würdig erachten, welche Sie ihr mit ihrer Wahl zeigen" (243). On the other hand, Jenny does not want to give up her freedom in a marriage: "Ich will keinem Menschen etwas verdanken, das er jemals bereuen könnte, mir gegeben zu haben. . . . Mir fehlt die Fähigkeit, mich in dem Leben eines anderen aufgehen zu lassen . . ." (247). The Geheimrätin, however, reminds Jenny that this conclusion is not necessarily true, and the reader finds a similar indication in Walter's words when he, using "Das Bild des Baumes und des Schlingkrautes für die Ehe," tells Jenny, "Sie glauben nicht wie müde ich dieser starken Eichen bin, an die sich zärtlich der Efeu anschmiegt" (227), hereby alluding that in terms of interpersonal and class relationships he is willing to depart from the conventional (male) position of his class.

But when Jenny survives a carriage accident, she regards the outcome as God's verdict and accepts Walter's proposition. The conclusion of the novel, however, does not have a happy ending. Walter is

killed in a duel provoked by societal prejudices in terms class and religion, and Jenny dies suddenly after his death.

IV

Gabriele Schneider has observed that an open-ended conclusion to Lewald's *Jenny* would have been more convincing (91). But despite the plot's closure, this novel is far from traditional. The text itself does not incorporate an explicit utopian perspective at the novel's end, in spite of Lewald's belief in the emancipation of women and Jews. She was much too aware of the social conditions of mid-nineteenth century German society—which were characterized to a large degree by gender inequality, class antagonism, and religious intolerance—to present a fairy-tale ending. Yet Lewald's discursive strategies situate the text in the "nicht mehr" and "noch nicht" to use Weigel's words, and with her dialectic treatment of gender, class, and Jewishness in this novel the writer problematizes these issues, emphasizes her social awareness, and inscribes the possibilities the future holds in terms of gender relationships in particular.

In her character Jenny, Lewald demonstrated the complex and often contradictory identity formation of a German-Jewish upper-middle class woman. Aspects contributing to this process do not operate separately but concurrently, and they often intersect. In terms of gender relationships Jenny oscillates between the internalization of traditional characteristics and the liberation of herself from them. In terms of being Jewish she experiences prejudice and resentment by the gentile majority despite her assimilation and conversion, and because she does not want or cannot return to her Jewish origin, she develops signs that Gilman has termed self-hatred. In general, Jenny's way of coping with conflicting tendencies is either through conformity to established norms or rebellion against them.

Lewald's own positionality in 1843 as a beginning German-Jewish middle-class woman writer is also characterized by numerous contradictions: (1) publishing anonymously, (2) experiencing an independent life style in her early thirties while at the same time feeling strong ties to father and family, (3) writing as a woman but attempting not to be recognized as such, and (4) writing in German while having different linguistic roots. Despite her complex life and wide-ranging oeuvre,

some critics have tended to pigeonhole Lewald, for instance by classifying her as a member of "Junges Deutschland" or as a (Prussian) feminist. Such an attitude, however, is too narrow and too one-sided to do justice to the person and writer Fanny Lewald.

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Notes

¹ All subsequent quotations from Lewald's three volume autobiography *Meine Lebensgeschichte* (ML) are based on the edition by Ulrike Helmer: ML III 77f.

² Cf. Renate Möhrmann, ed., *Frauenemanzipation im deutschen Vormärz* and Elke Fredriksen, ed., *Die Frauenfrage in Deutschland 1865-1915*, both of whom include texts by Fanny Lewald in their respective anthologies.

³ Cf. also Schneider for an overall positive tenor in the most recent monograph on Lewald and her comprehensive oeuvre and Brigitta von Rheinsberg's biography *Fanny Lewald. Geschichte einer Emanzipation*.

⁴ In her 1983 essay Venske makes the later oeuvre of Lewald the focus of her analysis and offers "eine Kritik bzw. Revision der gängigen Lewald Rezeption" (372). In her 1989 essay, published as an epilogue to Lewald's autobiography (ML), Venske presents a more balanced assessment.

⁵ Cf. the 'Judenedikt' of March 11, 1812 which granted Jews living in Prussia the rights as "Inländer und im allgemeinen gleichberechtigte Staatsbürger" (Tourey 281), but with the restorative tendencies since 1815 the legal and political situation of Jews in Prussia became more heterogeneous and essentially worse.

⁶ Cf. Simon's *Die preußischen Richter und die Gesetze vom 29. März 1844* (Leipzig: O. Wigand, 1845).

⁷ I see a correlation between the overall assimilation tendency among German Jews in the 19th century and Lewald's apparent conservative attitude and affinity with patriarchy.

⁸ In the introduction to *Jenny*, Ulrike Helmer claims that the whole Marcus family converted to Christianity. I do not find such a position confirmed in Lewald's autobiography, where the name change of Mr. Marcus is tied to a petition to the government. Moreover, he did not consider conversion seriously for fear of alienating orthodox business partners in Poland.

⁹ Cf. "Stundenzettel für Fanny Marcus" (ML I 140-141).

¹⁰ In 1836 Lewald's father wanted her to marry a civil servant, whom she did not love. She asserts that "nichts . . . [sie] bestimmen könne, eine Heirath ohne Neigung einzugehen . . . [und daß ihr] eine Dirne, die sich für

Geld verkaufe, wenn sie nichts gelernt habe und ihre Familie arm sei, nicht halb so verächtlich vorkomme als ein Mädchen, das genug gelernt habe, um sich zu ernähren, und sich für Haus und Hof verkaufe" (*ML* II 134f.).

¹¹ Both Lewald's affection and respect for her father and her embeddedness in patriarchal structures is evident in the following passage: ". . . und von dem Augenblicke an, in welchem mein Vater mir das Recht zuerkannt, mein Denken in Worte niederzulegen und der Öffentlichkeit zu übergeben, habe ich von ihm nie auch nur den leisesten Angriff gegen die mir ausgesprochenen Überzeugungen gehört, auch wenn er sie vielleicht anders gewünscht haben würde, und ich habe gerade darin die Größe seines Verstandes und die Stärke seines Adels bewundert. Von der Stunde ab, in welcher er mich als freie Persönlichkeit seiner natürlichen Zucht entlassen, hat er meine Freiheit und mein Recht auf Selbstbestimmung respektiert, wie er jeden Respekt für sich und seine Handlungen von jeher und von jedem beanspruchte" (*ML* III 36f.).

¹² Lewald, *Jenny* 27. All subsequent quotations from *Jenny* will be given in parentheses and will refer to the 1988 edition.

¹³ As another example, during their short time in school together Jenny is not allowed to socialize with Clara, "weil Jenny's Eltern Juden wären und ihre [Claras] Eltern diesen Umgang niemals gestatten würden" (46).

¹⁴ In the 1830s Jews' access to a university education was limited almost exclusively to the medical field; studies in the field of law and philology were an exception because Jews were barred from government positions. Obtaining a doctoral degree, except in the medical field, was often tied to conversion (Toury 175f.).

¹⁵ While marriages between Jews and Christians occurred in social reality, for instance in England and the Netherlands, these relationships were very seldom and often accompanied by societal prejudices and resentments. For a fictional depiction of a marriage between a Christian and a female Jew see Karl Gutzkow's *Wally, die Zweiflerin* (1835).

¹⁶ Cf. Weigel "Der schielende Blick" 97f. for male images in Lewald's novels.

¹⁷ Lewald's father terminated her relationship with the candidate of the ology, Leopold Bock, after whom the character Reinhard is modelled.

¹⁸ The passage about Eduard reads as follows: "[N]icht umsonst hatte er seine Hoffnung geopfert und der Geliebten entsagt. Er fing an wieder vorwärts zu blicken, mit neuem Eifer seine medizinischen Studien und die Bestrebungen aufzunehmen, die er im Verein mit gleichgesinnten Männern schon früher für die Befreiung seiner Glaubensgenossen gemacht hatte" (207). Cf. that Lewald's brothers converted to Christianity before she did and that her father initially didn't see any benefit for his daughter to convert (*ML* I 195ff.).

¹⁹ In contrast to her statement in the letter to Reinhard, Möhrmann regards Jenny's refusal to agree to a marriage of convenience in the begin-

ning of the novel as the reaction of a spoiled, stubborn child (136).

²⁰ There is also the paternal demand to let go of Reinhard: "Du warst Reinhard's Braut, aber du bist auch meine Tochter; auch die Ehre deines Vaters muss dir heilig sein, auch ihr mußt du ein Opfer bringen können, ja, ich fordere, daß du es mir bringst" (219), which reinforces Jenny's entrapment in conventions.

²¹ Cf. Lewald's essays "Einige Gedanken über Mädchenerziehung" (1843) and "Osterbriefe für die Frauen" (1863).

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BOOK REVIEW FOCUS: Recent Works by Hans-Jürgen Heise

Christina L. Bonner

Ich stamme aus einer Kleinstadt: Bublitz, einem unbedeutenden hinterpommerschen Ort, fast außerhalb der Geschichte. Dort bin ich als Kind eingetaucht in die weite Landschaft, die mich umgab und die mir zugleich ein lockendes Abenteuer war und ein Labyrinth phantasie-aufgepeitschter Ängste. (7)

So begins Hans-Jürgen Heise's personal and literary autobiography, *Schreiben ist Reisen ohne Gepäck*. The opening section focuses primarily on the first thirty years of Heise's life, with emphasis on the adventurous, unsettled character of his childhood and its significant role in his writing. Heise opens with a series of detailed and vivid autobiographical snapshots: he was born in 1930 in a small town that was later destroyed during the second world war. At age four he dealt with his mother's death, the onset of asthma, and the beginning of an itinerant lifestyle under the tutelage of various relatives. At the end of the war he found himself in East Berlin, translating American short stories and writing book reviews, commentaries, and poetry for *Sonntag*. Heise goes on to recount his flight from the GDR only five years later, an event followed by a period of intensive writing and autodidactic studies in philosophy, literary history, and psychoanalysis. In 1958 he began working as *Archivlektor* in Kiel, and by 1961 his debut collection of poetry, *Vorboten einer neuen Steppe*, had been published. Heise's 1964 appearance before the *Gruppe 47*—the "Schnellfeuer-Rhetoriker" (57)—is recounted in *Schreiben*, as are a series of trips to Spain and Latin America beginning in 1968 and their influence on his writing.

The next sections of *Schreiben* deal mostly with literary matters: interviews, speeches, essays, and two short segments resembling poetological proverbs. Heise openly and clearly reveals his sources of