NARRATING THE SELF – WOMEN IN THE PROFESSIONS IN GERMANY

1900-1945

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ABSTRACT

Women's perception of university education and professional life during the period 1900 to 1945 is the focus of this study. In order to examine these perceptions, the thesis undertakes a close textual analysis of autobiographical writings by two medical doctors, Rahel Straus (1880-1963) and Charlotte Wolff (1897-1986) and the aviator Elly Beinhorn (1907-2007). The images employed in these texts indicate the intricate ways that individual women in the professions define their sense of who they are in relation to their surroundings and how that sense may shift in different settings and at different times, or may ostensibly not shift at all. I have developed a differentiated language for the purposes of articulating the fluidity. This language allows me to take apart narrative levels and to examine the importance that is attached to gender in relation to religion, race, nationality, sexuality and professional identities. Through differentiating between narrative levels I am able to juxtapose life experiences that at first glance seem unconnected and to show this can be done without imposing binary classifications such as 'emancipated' or 'un-emancipated', as 'political' or 'apolitical' or 'victim' or 'perpetrator'. The language that I have developed enables me to explore the articulation of self where it cannot be classified and where self should not be judged.

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1. INTRODUCTION

> Ich denke mit Freude an unsere Abende zurück, die fast immer anregend waren, in denen wir mit den interessantesten Frauen zusammensaßen, beteiligt am Aufbau eines neuen Frauendaseins[1].

This quotation from Rahel Straus's autobiography *Wir lebten in Deutschland*, published in 1961 is a comment on her experiences in the first 'Studentinnenverein' at the University of Heidelberg where in 1900 she was one of the first women students. The university is portrayed in the text as an institution where female students could negotiate the process of creating a new sense of what it meant to be a woman in the context of the academic opportunities which were opening up to them. I understand the term 'negotiate' to signify the discussion and debate undertaken by the women. Women's perception of university education and professional life during the period 1900 to 1945 is the focus of this study. In order to examine these perceptions, the thesis undertakes a close textual analysis of autobiographical writings by two medical doctors, Rahel Straus (1880-1963) and Charlotte Wolff (1897-1986) and the aviator Elly Beinhorn (1907-2007). The texts I have chosen to analyse are Rahel Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland. Erinnerungen einer deutschen Jüdin 1880-1933,* Charlotte Wolff, *Hindsight*[2] and Elly Beinhorn, *Alleinflug. Mein Leben.*[3] I compare the aviator's

[1] Rahel Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland. Erinnerungen einer deutschen Jüdin 1880-1933* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1961), p.94.
[2] Charlotte Wolff, *Hindsight* (London: Quartet, 1980).
[3] Elly Beinhorn, *Alleinflug. Mein Leben* (Munich: Herbig, 2007). The autobiography was first published in 1977 and republished in 2007 to commemorate the author's hundredth birthday. Apart from some structural rearrangement and the addition of a foreword and new cover the 2007 edition remains unchanged from the editions published in 1977 and 1981. The thesis refers to the 2007 edition.

autobiography with her travel accounts published during the Weimar and National Socialist period. These are *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt* [4] and *180 Stunden über Afrika*[5]. I will also examine specific episodes from the biography she wrote of her husband, who was an acclaimed racing driver during the Third Reich, in which she depicts her experiences and feelings during the marriage[6].

The images employed in these texts indicate the complex ways that education and professional life are depicted within the texts. These images invite close textual reading because they contribute to our understanding of how individual women in the professions define their sense of who they are in relation to their surroundings and how that sense may shift in different settings and at different times, or may ostensibly not shift at all. Within each of the texts 'womanhood' is defined and redefined in different settings and in ways that refute attempts to categorise women by profession and by the period when they entered these professions. The thesis acknowledges the limitations of the term womanhood because of the essentialist connotations that it suggests. The thesis is concerned with finding an appropriate set of terms to differentiate between senses of self, whilst recognising that the language that is available to me remains fallible. The term womanhood is understood in my context as a fluid concept because firstly, women are not identical. Secondly, the images employed in the texts demonstrate that womanhood is not constituted simply by reflection on subjects traditionally related to gender such as career, marriage and children[7]. Analysis of the dynamics of reflection will aim to show how thoughts on the above intersect with thoughts on religion,

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[4] Elly Beinhorn, *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt* (Berlin: Reimar Hobbing, 1932). *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt* was republished as *Ein Mädchen und fünf Kontinente. Bericht einer Vierundzwanzigjährigen* in 1956.
[5] Elly Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika* (Berlin: Scherl, 1933); *180 Stunden über Afrika* was republished in 1939 as *Berlin-Kapstadt-Berlin. Mein 28.000-Kilometer Flug nach Afrika* and then reprinted in1942 and 1943. The content remained unchanged from the 1933 version.
[6] Elly Beinhorn, *Mein Mann, der Rennfahrer. Der Lebensweg Bernd Rosemeyers* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag, 1938).
[7] Harriet Pass Freidenreich, *Female, Jewish and Educated. The Lives of Central European University Women* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002), p.xvi.

sexuality and race and in doing so to develop a terminological framework within which shifting and complex senses of self can be explored in ways that avoid essentialising individual women.

Secondary literature has inadvertently pressed women into a number of moulds, through approaches to the question of women's changing roles and through the terminology that has been applied by scholars[8]. The term 'new woman'[9] has frequently been employed by scholars as a point of departure for explorations of the changing position of women in Germany. These explorations have also focused on the period of the Weimar Republic[10]. Commentators have examined the "real"[11] position of women during this period, often concentrating on specific aspects such as fashion[12], sexuality[13] or cultural representations in

[8] Studies by Jill Stephenson and Claudia Huerkamp have focused specifically on the period between 1900 and 1945 and have concentrated on the representation of women in the academic professions of medicine, law and university teaching. Jill Stephenson, 'Women and the Professions in Germany 1930-1940', in *German Democracy and the Triumph of Hitle*r*: Essays in Recent German History*, ed. by A Nicholls and E Matthias (London: Allen & Unwin, 1971), pp.175-213; Claudia Huerkamp, *Bildungsbürgerinnen. Frauen im Studium und in akademischen Berufen 1900-45* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1996). Stephenson and Huerkamp have provided a comprehensive socio-political and economic analysis of women in the academic professions. More recently, Evelyn Zegenhagen has published an extensive study of women in German aviation between 1918 and 1945. Evelyn Zegenhagen, '*Schneidige deutsche Mädel'- Fliegerinnen zwischen 1918 und 1945* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007).

[9] I use the term 'new woman' in single quotation marks to indicate this is a term that others have associated with 'women' as a group or with specific individuals. This is not a term which I will impose on the individuals examined here as it is not a term that the narrating selves apply in the writing.

[10] Ute Frevert, *Women in German History - From Bourgeois Emancipation to Sexual Liberation* (Oxford: Berg, 1997), p.176; Ingrid Sharp, 'Gender Relations in Weimar Berlin', in *Practicing Modernity. Female Creativity in the Weimar Republic,* ed. by Christiane Schönfeld (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2006), pp.1-13: 2-3; Ingrid Sharp, 'Riding the Tiger: Ambivalent Images of the New Woman in the Popular Press of the Weimar Republic', in Schönfeld, *Practicing Modernity. Female Creativity,* pp.118-141:118-119; Atina Grossmann, 'Girlkultur or Thoroughly Rationalized Female. A New Woman in Weimar Germany?', in *Women in Culture and Politics,* ed. by Judith Friedlander (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp.62-80: 64, Atina Grossmann, 'The New Woman and the Rationalization of Sexuality in Weimar Germany', in *Powers of Desire: The Politics of Sexuality*, ed. by Ann Snitow, Christine Stansell and Sharon Thompson (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983), pp.153-171.

[11] Cornelie Usborne, 'The New Woman and Generation Conflict. Perceptions of Young Women's Sexual Mores in the Weimar Republic', in *Generations in Conflict. Youth Revolt and Generations in Formation 1770-1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp: 137-163: 139.

[12] Irene Guenther, *Nazi Chic ? Refashioning Women in the Third Reich* (Oxford/NewYork: Berg, 2004), pp.53-88.

[13] Grossmann, 'The New Woman and the Rationalization of Sexuality', pp.153-171.

the press[14] and the arts[15]. The term 'new woman' has frequently been applied to women, normally in their twenties who were living in Berlin. They worked in an office, a shop or on the assembly line of a factory, and their job provided a degree of financial independence[16]. Ute Frevert approaches the 'new woman' as a type constituting a particular social and demographic group[17]. This 'new woman' was young, working class and she was employed in jobs which did not require substantial education or professional training. She spent some of her earnings on the 'Bubikopf' hairstyle, clothes, cigarettes and make-up made fashionable in women's magazines and at the cinema[18]. She associated sex with pleasure and the possibility of taking control of her own body through more reliable methods of contraception. These methods were the condom which was available to buy in chemists and tobacconists[19] and the diaphragm which meant that women themselves had the means of taking control of their body as far as procreation was concerned. These were apparently the women for whom changing fashions with shorter hemlines and clothes which could be worn without a corset meant being able to pursue activities such as dancing and playing sport[20]. Through applying terms such as 'new women', scholars have inadvertently approached 'women' in ways that categorise and essentialise, whilst at the same time making claims to the complexity of the individuals they label as 'new women'[21]. These categorisations are exemplified by scholarly efforts to show the image of the 'new woman' to be exaggerated, arguing that "a woman's occupation was

[14] Sharp, 'Riding the Tiger', p.118.
[15] *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture,* ed. by Katharina von Ankum (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
[16] Frevert, *Women in German History,* p.177.
[17] Ibid*,* p.176.
[18] Kerry Wallach, 'Mascha Kaléko Advertises the New Jewish Woman', in '*Not an Essence but a Positioning': German-Jewish Women Writers 1900-1938,* ed. by Andrea Hammel and Godela Weiss-Sussex (Munich: Martin Meidenbauer, 2009), pp.211-231: 225; von Ankum, 'Introduction', in *Women in the Metropolis*, pp.2-3; Frevert, *Women in German History,* p.176; Sharp, 'Gender Relations in Weimar Berlin', pp.2-3; Sharp, 'Riding the Tiger', pp.118-119; Grossmann, 'Girlkultur or Thoroughly Rationalized Female', p.64; Grossmann, 'The New Woman and the Rationalization of Sexuality', p.156; Usborne, 'The New Woman and Generational Conflict', p.137.
[19] Frevert, *Women in German History,* p.189.
[20] von Ankum, *Women in the Metropolis,* p.3.
[21] Frevert, *Women in German History,* p.179.

merely a temporary place of safe-keeping before marriage"[22]. There is insufficient delineation between occupations as secretaries and shop assistants on the one hand, and academic careers requiring a degree and new technical careers, on the other.

The texts examined in this thesis all concern individual women who pursued careers which required a substantial period of training. Through textual analyses of their autobiographical writings this thesis examines how the flying machine, the airfield, the university and the clinic are narrated as places where a sense of self is defined and may be redefined. The thesis examines how reflection on being a woman is narrated in relation to thoughts on nationhood, religion, sexuality, professional experiences and relationships. The thesis then explores how these thoughts may be revised at different narrative points. Reflection on being a professional woman can only be a point of departure from which to examine a far more complex picture of how identities are constructed.

The text-focused approach taken in this thesis departs from that of Harriet Pass-Freidenreich in her comprehensive study of Jewish women in the professions, *Female, Jewish and Educated - The Lives of Central European University Women.* Pass Freidenreich has approached Straus and Wolff as biographical illustrations of educated Jewish women and used their autobiographies to measure whether they did or did not regard themselves as feminists[23]. Her study has insufficiently defined the terms 'feminist', 'emancipated' and 'new woman' and has tended to apply them as labels[24]. This thesis acknowledges the difficulties inherent in any reading which investigates the past through the concerns and expectations of the present and the labels that have been employed in such readings[25]. The texts I have

[22] Frevert, *Women in German History,* p.179.
[23] Pass Freidenreich, *Female, Jewish and Educated,* p.xx.
[24] Ibid*,* pp.xx, 148-150, 155.
[25] Marlene LeGates, *In their Time. A History of Feminism in Western Society* (London: Routledge, 2001)*,* p.1.

selected are clearly connected through refusing to fulfil the expectation of previous scholarly readers[26] that the individuals examined in my thesis appeared to embody female emancipation of the time and must also be politically engaged with a Woman Question or prioritising the challenge against gender hierarchies. Scholars have identified a paradox in terms of how the texts engage with the opportunities which were opening to women. They do not, however, suggest any explanation for this paradox. The narratives indicate that engagement with womanhood is far more complex and merits closer textual analysis, an approach that has not previously been applied to these texts nor indeed to this particular set of professional backgrounds.

The texts examined here encompass travel accounts published by the pilot shortly after completing her flights during the 1930s, and autobiographies published late in the authors' lives and after long careers. These texts, published several decades apart, are examined through the issue of remembrance and specifically through examining the images that emerge at different narrative levels. In order to examine how reflection is undertaken in the narratives it is necessary to establish a set of terminology that distinguishes between the reflection that ostensibly takes place when a young girl, to that which takes place much later in life. The differentiation between these narrative 'voices' proves fruitful to explorations of how the university, workplace and family prompt discussion of the opportunities which were opening to these individual women, and also to explorations of how these discussions are revised at a different narrative point.

[26] Nancy F Cott asserts that women must be actively concerned with fighting gender hierarchies in order to fulfil the image of feminist writers. In: Nancy F Cott, "'What's in a Name? The Limits of 'Social Feminism': or, Expanding the Vocabulary of Women's History", *Journal of American History,* 76 (1989), pp. 809-829: 820, 826.

1.1 The Question of Authenticity and the 'Voice' in the Text

This thesis examines the texts not as stories but rather as acts of narration. The conceptual framework that I develop here is a departure from biographical analyses such as those undertaken in *Female, Jewish and Educated* by Harriet Pass Freidenreich. Through referring to authors by name she suggests that what is portrayed in the texts captures a snapshot image of the past of the life as it was lived[27]. The woman as the author replaces the multiple 'voices' suggested by my reading of the same texts that Pass Freidenreich references. She associates her exploration of the "personal histories" [28] and "stories"[29] of Jewish women in the academic professions with "contributing to our understanding of the group as a whole"[30]. The question of 'voice' is complicated further as she conflates her interpretative voice with the interpretative voice of other scholars, and all based on subsuming the individual women of her study within a 'group'. In her analyses of autobiographical texts the approach taken by Pass Freidenreich assumes that the only narrative presence in the text is the author. There is an implicit assumption that what is recounted offers a truthful and complete picture of the life as it was lived. Pass Freidenreich locates the author at the forefront of her approach to autobiographical texts, for example, her concern with discerning author intentionality from what is written on the page. The author-centred approach undertaken by Pass Freidenreich is indicative of a traditional reading of autobiography. Theorists of autobiography have associated Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* and the *Confessions* by Augustine and by

[27] Pass Freidenreich, *Female, Jewish and Educated,* p.146.
[28] Ibid*,* p.xviii.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid*,* p.xix.

Rousseau with setting the parameters for the genre of autobiography[31]. Author and protagonist are depicted in these autobiographies as a single persona and the text projects an image of the progressive development of the unified, coherent and enlightened self[32]. The influence of poststructuralist theories has motivated redefinitions of the autobiographical genre. Barbara Saunders argues that since 1945 autobiographical writing has departed from depictions of a complete and completed life with its' claims to reality, truth and totality[33].

Philippe Lejeune approached autobiographical texts on the premise of an 'autobiographical pact', a definition which distinguished autobiography from fiction. He set out his definition as follows:

> In printed texts, responsibility for all enunciation is assumed by a person who is in the habit of placing his *name* on the cover of the book, and on the flyleaf, above or below the title of the volume. [...] The place assigned to this name is essential: it is linked, by a social convention, to the pledge of responsibility of a *real person.*[34]

If these criteria are present, an assumption can be made that the author, narrator and protagonist are identical and that the life that is represented on paper is a truthful and sincere account of the life lived. Such an approach emphasises the confessional act of the autobiography and engages with the intentions of the author but in doing so Lejeune sets out specific criteria stipulating a para-textual "contract of identity" between the reader and the

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[31] Linda Anderson, *Autobiography* (London/New York: Routledge, 2001), p.18; Katherine Goodman, *Dis/closures: Women's Autobiography in Germany 1790-1914* (New York: Peter Lang, 1986), p.10; Barbara Saunders, *Contemporary German Autobiography: Literary Approaches to the Problem of Identity* (London: Institute of Germanic Studies, 1985), pp.2 and 6; Barbara Kosta, *Recasting Autobiography: Women's Counterfictions in Contemporary German Literature and Film* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994), p.9.

[32] *Autobiography by Women in German,* ed. by Mererid Puw Davies, Beth Linklater and Gisela Shaw (Bern: Peter Lang, 2000), p.9; Kosta, *Recasting Autobiography,* p.1.

[33] Saunders, *Contemporary German Autobiography,* pp.2-3.

[34] Philippe Lejeune, *On Autobiography* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p.11.

author that is "sealed by the proper name".[35] Lejeune introduces the importance of reader interpretation to autobiographical texts, asserting that autobiography is a "mode of reading as much as it is a type of writing".[36] In accordance with poststructuralist theories his observation offers new ways of approaching autobiographical writing through acknowledging a shift in importance from the author as the symbol of a single truth and meaning in the text, to new possibilities for reader interpretation, indeed for multiple readings.

Roland Barthes in his essay 'Death of the Author' represents a further step in the poststructuralist notion of the text as a repository of multiple meanings by removing the author from the autobiographical work altogether. Barthes argued that "writing is a neutral, oblique space where our subject slips away" and where "the identity of the body writing is lost".[37] He rejects the notion that the author is God within a text and that a single meaning is to be deciphered from a text. Texts cannot be explained, rather a text is "a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, blend and clash".[38] The notion that a text is composed of multiple writings indicates that texts should not be the focus of a search for a single meaning and truth, deciphering the intention of the author, but rather should be subject to multiple re-interpretations by the reader. Barthes asserts that through the act of writing the author enters into his own death and in doing so ensures the birth of the reader.[39] The theory proposed by Barthes makes a distinction between the life as it was lived and the construction of self as it appears on the page. It is this distinction that has informed the methodology adopted in my thesis.

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[35] Lejeune, *On Autobiography* , p.19.
[36] Ibid, p.30.
[37] Roland Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in *Image-Music-Text.* Essays selected and translated by Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), pp.142-148: 142.
[38] Ibid, p.146.
[39] Ibid, p.148.

Examining the texts in terms of constructions is a response to re-appraisals of how notions of authorship, self and truth are understood in poststructuralist theories. This thesis makes use of these re-appraisals through locating a differentiated language which makes critical distinctions between the life as it was lived and how that life is represented in autobiographical writing. This thesis posits that the texts explored here contain multiple voices thus the analyses distinguish between two narrative levels, between a narrated self and a narrating self in order to explore how a sense of self is first constructed in narrated time and then the further reflection that may be undertaken on self in the narrating present, or indeed that may not be undertaken at all. Through differentiating between narrative levels the analyses demonstrate the nuanced notions of identity even amongst a relatively small group of German women professionals. The differentiation of narrative levels offers a framework for examining the shifts in these women's self perceptions, reflecting a shift from assuming the existence of a unified self. The narrated self constructs a sense of who she was and that may be when she was a girl, an adolescent or during her adult life. She attributes that level of reflection to the narrated past. In narrating time the sense of self may then be revised in response to specific historical events or in response to confrontations with family, friends or work colleagues. The texts under consideration prompt reader interpretation on these two different narrative levels. Integral to the textual analyses is a concern with setting out terms which differentiate between reflections that are undertaken at different points in the narrative. The term 'revise' indicates a shift in perception in a general sense. The terms 'refine', 'redefine' and 'dismantle' indicate specific points at which reflection on notions of identity takes place in the texts. All of these terms, however, imply a certain level of intentionality. 'Refine' indicates making modifications to an earlier stance in order to adjust how that stance is perceived. The term is understood in this thesis to signify perceptions of self that fluctuate

between narrated time and narrating time, but also shifts in perception within narrated time. The term has the connotation of correcting one's stance, an acknowledgment that one ought to have had a better grasp of a situation. The term 'redefine' is a further step in reflection on self. It indicates a fundamental reconstruction of self which is depicted in narrating time. The term 'dismantle' is employed alongside 'redefine' in relation to those episodes where the narrating self thematises her rejection of a particular way of defining herself and engages with her reasons for this rejection. The key issue is how the narrating and narrated selves find opportunities for reflection and how that thinking is interspersed throughout the narration. The question is how the narrating selves engage with feelings, thoughts and assumptions they had attributed to the younger narrated self and whether in narrating time they create distance between these stances. The textual analyses examine where narrative levels are conflated, for example, in the texts by Jewish women the narrative point at which the narrators claim to have become aware of anti-Semitism. The analyses also examine where critical distance is established in the texts, for example, where the self in narrating time criticises an earlier stance. In *Hindsight,* for example, there is a very clear distinction between narrated time and narrating time. There is a clear point in the narrative at which a sense of belonging is questioned. The identity of an assimilated German-Jew, which is constructed as a fixed and unified position in narrated time, is fundamentally dismantled, redefined and then replaced with a new identity in response to the narrator's flight from National Socialism in 1933. The narrating self dismantles her sense of belonging in Germany and she replaces her sense of Germanness with a new identity as an "international Jew"[40]. She redefines her sense of Jewishness from a religious concept from which she felt alienated, to an ethnic identity. The sense of belonging to small communities which the narrated self identifies as protected

[40]Wolff, *Hindsight*, p.181.

places' is also dismantled in *Hindsight* at which point the narrated self appears to lose her exclusivity. The term 'exclusivity' refers, in the thesis, to the separate position either alone or within a very small tightly knit community, in which the narrated self locates herself. There is a connotation that the individuals within these communities have an intuitive understanding of the other members, as the narrated self attributes to the lesbian community in *Hindsight.*[41] Similarly, the creative world of artists and intellectuals is constructed as a small community, protected from the world outside. Such communities are constructed positively in *Hindsight* in narrated time but, when further reflected upon in narrating time, the position of exclusivity is dismantled as a dangerous position because it prevents one from seeing the 'true' dangers in the world around. The narration of dismantling positions of self-imposed exclusivity demonstrates a shift in perception from an incomplete or distorted view of the world to a clear view of what was taking place on the streets of Berlin.

In *Wir lebten in Deutschland*, perceptions of belonging to a German community fluctuate within narrated time as well as between narrated time and the narrating present. The construction of self often appears contradictory. In relation to the childhood observance of Passover, for example, the narrated self, as a girl, makes claims to a complete understanding of the 'true' position of Jews in Germany and their precarious position. However, in the narration of the Dreyfus Affair the narrating self expresses regret at not recognising the dangers of anti-Semitism earlier. The narration of a sense of belonging seems to fluctuate between different narrative points in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* indicating how notions of identity are refined throughout the narration. In the context of narrative positions there are clear distinctions between these two texts. Omniscience is a feature of both texts by German-Jewish authors, at certain narrative points the narrators claim to be being fully cognisant of

[41] Wolff, *Hindsight,* pp.106-7.

the dangers around them. However, this sense of being all-knowing is associated with different points in the narrative, indicating how nuanced the construction of national and religious identity is in narratives by this small group of German-Jewish women professionals.

In his essay, 'Autobiography as a Source for Writing Social History – German Jews in Palestine/Israel as a Case Study', Guy Miron analyses *Wir lebten in Deutschland* as a historical source as opposed to undertaking a close literary analysis of the text[42]. Miron differentiates between "the past that is related (the 'narrated event') and the circumstances in which the author writes down his or her recollections (the 'narrative event')"[43]. Questions of author intentionality are at the forefront of Miron's analyses because he is concerned with the social period in which the authors were reflecting upon their past. References to Straus by name thus indicate that the author remains a significant narrative presence in his study and in this respect Miron takes the same approach to autobiographical writing as Cora Kaplan and Cheryl Walker, who both locate the author as being of significance in interpreting the text, arguing that the author is one "site of possible meaning"[44] in the writing. These critics have argued that considerations of author intentionality are relevant to analyses of autobiographical writing because these considerations suggest explanations for the adoption of certain narrative positions in the text. Indeed, in her foreword Straus addresses her children and then emphasises, through her account, a concern with preserving a cultural legacy of Germanness at a time when the family are no longer living in Germany.[45] It could be argued that this aspect is important because it gives Straus's text an explicit objective and consequently the removal of the author from the analysis may have the effect of removing some explanations

[42] Guy Miron, 'Autobiography as a Source for Writing Social History – German Jews in Palestine/Israel as a Case Study', *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte,* 29 (2000), pp.251-281.
[43] Ibid, p.253.
[44] Cheryl Walker, 'Feminist Literary Criticism and the Author', *Critical Inquiry,* 16 (1990), pp.551-571: 568.
[45] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland*, p.7.

for why the narrator presents herself in a certain way. This thesis acknowledges that seeking explanations risks assuming that the author wrote with a single specific purpose and knowing what that purpose was. This thesis takes a different approach and focuses instead on the merits of interpreting texts beyond authorial intent. Indeed, the distinction which Miron makes between different narrative levels is an acknowledgment of the complex ways in which self is constructed in autobiographical writing. The framework which I have developed departs from questions of author intentionality and makes possible a closer investigation of the nuanced ways in which self is constructed in relation to gender and national identity in autobiographical texts. Of interest are the constructions of self and further reflections on the construction of self. The focus is thus on how shifts in perception are revealed in the narratives and how, following Barthes' concern with 'the birth of the reader, these shifts may be interpreted by the reader. The methodology developed here avoids potentially reductive and anachronistic interpretations therefore contributing to more carefully differentiated readings of autobiographical texts.

By examining the texts in terms of constructions I engage with harmonising tendencies without judging why specific issues are engaged with in one way but not in another, or indeed why they are not engaged with at all. The conceptual framework I develop here offers ways of examining the significant absences[46] of a text. These absences indicate voids in the narration or in the reflection of a narrated event. These voids are understood here to signify missed opportunities to express thoughts differently in narrating time. The aim is not to judge but rather to thematise how the narrating and narrated selves desist either from narrating significant historical events, or where these are narrated, from engaging in different ways with the implications of these events.

[46] Michael von Engelhardt, 'Geschlechtsspezifische Muster des mündlichen autobiographischen Erzählens im 20. Jahrhundert', in *Autobiographien von Frauen: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte,* ed. by Magdalene Heuser (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1996), pp. 368-392:383.

1.2 Resisting the Political: The Historical Period in the Narrative

The period examined in this thesis (1900-1945) extends from the matriculation of the first women to German universities to the end of World War Two. This is a distinct period in German history which covers a period when opportunities were opening to women to study for degrees, to pursue medical careers in institutions founded during the Weimar Republic and, as a result of technological advances, to travel to remote places otherwise inaccessible except by aeroplane. The period (1900-1945) is furthermore distinct as a time which placed people under pressure. This pressure related to the loss of life during World War One and the hardship on the home front after the armistice. There was also the pressure concerning the economic instability of the Weimar period and its implications for funding a university education and securing sponsorship for long distance flights.

Specific events such as the Dreyfus Affair in France and the Munich Putsch in 1923 exemplified political crises of the period under analysis. The analyses undertaken here examine how these events prompted the narrated selves in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* and *Hindsight* to reflect on their sense of Jewishness and on their sense of belonging in Germany and how they did so through delineating their reflections on different narrative levels. Policies that legalised the exclusion of specific groups from the 'Volksgemeinschaft' were introduced swiftly, within four months of Hitler's appointment as Chancellor. These policies were promulgated in law and were thus highly visible to the population. Jews were the principal target of these policies and were defined by their parentage as a racial group and not according to whether they practised that religion.[47] Charlotte Wolff was thus suspended from her post and no longer able to earn a living in Germany. Political violence and the fear of

[47] The first policy to be introduced against Jews as part of the process of 'Gleichschaltung' was promulgated on 7th April 1933 and stipulated their dismissal from posts in the civil service.

incarceration are thematised in *Hindsight* through the narration of life in Berlin as the National Socialists consolidated their power base.[48] Political change is narrated by the pilot in the context of opportunities to undertake her long cherished dream of circumnavigating Africa and also of bringing news from the Reich to the expatriate Germans living in the former colonies. This feat, which is narrated in her travel account *180 Stunden über Afrika*, is absent from the later autobiography *Alleinflug.* Acts of flight are thematised in all the texts under analysis in different ways. Desperate flights from Germany are narrated by Straus, first to Switzerland, then Merano and then by ship to Palestine, and Wolff who fled Berlin for Paris, then Sanary followed by emigration to London in 1937. Acts of flight prompt the narrated self in *Hindsight* at the point of emigration to London to dismantle her sense of belonging in Germany and to question the validity of her friendships with other Germans. She defines her sense of Jewishness in racialist terms based on a collective sense that all Jews are connected through shared experiences of persecution. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narration stops in 1933 as Straus stands on the ship reminiscing on her life in Germany and attempting to look forward to a new life ahead in Palestine. She associates the act of flight with the end of her life in Germany but is determined to preserve her memories as a legacy to her children of the contribution that Jewish families such as their own made to German cultural life before the Nazis came to power[49]. A key question to pose concerns the narrative points at which the sense of belonging is questioned in the texts and how reflection in the texts on this matter is interspersed throughout the narration, or indeed is not undertaken at all. In *Alleinflug* self is defined in narrated time and in the narrating present from a privileged and exclusive position. The narrative demonstrates a sense that the narrated self was destined to fly and in doing so

[48] Political opponents were incarcerated in the newly constructed concentration camp at Dachau from March 1933.
[49] The first draft was written between 1933 and 1940 and was eventually published by the Leo Baeck Institute in Germany in 1961.

she was able to travel to places which could only be accessed by aeroplane, she alone was able to bring Germanness to the former colonies. Flying is constructed as a communion with the aeroplane that can only be understood by her own small community of flyers[50], these were not opportunities that she wished to encourage other women to pursue.[51] In narrating time experiences of National Socialism are depicted as episodes of wartime suffering. The flights which had been undertaken to Africa during the Third Reich and which been narrated as adventures in the travel accounts, disappear from *Alleinflug*, only to be replaced by a different kind of flight, but still an exclusive one as she and her children flee the bombing and the advancing Russians.

Specifically I question how the narrated selves are first positioned with respect to events that put them under pressure and then how these positions shift in narrating time. Each of the women occupy apparently privileged positions in terms of their access to a university education, to research opportunities, a life in Berlin at the seat of government and for the pilot, celebrity status and opportunities to travel. There is an expectation that these opportunities would have provided insights into the political events that were happening. The language of 'positioning' and 'repositioning' is motivated by Stuart Hall's approach to 'identity'[52] as fluid and shifting, "not an essence but a positioning"[53]. The thesis examines at which narrative points the narrated self appears, disappears or is just absent. The thesis then examines whether these appearances, disappearances and absences are subsequently discussed

[50] See the narration of meeting Mussolini, a fellow pilot in, Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.123.
[51] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.11.
[52] The term 'identity' is not employed in this thesis because of the connotations that identity is a single fixed concept which encompasses a set of essentialist traits. The term 'points of identification', also used by Hall, is preferred because along with suggesting fluidity, points of identification indicates that constructing a sense of who one is an evolving process and one that interacts with settings and people.
[53] Stuart Hall, 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora', in *Identity, Community, Culture Difference,* ed. by Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), pp.222-232: 226. This quotation also informs the approach taken by Andrea Hammel and Godela Weiss-Sussex in their edited publication, *'Not an Essence but a Positioning': German-Jewish Women Writers 1900-1938*, a study of the self-identifications of German-Jewish women in their autobiographical, fictional and journalistic writings.

by the narrating selves. It is not the stories that are of interest here but rather how stories are remembered. Events are frequently narrated without considering even very serious implications for a large number of other people.

Investigations of memories of National Socialism have provided the impetus for a number of empirical research projects during the 1980s[54]. In her essay, "German Women's Memories of World War II" Annemarie Tröger concludes that, in her interviews with women who had lived in Berlin during the war, the interviewees consistently isolate their daily lives - including the extraordinary events of war - from the political context of those events[55]. She claims that her interviewees present their memories of the Third Reich within a de-politicised framework. Whilst the issue of remembrance is significant to the narrative responses to war in *Alleinflug*[56], it is first important to assess the terminology employed in the investigations undertaken in previous studies and how these have informed this thesis. Gabriele Rosenthal refers to "strategies"[57] by which the Third Reich is narrated. Instead of the term "strategy" I refer to "parameters" and "frameworks" within which memories are framed since both terms are less oriented towards questioning the intentionality of remembrance. Rosenthal concludes that her interviewees present their memories within a "depoliticized framework"[58]. This thesis uses the term 'apolitical', a more nuanced approach to remembrance which does not assume a degree of consciousness. There are narrative points at which the different narrating selves

[54]Annemarie Tröger, 'German Women's Memories of World War Two', in *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars* ed. by Margaret Higonnet and Jane Jenson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), pp.285-299; Gabriele Rosenthal, 'Reconstruction of Life Stories: Principles of Selection in Generating Stories for Narrative Biographical Interviews', in *The Narrative Study of Lives* ed. by Ruthellen Josselson and Amia Lieblich, vol. 1 (London: Sage, 1993), pp.59-91.

[55]Tröger, 'German Women's Memories of World War Two', pp.285-299; This essay presents the findings of two sets of oral interviews undertaken by Tröger with men and women living in Berlin and Hanover during World War Two. The interviewees ranged in age from those born before World War One to those who were born between 1920 and 1925 and who were part of what Tröger refers to as the Hitler Youth generation.

[56] The period of war is not narrated in *Wir lebten in Deutschland*, indeed the narrative ends at 1933 with the narrated self standing on a ship as she flees to Palestine. In *Hindsight* the war is narrated but from the context of living in England where Wolff settled in 1937.

[57] Rosenthal, 'Reconstruction of Life Stories', p.86.

[58] Ibid.

attribute awareness to the younger narrated self and relate that awareness to specific historical events which pose potential threats. One such narrative point is exemplified by the narration of Passover and its impact on the protagonist when a little girl in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* who apparently identifies the custom with prompting her to question her sense of belonging in Germany.

The term 'positioning' is applied here to narrative engagement with different episodes within the period 1900 to 1945. The issue of 'positioning' and 'repositioning' is also significant in terms of how gender, religion, race and sexuality are thematised in the narratives and how these points of self-identification are revised. The flights, motivated by different reasons, all prompt discussions of Germanness and these discussions narrate the concept of Germanness in cultural, intellectual and racialist terms. The narration of these different flights thematises Germany as a cultural and intellectual place that is to be preserved in memory[59], a place that is defined by the cultural and intellectual life in Berlin and with flight to France, relocated to Sanary[60] on the Côte d'Azur. Germany is also a place of technological advances and of 'der neue Geist' that the pilot can transport with her to distant lands and then imbue the Germans she meets there with that renewal[61]. Germany is revised during the war as a place where flight signifies escaping the bombing of German cities and the advance of Russian troops, it is a place of suffering[62].

The textual analyses demonstrate how acts of positioning and repositioning are narrated in relational terms to political circumstances that may shift and in relation to other people. In order to explore how senses of self are constructed and how they evolve in relation

[59] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.7.
[60] Wolff, *Hindsight,* pp.114-117.
[61] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* pp.60-62.
[62] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* pp.291-5.

to gender, religion, race, sexuality, it is fruitful to refine the approach to 'positions' through focusing on the narration of different communities.

1.3. 'Positionings' and the Narration of Communities

The use of the term 'community' was initially motivated by Benedict Anderson's understanding of "imagined communities".[63] Anderson applies his model to ways of defining the nation, arguing that the nation is socially and culturally constructed and based on broad ideas about that nation by people who would never meet every member of that nation community. The use of community concepts that I propose in my readings offers an acknowledgment of the complexities involved in analysing multiple points of self-identification whilst also making clear the understanding that gender, racial and religious communities cannot be isolated from one another in a differentiated analysis[64]. The concept of positioning and repositioning within communities is integral to exploring the nuances of remembering and to the dynamics of reflection in the narratives.

In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the Jewish community is constructed as both a religious community, observing the Passover and other festivals, and at the same time as an ancestral community connected across history by a common destiny to suffer[65]. In *Hindsight* Judaism is only constructed in terms of a community to which the narrated self felt she belonged in exile. She dismantles her sense of being a member of the German community, repositioning herself

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[63] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), p.7.
[64]Elisabeth V. Spelman, *Inessential Woman. Problems of Exclusion in Feminist Thought* (London: Women's Press, 1990), p.88; Julia Watson and Sidonie Smith, 'Introduction: De/Colonization and the Politics of Discourse in Women's Autobiographical Practices', in *De/colonizing the Subject. The Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography*, ed. by Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), p.xiv.
[65] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.49; Charlotte Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.6.

within a Jewish racial community, whose members are connected through centuries of persecution[66]. Communities can be dismantled and one community may be replaced by another community as in *Hindsight.* Communities can also intersect with other communities. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* in the school classroom a sense of belonging with other Germans is thematised through observance of German customs, this sense of belonging is not questioned in relation to the Jewish 'Schicksalgemeinschaft'[67] that is also constructed in the narration. Zionism is narrated as a solution to the persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe, providing a geographical and cultural community in Palestine, yet it is only in 1933 that this becomes a viable destination for the narrated self. Zionist and German communities intersect and these intersections are not questioned.

The approach taken in this thesis is further informed by Iris Marion Young's approach to notions of community as a "serial collective"[68]. This concept is significant in the thesis because it suggests how the community model has been applied to gender. Young expresses concerns about 'women' as a term of classification because this suggests that women are a single homogeneous group based on a specific set of characteristics[69]. Such a label reinforces ideas of male/female and men/women as binary and polarised subject positions. Young posits that women define their sense of self in relation to other social groups and this has set the framework for examining how the narrated selves are positioned and how they do the positioning, without categorising.

Through examining metaphors of community, this thesis focuses on the roles that are narrated in the texts and how these roles may prompt further reflection and may be

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[66] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.6.
[67] Herlinde Koebl, *Jüdische Portraits: Photographien und Interviews* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1989), p. 256.
[68] Iris Marion Young, *Intersecting Voices: Dilemmas of Gender Political Philosophy and Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).
[69] Ibid*,* p.10.

subsequently questioned. The question of where the narrated selves position themselves and how the narrating selves may subsequently reposition the narrated selves, has enabled me to examine the authority the different selves ascribe to themselves within the different communities. This offers a different approach than that taken in scholarly work which has variously categorised women as 'victims', 'collaborators' and 'perpetrators' during the specific period of the Third Reich[70]. The 'either/or' paradigm has since been discredited by historians in preference to a more differentiated approach encompassing varying degrees of 'victimhood' and 'collaboration'.[71] The readings in this thesis reveal just how blurred these categories are in terms of how the narrating selves reconstruct their sense of self. The ideas behind the terms 'victim' and 'collaborator' cannot be associated in essentialist terms according to Jewishness and they cannot consider the National Socialist period in isolation from other times through which the narrating selves lived. This thesis avoids an approach which frames the self-identification of Straus and Wolff exclusively as victims of the Holocaust[72], precisely because the narrating selves do not frame their memories in these terms. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* flight from Germany is narrated in terms that suggest the loss of Germanness and of European identity, indicating victimhood. Yet the narrating self also gives prominence to preserving her life in Germany and her family background as a legacy to pass on to her descendants, even as she anticipates that her life is about to take her

[70] The conflict between Claudia Koonz and Gisela Bock exemplifies this paradigm. Cf. Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland. Women, the Family and Nazi Politics* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1987); Gisela Bock, 'Die Frauen und der Nationalsozialismus: Bemerkungen zu einem Buch von Claudia Koonz', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft Zeitschrift für Historische Sozialwissenschaft,* 15 (1989), pp.563-579.

[71] The shift away from the victim-perpetrator dichotomy is present in approaches to National Socialism by Jill Stephenson, *Women in Nazi Germany* (Harlow: Longman, 2001), p.125; Matthew Stibbe, *Women in the Third Reich* (London: Arnold, 2003), pp.2-3; Frevert, *Women in German History,* pp.251-2. These authors do not, however, approach differentiation (incorporating collaboration) from a text based perspective. My approach uses a text-based analysis to expand upon understandings of differentiation.

[72] Marion Kaplan introduces her study of German-Jewish women in the Kaiserreich as an attempt to move away from approaches which have viewed Jewish women as victims rather than agents involved in social, political and cultural changes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in, Marion Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class. Women, Family and Identity in Imperial Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p.vii.

to a very different geographical and cultural setting. In *Hindsight* flight from Germany brings new friendships and an opportunity to undertake research in a new professional area within medicine. Of all the texts, it is in *Alleinflug* that metaphors of suffering are most clearly constructed in relation to the bombing of the pilot's apartment in Berlin and her relocation first to East Prussia and then to Freiburg in 1944. It is here that the significant absence of the National Socialist regime in the narrative is most evident.

The narrated selves in each of the autobiographical texts define their sense of self in relation to the communities in which they position themselves and in relation to how they may reposition themselves in narrating time. It is in relation to the process of positioning and repositioning that the narrated selves delineate their understanding of womanhood. The opportunities which are found by the narrated selves and subsequently in narrating time for reflection and reconsideration in relation to communities motivates the structure of the thesis. **Chapter Two** introduces the debate concerning the admission of women to German universities through exploring how women have been categorised by the university professors who opposed the *Frauenstudium*. The chapter then examines how the moderate women's movement framed their arguments for women to be admitted to German universities in terms of the fulfilment of maternal duty. The focus of Chapter Two is to explore how womanhood has been classified and depicted in public debate concerning the roles available to women in higher education and professional life because this is the discursive context in which the narrated selves in the autographical texts would have been situated. The chapter then examines how womanhood in the context of *Frauenstudium* has been depicted in scholarly research by women since the Weimar period and it does so through focusing on different narrative levels. The chapter examines how Elisabeth Knoblauch classifies the responses of the women students she interviewed for her doctorate in 1927 in relation to their university

experiences and professional aspirations.[73] These categorisations are then compared to the responses of women interviewed by feminist scholars several decades after graduation.[74] The focus in my context is on narrating being a woman in the professions and the final sections of chapter two examine attempts by Nancy Chodorow to take a more differentiated approach to the issue of women's 'voices'. **Chapter Three** examines texts by all three authors and explores how womanhood is delineated in relation to the communities the narrated selves find in educational and professional places. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narrated self initially defines herself by her gender, locating herself as a pioneer at the medical school. She differentiates between professors and male students who objected to a woman studying medicine and those who supported her and with whom she socialised. In her narration of the sense of community she found within the 'Studentinnenverein' the narrated self depicts this as a place for reflection on different subjects. As she approached graduation the narrated self positions herself outside this particular community because of the hostility she encountered towards Jewish students such as herself. The narrated self delineates 'womanhood' therefore as a concept that is defined by religion as well as by gender and indeed by common professional goals. In *Hindsight* the narrated self positions herself at the protected centre of her professional community at the family planning clinic in Berlin during the Weimar Republic. She defines her professional role as one that focused on the holistic care of women as individuals and of protecting and preventing pregnancies. The thesis then questions how far the narrating self engages with the apparent paradox of determining how motherhood should be controlled by the health practitioners at the clinic. In narrating her career at the clinic next

[73] Elisabeth Knoblauch, *Zur Psychologie der studierenden Frau: Eine Untersuchung über die Einstellung zum Studium und zur späteren Berufstätigkeit* (Leipzig, 1930).
[74] Edith Glaser, *Hindernisse, Umwege, Sackgasse. Die Anfänge des Frauenstudiums in Tübingen 1904-1934* (Weinheim: Deutscher Studienverlag, 1992); Petra Clephas Möcker and Kristina Krallmann, *Akademische Bildung – eine Chance zur Selbstverwirlichung für Frauen? Lebensgeschichtlich orientierte Interviews mit Gymnasiallehrerinnen und Ärztinnen der Geburtsjahrgänge 1909 bis 1923* (Weinheim: Deutscher Studienverlag, 1988).

to her depiction of social life in the lesbian bars of Weimar Berlin she constructs communities for herself where she claims to feel protected. Within these protected communities the narrated self finds opportunities to define herself as a lesbian and as a lover of the arts and these self-definitions demonstrate how she delineates womanhood in her contexts. **Chapter Four** examines how the narrated selves delineate their sense of self as Jews in more intricate ways than have been hitherto assumed by scholars. School, university and the family home are narrated as places where Jewish customs and German traditions are observed. This chapter considers how the narrated selves define their sense of self as Jews through the religious communities in which they position themselves and how these communities prompt them to reflect on and question their sense of belonging in Germany. The chapter demonstrates the intricate ways that Jewishness is delineated across both texts as a religious, social, political and racial concept and these delineations defy categorisation by liberal or orthodox religious observance. **Chapter Five** approaches the texts by all three authors in terms of how each employs images of flight in their discussions of exiting Germany in 1933, yet for different reasons. In *Wir lebten Deutschland* and *Hindsight* flight is narrated in terms of a desperate escape from persecution by the National Socialists. In the travel account by Elly Beinhorn flight is narrated in terms of an adventure and an opportunity to carry the spirit of the new regime to expatriate Germans living in former colonies in East Africa and in South West Africa. Her narration of flight and of the German community she finds abroad suggests that she defines herself by her Germanness and she does so through the technology which she brings to the colonies. In her retrospective account *Alleinflug* this particular flight is absent from the narration and her discussion of flights undertaken during the Third Reich are partly taken out of historical context through the absence of dates. These flights are also narrated alongside her escape as a mother from the Allied bombing of Berlin and later from the

advance of the Russian troops as the family fled by train and on foot to Freiburg. The nuances of remembering are significant in terms of examining her differing accounts of life in the Third Reich. Of particular significance here are the prominent absences in terms of how the National Socialist past is remembered. In *Wir lebten Deutschland* the narrating self defines herself as a mother protecting the small community of her family and determined to build a new future in a distant alien hostile community in Palestine. Her veneration for a Jewish homeland, hitherto prominent in her narration, disappears just as she sails towards Palestine. Instead of looking forward she looks to a familiar past in Germany as she preserves memories of their life there before the Third Reich and of the professional, social and cultural communities to which the Straus family had contributed there. In contrast, in *Hindsight* flight from Germany and later from Paris is narrated in ways that demonstrate how the narrating self redefined her sense of self through rejecting her sense of being German and categorising herself, in terms of race, as an international Jew. She dismantles her German community and engages with the past through isolating herself from further community models.

This thesis is concerned with narration not with story. The chapters that follow explore the intricate aspects of self-definition. The chapters also develop a differentiated language for the purposes of articulating the fluidity that I perceive in the texts and test how successful this language is in articulating that fluidity. Through differentiating between narrative levels I am able to juxtapose life experiences that at first glance seem unconnected. This can be done without imposing binary classifications such as ‘emancipated’ or ‘un-emancipated’, as ‘political’ or ‘apolitical’ or ‘victim’ or ‘perpetrator’. The language that I have developed enables me to explore the articulation of self where it cannot be classified and where self should not be judged.

2. METHODOLOGIES OF CATEGORISATION AND THEIR PROBLEMS: DEFINING 'WOMEN'

The 'Studentinnenverein' in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* is constructed by the narrated self in terms of a small community where the first female students at Heidelberg find opportunities to negotiate the roles that were opening up to them at university and in the professions. Her narration of the student society demonstrates the complex ways that the narrated self portrays womanhood in relation to her experiences as a medical student in the 1900s. Her narratives of womanhood stand in contrast to the depiction of 'women' as a category in public debates relating to 'Frauenstudium'. A concern to define 'woman' in relation to a specific set of criteria stimulated discussion across a breadth of disciples from the mid nineteenth century to World War I. The criteria put forward by commentators in medicine, psychology and law connected the act of defining 'woman' with defining 'woman's nature'. Discussions from this period are often characterised by the application of 'woman', in the singular, to 'women' as a generic group. Commentators articulated their arguments through language that identified a gendered group with a particular set of traits. These traits determined what were deemed to be appropriate functions, conduct and education. Female commentators reinforced and challenged ideas about how to define 'women' in a range of texts including works of fiction, political tracts, autobiographical writing and conduct manuals.[1] From the 1870s the arguments

[1]Examples of publications by women authors include: Carola Baronin Eynathen, *Die Frau in Haus und Welt. Ein praktischer und moralischer Führer für Frauen und Jungfrauen* (Leipzig: C.A.Koch, 1888), Sophie Christ, *Taschenbüchlein des guten Tones. Praktische Anleitung über die Formen des Anstandes für die weibliche Jugend* (Mainz: Franz Kirchheim, 1897); Henriette Davidis, *Die Hausfrau. Praktische Anleitung zur selbständigen und sparsamen Führung von Stadt- und Landhaushaltungen. Eine Mitgabe für angehende Hausfrauen* (Leipzig: Seeman, 1861); Hedwig Dohm, *Die wissenschaftliche Emancipation der Frau* (Zürich: Ala Verlag, 1874); Helene Lange, 'Die höhere Mädchenschule und ihre Bestimmung' reprinted in, *Die Frauenfrage in Deutschland 1865-1915 Texte und Dokumente,* ed. by Elke Frederiksen (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1981), pp.207-226.

surrounding women's matriculation took the form of academic treatises by male professors. Section. **2.1** examines a treatise by Theodor von Bischoff who situated the debate about women's admission to universities in relation to the alleged implications of academic study on the health of women.[2] This section explores how women were defined by Bischoff in relation to their physiology which he claimed was different from that of men and that also determined their suitability for different functions from men. This section then examines the response of feminist writer, Hedwig Dohm, to such essentialist constructions of womanhood and then explores her concern with articulating demands for 'Frauenstudium' in the language of universal rights.[3] A further section shows that her approach did not go uncontested within the women's movement. Indeed, women contributed to the debate through popular media such as *Die Frau,* the magazine of the Bund Deutscher Frauenvereine (BDF), the moderate faction of the women's movement. There, contributors campaigned for women to be permitted to matriculate through couching their demands in the language of duty and arguing that women had particular roles to fulfil within society.[4] Contributors such as feminist Helene Lange related discussions about 'Frauenstudium' to a belief that women had a duty to become mothers and their education should prepare them to educate their own children or, if they did not marry, to educate other people's children. During the 1890s women were permitted to

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[2]Theodor von Bischoff, *Das Studium und die Ausübung der Medizin durch Frauen* (Munich, 1872), Arthur Kirchhoff, *Die akademische Frau. Gutachten hervorragender Universitätsprofessoren, Frauenlehrer und Schriftsteller über die Befähigung der Frau zur wissenschaftlichen Studium und Berufe* (Berlin, 1897), Max Hirsch, 'Über das Frauenstudium. Eine soziologische und biologische Untersuchung auf Grund einer Urhebung', *Archiv für Frauenkunde und Eugenik*, 6 (1920), pp.1-43, Josef Rompel, *Die Frau im Lebensraum des Mannes. Emanzipation und Staatswohl* (Darmstadt/Leipzig, 1931).

[3] Hedwig Dohm, 'Ob Frauen studieren dürfen, können, sollen?', reprinted in, *Die Frauenfrage in Deutschland 1865-1915 Texte und Dokumente,* ed. by Elke Frederiksen (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1981), pp. 242-255.

[4] Helene Lange, 'Was wir wollen!', *Die Frau. Monatsschrift für das gesamte Frauenleben unserer Zeit,* 1 (1893), reprinted in *Die Frauenfrage in Deutschland 1865-1915 Texte und Dokumente,* ed. by Elke Frederiksen (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1981), pp.49-54; Fanny Lewald, 'Behandelt uns wie Männer, damit wir tüchtige Frauen werden können', in *Für und wider die Frauen* by Fanny Lewald, (Berlin: Otto Janke, 1870), pp.62-69 reprinted in, *Die Frauenfrage in Deutschland 1865-1915 Texte und Dokumente,* ed. by Elke Frederiksen (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1981), pp.201-206; Helene Lange, 'Die höhere Mädchenschule und ihre Bestimmung' reprinted in, *Die Frauenfrage in Deutschland 1865-1915 Texte und Dokumente,* Elke Frederiksen (ed) (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1981), pp.207-226.

attend lectures as auditors but until Baden became the first State to permit women to matriculate in 1899, this was a discretionary matter for the professor concerned.[5] The issue of 'Frauenstudium' continued unabated amongst male professors even after World War One, by which time all German universities were open to women. Max Hirsch took the debate further in 1920 by examining the impact of academic study and professional life on women's health and reproduction. During the same period, contributors continued to publish articles in *Die Frau* on the issue of 'Frauenstudium'. Contributors were frequently critical of the young women who were taking up university places without engaging with the campaigns of the women's movement. "Gedanken über Frauenstudium" by Dr Helene Bötjer was published in *Die Frau* in 1925. The article is a reappraisal of women's matriculation, focusing specifically on her concern that young women were motivated to enter university in order to secure employment and not for the pleasure of learning.[6] The section goes on to explore the language of generation difference employed by Bötjer as a member of the women's movement. She was concerned with categorising female students through what she perceived as their failure to conform to their expectations of the women's movement that young women should join the organisation in recognition of what it had achieved on their behalf.[7]

The question of what prompted women to go to university also motivated scholarly research by female academics and in 1931 Elisabeth Knoblauch gained her doctorate for her

[5] The admission of women to university courses leading to a first degree was not standard across Germany but took place at different times between 1900 and 1908 varying from State to State. Universities in Bavaria allowed women to formally matriculate in 1903 followed by Württemberg in 1904, Saxony in 1906 and Thuringia in 1907. Universities in Prussia opened their doors to women in 1908 and Mecklenburg was the last State to admit women in 1909. Despite the delay in admitting women it should be noted that once a German State had agreed to full matriculation, all universities in that State would admit women and across all faculties. Cf. Huerkamp, *Bildungsbürgerinnen.*, p.75.

[6] Dr Helene Bötjer, 'Gedanken über das Frauenstudium', *Die Frau,* 33 (1925/26), pp.113-115: 113.

[7] Anna Schönborn, 'Studentinnenfürsorge des Deutschen Akademikerinnenbundes', *Die Frau,* 36 (1928/9), pp.325-329.

empirical study of women who were studying during the Weimar period.[8] Knoblauch categorises the responses to her survey in terms of the expectations her respondents claimed they had had of university study and of their future career. Knoblauch includes the full transcripts of the surveys she cites in the appendices. In this respect she makes her raw data available to future scholars. In the body of her thesis she classifies the responses and in doing so edits the comments she cites in order to fit her methodology**. Section 2.2.** demonstrates that an approach classifying women by their self-depictions need not necessarily conflate the 'voice' of the scholar with the 'voices' of her respondents. Knoblauch organises her material as just one way of approaching the question of what motivated women in a particular age group to go to university, the material is available for future scholars to present differently. Her survey is not only revealing because of her respondents' varied portrayal of their aspirations, but also because of the issues which are apparently not significant to her as the interviewer in terms of the questions she poses. In the context of academic publications such as that of Max Hirsch which were concerned with establishing a connection between study and reproductive health, it is significant that the survey by Knoblauch does not question female students about motherhood. Her survey shows that the questions she does not pose are as significant as the questions she does pose, in terms of her attempts to define academic women.

Section **2.2** then examines how feminist scholars Edith Glaser and Barbara Cohors-Fresenborg have organised their interview material with women who had graduated during the Weimar Republic and the National Socialist period. This section problematises the criteria employed by Glaser and Cohors-Fresenborg to classify women along purely gendered lines. Full transcripts of interviews are not included by the scholars and the responses of the

[8] Elisabeth Knoblauch, *Zur Psychologie der studierenden Frau: Eine Untersuchung über die Einstellung zum Studium und zur späteren Berufstätigkeit* (Leipzig, 1930).

interviewees are edited in such a way that labels the graduates as un-emancipated and unengaged with the 'Woman Question'.

Contributors to the debate about 'Frauenstudium' between 1872 and 1930 frequently organised their arguments within a dualist paradigm of gender difference[9]. They were therefore following a much older trend. There is an expectation that students such as Straus and Wolff, who also became medical practitioners, should have engaged with these debates in their autobiographical writings. It would also seem evident that pilots such as Beinhorn would have engaged with expectations placed on her within different but equally male-dominated settings. This chapter examines the ways in which womanhood has been constructed in essentialist terms, the chapter also explores the complex ways in which contributors to the discussion concerning 'Frauenstudium' have taken a more differentiated approach to this question. These discussions underline the need to develop a language that makes distinctions between different constructions of self and, in doing so, reveals the opportunities for multiple interpretations of the autobiographical texts under consideration. The language of differentiating between 'voices' is a fruitful way of interpreting the texts where self cannot and should not be classified by reader expectations and where what is significant lies in reading the texts as narration not as story.

2.1 Constructions of 'Womanhood' - The Debate about 'Frauenstudium' 1872-1930

2.1.1 Physiology and the Language of Essential Womanhood in Relation to Debates about 'Frauenstudium' during the 1870s

[9] Chris Weedon, *Gender, Feminism & Fiction in Germany 1840-1914* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), p.8

During the nineteenth century physiology was a frequent point of reference put forward by scholars in their objections to women being admitted to German universities. In her narration of entering Heidelberg in 1900 the narrated self in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* gives prominence to her medical professors' concern for the implications of academic study on the health of women at Heidelberg.[10] It is for this reason that chapter one opens with an examination of the socio-biological arguments set out by academics. From the 1870s studies claiming scientific authority were published which were concerned with proving that men and women were different. Scholars argued that these differences should determine their suitability for different roles within society. In 1872 Theodor von Bischoff, a professor in the field of the natural sciences at the University of Munich, was engaged in research on the dimensions of the brains of women. He claimed that the results of his study proved that women were inferior to men in terms of intellect and reason, and therefore unsuited for academic study.[11] Indeed, he vowed that based on his conclusions he would never permit women to attend his lectures.[12] Bischoff had his critics who claimed that the size and weight of the brain were not conclusive in determining the capacity for intellect.[13] Nonetheless, his methodology of classifying the subjects of his research within a hierarchy was a key feature of research on gender difference between 1870 and 1930.

In 1874 Hedwig Dohm published her essay, 'Ob Frauen studieren dürfen, können, sollen?"[14], in which she responded to scientific claims that women were essentially unsuited

[10] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland*, pp.88-9.
[11] von Bischoff, *Das Studium und die Ausübung der Medizin durch Frauen* (Munich, 1872), cited in Patricia Mazon, *Gender and the Modern Research University. The Admission of Women to German Higher Education* 1865-1914 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), p.2.
[12] von Bischoff, *Das Studium und die Ausübung der Medizin durch Frauen,* p.19
[13] Karl Reclam, *Der Leib des Menschen: dessen Bau und Leben* (Stuttgart: 1879).
[14] Dohm, 'Ob Frauen studieren dürfen, können, sollen?', pp.242-255.

to academic study.[15] She deconstructs the dualistic model of gender difference through her criticism of a rigid concept of "Frauennatur"[16], also criticising the claims of von Bischoff that the size of women's brain meant they were unsuited to academic study.[17] Dohm focuses on practical reasons why women should be admitted to universities; she asserts that demographic factors meant that many women would be unable to marry and should have the means to support themselves. Secondly, she argued that, for reasons of propriety, women doctors would best be able to treat women patients[18] and that women have a better understanding of the physiological workings of the female body from their own experience[19]. Dohm claims that womanhood is not a fixed concept, determined by a set of 'natural laws'.[20] She articulates her demands for the full matriculation of women to German universities in the language of the Enlightenment discourse of universal human rights. She argues that every human being has the right to pursue occupations which are of interest to them, which offer them fulfilment and give them a livelihood.[21] She locates education and learning as the most fulfilling pursuits and insists that men and women should have equal claim to education and to a profession.[22] Dohm frames her demands in terms of a shared humanity and that women should thus have equal access to educational and professional opportunities. Instead she suggests that womanhood is a matter for definition by the individual woman. Dohm argues that womanhood is characterised through the individual's opportunities for self-fulfilment and not through biological functions or through her position in relation to a spouse. Her arguments ascribe authority to individual women to determine their future roles and these roles are not

[15] Hedwig Dohm (1831-1919) published essays on the Woman Question and these focused specifically on the campaign for women to be admitted to universities and for women to be granted the vote.
[16] Dohm, 'Ob Frauen studieren dürfen, können, sollen?', p.252.
[17] Ibid, p.251.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid, p.253.
[21] Ibid, p.250.
[22] Ibid, p.251.

restricted to being a wife and mother. The definition of the self and the fulfilment of individual potential are concerns that inform her engagement with debates on the Woman Question.[23] Dohm defines her understanding of womanhood as a matter of individual negotiation and not as an essence. This was a radical position at the end of the nineteenth century. It was also a position that did not go uncontested amongst the women's movement in the late nineteenth century.

2.1.2. 'Die Kulturaufgabe der Frau' (Lange) – Positioning Women in the Debate about 'Frauenstudium' by the Women's Movement 1887 - 1893

In 1887, Helene Lange (1848-1930), one of the leaders of the moderate women's movement, published 'Die höhere Mädchenschule und ihre Bestimmung' to accompany her petition to the Reichstag for improved educational opportunities for girls. Women were to have greater responsibility for teaching in the middle and upper levels of girls' secondary education and to have sole responsibility for teaching German and religious studies.[24] In 1893 the first 'Mädchengymnasium' was established in Karlsruhe and Straus was amongst its first pupils.[25] Lange orientates her campaign to establish a 'Mädchengymnasium' in the language of

[23] For discussion of Dohm in the context of Nietzschean ideas concerning the creation of individual identities see, Carol Diethe, *Towards Emancipation. German Women Writers of the Nineteenth Century* (New York/Oxford: Berghahn, 1998), pp.156-7.
[24] Lange, 'Die höhere Mädchenschule und ihre Bestimmung', pp.207-226.
[25] Since the mid nineteenth century middle class girls would have had the opportunity to attend public and private secondary schools. These were known variously as Höhere Töchterschulen, Mädchen-Lyzeen or Höhere Mädchenschulen. These schools would have provided them with an education in modern languages, history of art and domestic subjects such as needlework but not sciences, mathematics, Latin and Greek. which were subjects examined in the Abitur, the entry requirement for university. Girls may, if their parents allowed this, have been able to spend a further two years training to be a teacher which was then the only profession available to young women who had followed this educational route. See, James C. Albisetti, *Schooling German Girls and Women: Secondary and Higher Education in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 35; Pass Freidenreich, *Female, Jewish and Educated,* p.6; Caroline Bland, 'Woman's Right or Mother's Duty', p.274.

women's difference, arguing that women have special abilities and these were to inform the roles they should fulfil for society. She asserts that these special abilities formed part of 'die Kulturaufgabe' der Frau'[26]. Lange claimed that women had special roles to fulfil that were different from men but just as important. These roles were articulated in the language of duty and not rights. Her arguments are based on a binary concept of the sexes and their different attributes. Lange frames her demands not in terms of opportunities for the individual woman or as a group but rather in terms of the fate of future generations. Lange assigns to women the task of providing "Erziehung", as mothers caring for and educating their children. She asserts that if they are unable to marry and have children, they should perform these tasks as teachers. Lange claims that male teachers emphasise the scientific aspects within their lessons. In contrast, women with their emotional warmth, compassion and empathy[27] are apparently more capable of incorporating moral dimensions within their teaching of German, religion and history. Her delineation of men and women informs her view that women's role was not only concerned with educating women as human beings but with educating what she claims to be their inherently feminine attributes.[28]

Lange refines the ideas of von Bischoff that women's difference should justify excluding them from education and the professions. Her campaigns for improved access to education and employment were based on her belief that women's difference supported women's access to educational and professional opportunities because of the special contribution they could make to the education of their own children, to the education of other children in their classrooms and to the benefit of the nation.[29] The model of gender difference which frames the demands articulated by Lange was widely supported within the moderate

[26] Lange, 'Die höhere Mädchenschule und ihre Bestimmung', p.212.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid, p.218.
[29] Ibid, p.226.

women's movement during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Lange offers the model as a positive indication of gender difference which identified the sexes as equal in their difference as opposed to inferior in their difference as suggested by the arguments put forward by von Bischoff. Through positioning women as different, Lange's model is an indication of the strategy pursued by the women's movement in response to decrees prohibiting women from forming or participating in political organisations. Through couching demands in the language of ethics, morality and humane values activists such as Lange were able to position women in ways that opened up opportunities in public life. This tactic meant reinforcing categorisations of roles and it was a strategy that promoted perpetual debate concerning how different women were from men and how far such differences should inform the campaigns of the movement. By 1900, when the first women were matriculating at Heidelberg, the professorial debate concerning the implications of academic study and professional life on women's health continued unabated.

2.1.3. The Science of Womanhood – the Professorial Debate concerning 'Frauenstudium' 1900-1920

In the first decade twentieth century, when Straus was beginning her studies at Heidelberg, medical professors continued to publish research which made scientic associations between women's physiology and their social roles. In 1900 the neurologist Paul Möbius published his research on the development of the brain in his study, 'Über den physiologischen

Schwachsinn des Weibes'.[30] Möbius argued that the areas of the brain that governed the capacity for emotion were better developed in women than in men. However, those areas of the brain that determined capacity for reason, judgment and intellect were less developed.[31] Möbius used his research findings to classify men and women with essentially different ways of functioning and then used these differences as a way of assigning women to domestic roles.[32] In contrast to von Bischoff, his research did not focus specifically on the issue of women entering the universities and professions. However, his claims to scientific authority offered some justification to those concerned with restricting the roles which were open to women.[33] In 1920, when Wolff was a student, scholars still considered matriculation for women along gendered lines.

In 1920 the gynaecologist Max Hirsch published 'Über das Frauenstudium. Eine soziologische und biologische Untersuchung auf Grund einer Urhebung'.[34] His investigations took the form of interviews with female students and graduates where he was concerned specifically with the impact of study on the health of women and on their capacity to bear healthy children.[35] Within the survey he questioned his interviewees on the impact of study on their health. The responses from which he quotes suggest that certain interviewees conflate discussion of their own health in terms of their physical and psychological sense of well-being[36] and this is exemplified by the concerns of respondents who define their health

[30] Paul J. Möbius, *Über den physiologischen Schwachsinn des Weibes* (Marhold: Halle, 1900), cited in Chris Weedon, *Gender, Feminism and Fiction in Germany 1840-1914* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), p.5.
[31] Möbius, *Über den physiologischen Schwachsinn des Weibes,* p.5.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Categorisations of the type focusing on gender difference had long been applied in the pseudo-science of locating white and non-white races within a racial hierarchy, with white peoples positioned at the top. Such categorisations were employed to restrict non-white peoples to specific functions, subservient to white races.
[34] Hirsch, 'Über das Frauenstudium', pp.1-43.
[35] Ibid, p.97.
[36] Ibid, p.103.

concerns in terms of "Nervosität und Depression".[37] These concerns were associated by the respondent with difficulties coping with the complex theoretical aspects involved with her law degree. Hirsch categorises the responses of his interviewees in terms of those who complained of health concerns during their studies and those who noticed no such ill effects, and he then relates these responses to academic disciplines. He argues that women in the medical faculty frequently associated academic study with making them better able to cope with motherhood. Hirsch does not discuss the practical aspects of combining a career with raising children, and there is no assumption that female graduates will not enter the professions. Indeed, he acknowledges that difficult economic conditions have prompted an increasing number of women to undertake paid employment. Nonetheless, it is clear from his study that he expresses concern that the priority of women should be motherhood and that role should not be compromised by the pursuit of a career.[38]

In his conclusions Hirsch argues that academic study has no tangible negative implications for female fertility[39] and it is clear that he defines women by their function as potential mothers. He locates a specific group of women from his interviews and categorises them as an elite in terms of their physical stamina and emotional well-being. He positions these women in hierarchical terms as being at the forefront of efforts to rebuild Germany after World War One.[40] The elite group of women are assigned by Hirsch to their role, ordained by nature, of contributing to the reconstruction of Germany through giving birth to children and passing on "wertvolle, intellektuelle und psychische Erbqualitäten".[41] He claims that giving

[37] Hirsch, 'Über das Frauenstudium', p.15.
[38] Ibid, p.139.
[39] Ibid, p.38.
[40] Ibid, p.39.
[41] Ibid, p.38.

birth to healthy children is their duty to the "Volkskörper".[42] Certain women are categorised by Hirsch not only by their reproductive capacity but by their capacity to give birth to the right children in terms of intellect and psychological welfare. Hirsch frames his conclusions about 'Frauenstudium' in the language of racial science and of separate roles for women. In contrast to von Bischoff his findings that certain women suffered physical and psychological problems as a result of academic study are not mobilised in justifying their exclusion from university. He assigns middle class women first and foremost to the role of wives and mothers,[43] yet locates a group of women who are most desirable as mothers because they will produce the healthiest children. It is fruitful to examine Hirsch because his study goes beyond categorising academic women as potential mothers and instead selects which women he deems to be most suitable as mothers. His study which identifies women who should be encouraged to have children corresponds to State policy in the Weimar Republic which was concerned with the science of motherhood.[44] Charlotte Wolff was employed in several clinics in Berlin, funded by the State, which were concerned with issues of welfare in relation to motherhood.[45] In order to explore how women doctors were themselves depicting womanhood during the Weimar period it is fruitful to examine the contributions of these

[42] Hirsch, 'Über das Frauenstudium', p.38.
[43] Ibid, p.125.
[44] Since the late nineteenth century (pseudo-) scientific ideologies were advanced in many Western nations. The term 'eugenics' was conceived by Francis Galton in 1883. Eugenicists advocated that many social problems could be eradicated by preventing certain individuals, deemed genetically unfit, from reproducing. Individuals with desirable social characteristics should, in contrast, be encouraged to reproduce. The eugenics movement was formalised in Germany with the establishment of the *Gesellschaft für Rassenhygiene* in Berlin in 1907. Whilst a number of German eugenicists advocated the legalisation of sterilisation on hereditary medical grounds, such legislation was not promulgated in the Reichstag until 1933 when the National Socialists introduced the sterilisation law of 14 July 1933. See, Francis R. Nicosia and Jonathan Huener (eds), *Medicine and Medical Ethics in Nazi Germany: Origins, Practices, Legacies* (New York/Oxford: Berghahn, 2002), pp. 17, 32.
[45] During the Weimar Republic four hundred family planning clinics were created, forty of which were located in Berlin, often in socially deprived areas. In 1931 one third of birth control and family planning clinics were directed by women. Cited in: Cornelie Usborne, 'Women Doctors and Gender Identity in Weimar Germany (1918-1933)', in *Women and Modern Medicine, Clio Medica* (61), edited by Anne Hardy and Lawrence Conrad (New York: Rodopi, 2001), pp.109-126:112-3.

practitioners to their own professional journal. These contributors engaged with the implications of welfare measures that they were making accessible to women patients.

2.1.4. The Science of 'Motherhood' – The Positioning of Women by Women Doctors in Debates about Motherhood during the Weimar Republic

This section focuses on contributions to *Die Ärztin*, the professional journal of women doctors[46]. It examines how practitioners found opportunities within this publication for discussion and debate on ways of caring for their patients and of negotiating their own professional choices. The leadership of the BDÄ focused specifically on the promotion of welfare measures from a woman's perspective both in terms of the perceived needs of the patient and the perceived abilities of the doctor. [47] In her editorial to the first edition of *Die Ärztin,* Dr Lizzie Hoffa, President of the BDÄ, stated that it was the duty of women doctors to demonstrate "mütterliches Einfühlungsvermögen"[48] as their contribution to the "Volksgesundheit"[49]. Hoffa attributes special traits to women doctors and assigns them to particular functions in accordance with these traits. Hoffa subscribes to the ideas of gender difference supported by von Bischoff, albeit not in the sense of excluding women from professional life. The concept of "Volksgesundheit" here indicates that the function of women doctors was to contribute to the community in particular ways.

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[46] The journal was the official publication of the 'Bund deutscher Ärztinnen' (BDÄ) which was established in 1924. In its first year the organisation had 600 members and this figure reached 900 by 1930 which encompassed a third of women doctors. Cited in: Usborne, 'Women Doctors and Gender Identity', p.112.
[47] Heusler-Edenhuizen, 'Was wir wollen', p.1.
[48] Lizzie Hoffa, 'An unsere Kolleginnen!', *Die Ärztin,* 1 (1932), p.1.
[49] Ibid.

Several contributors assimilated unquestioningly the eugenicist ideas of the period, asserting that fertility should be controlled according to specific criteria in accordance with the social and economic interests of the State.[50] Articles such as "Warum treiben wir Eugenik?" by Dr Meta Gumpertz classify the population in hierarchical terms according to their "eugenische Wertigkeit"[51] as "Schwächlinge aus ererbter Minderwertigkeit"[52], as "Erbkranke"[53] and "Minderwertige"[54] as well as "Erbgesunde"[55]. The measures advocated by Gumpertz include sterilisation and termination of pregnancies which should be enshrined in law in order, "die Schwächen der Umwelt auszumerzen"[56] and to protect "die Zukunft des Volkes"[57]. She advocates further measures including the education of secondary school pupils concerning eugenics and the exchange of "eugenische Gesundheitszeugnisse"[58] between couples prior to their marriage. The intimate matter of reproduction is identified by Gumpertz as a concern for women doctors in their consultations and also a concern with implications for the health of the nation. These contributions may be read as narratives of womanhood where the State assigns authority to the women practising in family planning clinics to categorise the population by their capacity to produce healthy children. Contributors argued that the healthy should reproduce in the national interest, the unhealthy should not.

A key point of reference for women doctors defining their own professional roles was the idea that men and women were different and women had their own roles to perform in society. In their career these roles were frequently concerned with matters relating to fertility and motherhood. Analyses of texts by Helen Lange and Hedwig Dohm have already

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[50] Nicosia, *Medicine and Medical Ethics*, p.17.
[51] Dr Meta Gumpertz, 'Warum treiben wir Eugenik', pp.1-3: 1.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid, p.2.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid, p.1.

demonstrated the competing discourses which were put forward by women who were concerned with extending the opportunities available to them. Central to these competing discourses were two alternative understandings of how to define the concept of womanhood. The next section focuses on the engagement of the women's movement with discussions about 'Frauenstudium' during the Weimar Republic. Discussions within *Die Frau*, the journal of the Bund Deutscher Frauenvereine (BDF), suggest that women's progress is defined in terms of a struggle. The struggle is linked by contributors to the lack of fighting spirit which older members of the women's movement associate with young women who now benefit from their campaigns to open universities and the professions to women. The struggle is also associated with the concern of the movement's leaders to attract a younger membership to their organisation. The next section demonstrates that in their pursuit of higher education and a career, younger women were concerned with defining their sense of who they were in ways that were not tied to specific issues, as they believed that many of these rights had been gained. In this respect they did not conform to the expectations of the women's movement who were concerned with a struggle for rights not yet won.

2.1.5. Narratives of a Generation Gap in Contributions to *Die Frau* after World War One

After World War One the campaigns of the women's movement shifted in emphasis from the demands for women's rights to the issue of a generation gap between young women students and the older members of the women's movement. Discussion within *Die Frau* was increasingly focusing on the question of younger women's responsibility towards the

women's movement and in this respect contributors were defining womanhood along generational lines. Contributors to *Die Frau* expressed concern that women were studying for the wrong reasons. In 'Gedanken über das Frauenstudium' (1925) Dr Helene Bötjer identifies a university education as an opportunity for personal fulfilment. Her idealised image of university is depicted as opening up a beautiful world of opportunities for inner development which cannot be fulfilled by any other means.[59] Education is associated by Bötjer with achieving personal fulfilment instead of motherhood and this view initially seems to accord with Dohm's image of education as the means to achieving fulfilment.[60] Yet she goes on to refine her understanding of self-fulfilment by basing her model of education on the dualistic model of gender difference promoted by Helene Lange. Her model is not reductionist in the sense that fulfilment is defined in terms of domestic roles. However, fulfilment is predicated on the understanding that men and women bring different thought processes and approaches to research.[61] Bötjer defines womanhood in relation to academia in terms of 'nature', of emotional warmth and empathy for others.[62] Her assertion that, "auch eine studierende Frau eben Frau ist, daß sie Frau bleiben kann, auch wenn sie den von alters gewohnten Weg verläßt"[63] indicates that the pursuit of new roles need not undermine a sense of 'womanliness'. Her understanding of womanliness is predicated on women's capacity for emotion and for empathy. For Bötjer the roles of being a student and being a woman are in harmony. Her understanding of harmony is predicated on the stability of certain gender norms.

[59] Dr Helene Bötjer, 'Gedanken über das Frauenstudium', p.113.
[60] Ibid, p. 114.
[61] Ibid, p. 113.
[62] Ibid, p. 115.
[63] Ibid.

Of particular concern to contributors was the lack of fighting spirit exhibited by the young women studying at university during the Weimar period and reflected in the ageing membership of the BDF. The image of the female student as "Kämpferin"[64] is one that contributors to *Die Frau* during the Weimar period frequently associate with the spirit of the women's movement. In her article 'Studentinnenfürsorge des Deutschen Akademikerinnenbundes', Anna Schönborn categorises the 'woman student' of 1928 as a type who takes for granted the hard won right to a university education. [65] She locates the student in a privileged and isolated position, isolated because of her disinterest and occasional hostility towards the campaign for women to be permitted to enrol at German universities. The discourse of this particular article gives an indication as to the importance of terms such as "Kampf" und "Rechte" in defining the strategies of the women's movement. [66] In the difficult climate of the Weimar Republic a change in emphasis is discernible in contributions to the journal. Terms such as "Kampf" which had often been applied to the campaign for women's rights were increasingly applied to the financial struggle experienced by women students trying to support themselves during their studies. Contributors to *Die Frau* were concerned with the practical assistance the movement could offer to young women, for example, the provision of halls of residence and small bursaries enabling them to continue their studies.[67]

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[64] Hildegard Gallmeister, 'Die Studentin im akademischen Leben', *Die Frau*, 37 (1929/30), pp.623-630:625 cited in Britta Lohschelder, *'Die Knäbin mit dem Doktortitel': Akademikerinnen in der Weimarer Republic* (Pfaffenweiler: Centaurus, 1994), p.112.
[65] Anna Schönborn, 'Studentinnenfürsorge des Deutschen Akademikerinnenbundes', p.325.
[66] Ibid.
[67] For contributions on the economic situation of women students see, Regine Deutsch, 'Die wirtschaftliche Lage der Studentinnen', *Die Frau* 38 (1930/31), pp.107-115; Annemarie Doherr, 'Zum Generationenproblem in der Frauenbewegung', *Die Frau* 39 (1930/31), pp.532-38.

In 1918 there were 7339 women enrolled at German universities, constituting 9.5% of the student body.[68] This number continued to rise throughout much of the Weimar period, although there were specific points at which the numbers fell, for example, in 1924 when 6675 women were enrolled.[69] The economic crisis in 1923, following the French occupation of the Ruhr, offers one explanation for this drop. The crisis left the German currency effectively worthless and many families faced financial ruin[70]. Women from middle-class families were strongly represented in the universities, with one third of women students from educated middle class families. This social group was particularly affected by the economic conditions and, as Michael Kater argues, many families felt obliged to fund a son's studies if they were only able to afford one student in the family.[71] In his study Kater concludes from statistics that women students required a monthly allowance of 480 Marks to cover living costs, food, clothing and books. For medical students like Charlotte Wolff this figure stood at 655 Marks per month.[72] Shortages of accommodation, particularly in the larger cities such as Berlin and Munich where women were strongly represented[73], and constant fluctuations in the value of the German currency exacerbated the situation. In order to assist women the women's movement made available small funds to support those who were struggling financially, e.g. through the Helene Lange bursary worth 400-600 Marks.[74] Students may also have taken paid employment to fund their studies, e.g. by offering private tuition, typing and

[68] Statistischen Reichsamt (ed), *Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Deutsche Reich* (Berlin, 1923), p.318, cited in, Michael Kater, 'Krisis des Frauenstudiums in der Weimarer Republik', *Vierteljahresschrift für Sozial-und Wirtschaftsgeschichte,* 59 (1972), pp. 207-255: 208.
[69] Statistischen Reichsamt (ed), *Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Deutsche Reich*, p.318.
[70] Mary Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany* (Cambridge: CUP, 1990), pp.165-166.
[71] Kater, 'Krisis des Frauenstudiums in der Weimarer Republik', p.207.
[72] Doherr, 'Zum Generationenproblem in der Frauenbewegung', p.108.
[73] Hamburg had the highest proportion of women students at 19.7%, women accounted for 16.2% of the student body in Berlin, whilst women were also well represented at Freiburg and Heidelberg, the first universities in Germany to admit women. Huerkamp argues that women expected to encounter fewer instances of discrimination in universities in larger cities as well as those with a longer tradition of admitting women than in universities situated in smaller university towns such as Halle and Gießen. Figures from: C.Burckhardt, 'Wie verteilen sich die Studentinnen auf die einzelnen Universitäten?', *Die Studentin. Eine Monatsschrift*, 3 (1926/7), pp.3-6. Cited in, Huerkamp, *Bildungsbürgerinnen*, p,157.
[74] Huerkamp, *Bildungsbürgerinnen*, p.139.

providing child care.[75] Concerns were expressed by contributors to *Die Frau* that women were suffering from exhaustion and malnutrition brought on by efforts to fund their studies.[76] The *Deutscher Akademikerinnenbund* (DAB), which was affiliated to the BDF, financed several halls of residence for women, for example, the *Viktoria-Heim* (1915) and the *Helene-Lange Heim* (1928), both in Berlin. These buildings could only provide accommodation for a limited number of women students. In "Studentinnenfürsorge des Deutschen Akademikerinnenbundes" Schönborn identifies halls of residence, lectures and meetings organised by the DAB as places where women students can socialise and form real "Lebensgemeinschaften".[77] Her emphasis on single sex meeting places underlines the significance which the DAB attaches to gendered support networks and Schönborn articulates this in the language of 'community'. Schönborn locates students and young professionals, away from a common political agenda as women, to a setting of their own where it is hoped mutual interests and discussions will foster a sense of community.

During the Weimar period the issue of higher education was the focus of contestation and negotiation and this is illustrated in the article by Schönborn. She exemplifies the complexities of discussions taking place within the women's movement whose discourse positions women in relation to the struggle for rights, offers of practical financial assistance and the creation of places for women to meet and socialise. The next section examines the work of Elisabeth Knoblauch who was awarded her doctorate in 1931 for a thesis based on a survey of women students. Her investigations are a fruitful source of information about the motivations of women who were entering higher education and articulating their aspirations after graduation. It is not, however, the story of these women that is of specific interest here

[75] Doherr, 'Zum Generationenproblem in der Frauenbewegung', p.110.
[76] Schönborn, 'Studentinnenfürsorge des Deutschen Akademikerinnenbundes', p.325.
[77] Ibid.

but rather the narration. The section focuses on the emphasis that the respondents place on their particular concerns and how they refine their concerns within their narratives.

2.2 Questions about Female Emancipation – Setting the Terminology

2.2.1 Exploring Lines of Questioning in a Survey of Women Students (1927)

The earliest scholarly investigation into the motivations of women in higher education was *Zur Psychologie der studierenden Frau: Eine Untersuchung über die Einstellung zum Studium und zur späteren Berufstätigkeit*.[78] In 1927 Knoblauch conducted a survey which was sent to 965 women who were studying at the universities of Hamburg, Jena and Munich. The survey asked (1) why the respondents were studying for a university degree (2) what they aspired to after graduation and (3) how far experiences of university corresponded with their expectations. Empirical research concerning the issue of 'Frauenstudium' had already been undertaken by Max Hirsch in 1920. 'Zur Psychologie der studierenden Frau' for the first time gathered evidence demonstrating that some women had aspirations to work after graduation and associated university with an opportunity to broaden their horizons in the sense of preparing themselves for a career.

In her research Knoblauch selects the 20-25 age group and states that all were studying at the time of being interviewed. Her rationale is concerned with identifying whether women enter higher education in order to train for a particular profession, if they make any connection between university study and a career or if they decided to go to university for

[78] Knoblauch, *Zur Psychologie der studierenden Frau.*

other reasons.[79] She refers to claims by the women's movement that entering university straight from school is an almost automatic step for young women, which the movement has also characterised as a thoughtless act.[80] Her conclusions are based on categorising her replies by the associations they make between their studies and their aspirations. She includes full transcripts of the interviews she has incorporated in her study and therefore makes some of her raw data available to future scholars. Her interest is in demonstrating that her replies can be classified in the following categories. She has found that women entered university either to prepare for a profession, to broaden their horizons or to engage in more intense theoretical study. In relation to career aspirations the respondents are classified by a wish for financial independence, personal fulfilment or a sense of contributing to society. The responses are a fruitful source of analysis yet they have been edited by Knoblauch in the body of her text in order to assign the response to a certain category. Her methodology of classifying the replies is of interest but the application of categories is at odds with the refinement which is evident in terms of how the respondents present their views and this is a limitation of the source.

It is interesting that the respondents are not questioned directly on their views with respect to marriage and motherhood although several approach the issues in relation to their career aspirations. Certain respondents anticipate having to choose between marriage and career whilst others aspire to pursue a career alongside raising a family. Knoblauch is concerned with editing her material to correspond with her attempts to classify what motivated women to study, yet by incorporating the varied comments with respect to family, she also includes narratives which differ from her initial line of questioning. Her voice does not overwhelm here the voice of the respondents who identified motherhood as relevant concerns in relation to their studies and career prospects. These respondents appear not to

[79] Knoblauch, *Zur Psychologie der studierenden Frau,* p.3.
[80] Ibid.

perform to the expectations of the women's movement that women were going from school to university without reflection or indeed that they were studying for the 'wrong reasons', of studying just for a career and not because of a love of learning. Instead, the responses present differentiated narratives of women who were entering higher education for a variety of reasons.

Those respondents who associate a university education with training for a career, identify their employment prospects as doctors, teachers and social workers, occupations which they label as 'careers for women'. [81] These answers indicate that some respondents were performing to the expectations of members of the moderate women's movement who continued to ascribe certain roles to women based on a dualistic model of gender difference. [82]

The differentiated narratives presented in Knoblauch's study offer an indication of how the respondents both conformed to and differed from the expectations of the women's movement. The narratives refute attempts to categorise by Knoblauch and this is why questions of positioning and repositioning are significant in examining these narratives because these indicate the dynamic ways that the respondents reflect on their aspirations. Respondents may refine their aspirations in relation to their experiences of study, either finding their studies more fulfilling than they had expected or framing their aspirations with a wish to broaden horizons yet further. Other respondents correspond with the premises of the women's movement through positioning women within categories based on ideas of gender difference and a dualistic model of gender roles. In this respect they do not conform to the expectations of the feminist reader. Furthermore, the respondents often locate themselves in isolated positions in their narratives, emphasising the importance of independence, of

[81] Elisabeth Knoblauch, *Zur Psychologie der studierenden Frau,* p.66.
[82] Ibid*,* p.71.

supporting themselves without depending on family and future husband. Knoblauch does not convey information on the quantity of women who prioritised particular aspects in their narration but her respondents' narratives indicate that the war was a significant concern to them. Furthermore, it is in relation to concerns about the aftermath of war that they position themselves with respect to others. Their narratives are significant for showing what is absent. Fathers, brothers and the prospective husbands they had yet to meet are all significant for their absence and this absence is associated with the loss of financial security.

Contributions to *Die Frau* indicate that the women's movement expressed concern during the Weimar period that women who were studying purely to obtain a job were studying for the wrong reasons. World War One is not referred to directly by the respondents to Knoblauch, nor is the inflation period in 1923. These events, which we would expect to have changed lives considerably, are discussed in the context of social privations and it is the narration of these events that demonstrates a complex picture of changed social conditions to which young students had to adapt. One student associates her initial motivations with necessity, expecting that she would have to support herself if she did not marry. She repositions herself in the course of her studies, distancing herself from study as a means to an end and instead associating it with new opportunities to broaden her horizons and to formulate her own ideas. Her goals are refined in terms of learning in pursuit of intellectual independence and cultural fulfilment as she pursues her interest in German literature and philosophy.[83] Respondents associate a life without a career with being at the margins of life. This act of positioning stands in contrast to the arguments of Helene Lange that women have their own special roles to perform and those roles should be performed primarily as wives and mothers. The following respondent, a medical student, anticipates, "das Leben ist durch die

[83] Knoblauch, *Zur Psychologie der studierenden Frau,* p.20.

Berufstätigkeit viel reicher. Ohne Berufsarbeit komme ich mir direct wie abgeschnitten vom lebendigen, pulsierenden Leben vor"[84]. Life for this respondent is not compartmentalised by gender roles and with respect to gender difference. The prospect of a life without a career suggests an isolated position that is without meaning. A further student rejects expectations that women should manage the home instead of pursuing their career because technological progress has changed how the household is managed on a practical level. She claims that the practice of women staying at home to care for the children and manage the home is outdated.[85] Her statement asserts that new technology has repositioned women in relation to career and family and this suggests similarities with Hedwig Dohm's claim that roles are not fixed but change with time and circumstances.

Other women are occasionally introduced in the narrative because they share views on a subject. References to other women have the effect of justifying their resolve on a subject, for example, other women also assume they must train for a career in case they do not marry or alternatively other women anticipate that after marriage they will give up their career. Other women are referred to because they make the same decisions but not in terms of an active support network. Other women are not referred to in term of offering advice and support. Knoblauch does not question the respondents on their relations with other women students or indeed other students, but nor does she question them specifically on marriage, yet marriage is frequently a point of reference in the narratives. The respondents apparently do not articulate their views on university and career through positioning themselves with other women or indeed with the women's movement, a political organisation. It appears that many of the respondents set the parameters for discussion in terms of reflection as individuals and

[84] Knoblauch, *Zur Psychologie der studierenden Frau,* p.50.
[85] Ibid*,* p.75.

not in relation to communities, not even with other women students, or with groups of women outside the university.

The expectation that women would define their university experiences in ways specific to their gender and in relation to other women has motivated scholarly research since the 1970s.[86] It is surprising that the study by Knoblauch has received little scholarly attention precisely because of the differentiated ways that the respondents narrate their experiences. Instead, feminist scholars have approached the 'story' of women in higher education and the professions as a narrative defined by the struggle against discrimination, prejudice and of the struggle for visibility.[87] They have given prominence to these preconceptions in their choice of title.[88] Scholars have also examined the issue of 'Frauenstudium' in relation to specific universities. These investigations have often been published to coincide with the centenary of women's admission to German universities.[89] The commemorative approach taken in these studies has again meant a focus on the challenges the first female students had to overcome in completing their degrees. In commemorating these women as pioneers Hadumod Bussmann and Hiltrud Häntzschel make connections between the discrimination of women in higher education during the Weimar period with raising consciousness of discrimination in German

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[86] Renate Bridenthal, and Claudia Koonz, *Becoming Visible: Women in European History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977); Sheila Rowbotham, *Hidden from History* (New York: Pantheon, 1974); Anne Schlüter, *Pionierinnen, Feministinnen, Karrierefrauen? – Zur Geschichte des Frauenstudiums in Deutschland* (Pfaffenweiler: Centaurus Verlag, 1992), A. Dageförde, Frauen an der Universität Hamburg 1933-1945 (Hamburg: Ms, 1987); Edith Glaser, *Hindernisse, Umwege, Sackgassen: Die Anfänge des Frauenstudiums in Tübingen 1904-1934* (Weinheim: Deutscher Studienverlag, 1992); Hadumod Bußmann, *Stieftöchter der Alma Mater ? 90 Jahre Frauenstudium in Bayern – Am Beispiel der Universität München* (Munich: Kunstmann, 1993).

[87] Michael Kater, 'Krisis des Frauenstudiums in der Weimarer Republik', p.207; Anne Schlüter, *Pionierinnen, Feministinnen, Karrierefrauen*, p.1. In her study *Gender and the Politics of History* Joan Wallach Scott examines the role of gender as a category of historical analysis. Wallach Scott examines gender in a generalized historical context and not specifically to the history of women in higher education in Germany. Yet her observation that feminist historians have focused on women's history in the context of examining the "specific conditions of women's subordination" corresponds to the approach taken in feminist studies of 'Frauenstudium'. Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), p.18.

[88] Renate Bridenthal, and Claudia Koonz, *Becoming Visible*; Sheila Rowbotham, *Hidden from History*.

[89] Glaser, *Hindernisse, Umwege, Sackgassen*; Bußmann, *Stieftöchter der Alma Mater ?*; Dageförde, *Frauen an der Universität Hamburg*; Kühn, *100 Jahre Frauenstudium*.

universities at the time of publication in 1997.[90] The authors define female emancipation as the struggle against discrimination and the struggle against prejudice. They conflate two different historical periods with their definition of emancipation. They also impose this definition as an expectation that all women would reflect on their experiences in ways specific to their gender, yet, as we have seen in Knoblauch's evidence, definitions which raise such expectations may obscure the fluid ways that individual women depict their motivations. The next section problematises lines of questioning in interviews undertaken with women decades after they graduated in the Weimar period.[91] The section shows that our expectations of how women remember can be misguided and explores the importance of language in questioning graduates on the relevance of gender.

2.2.2. Searching for Evidence of Emancipation – The Problem of Questioning Women Graduates during the 1980s and 1990s

Edith Glaser published *Hindernisse Umwege, Sackgassen: Die Anfänge des Frauenstudiums in Tübingen 1904-1934* in 1992 and her source material is taken from interviews she conducted with women graduates at Tübingen in 1986. The testimonies she includes are extracts which Glaser has edited, the complete interviews are not included. Experiences of discrimination are of concern to Glaser although she establishes for the reader that the women only discussed discrimination when questioned about such instances. One graduate

[90] Hadumod Bußmann, Hiltrud Häntzschel, *Bedröhlich gescheit: Ein Jahrhundert Frauen und Wissenschaft in Bayern* (Munich: Beck, 1997), p.12.
[91] Glaser, *Hindernisse, Umwege, Sackgassen*; Bußmann, *Stieftöchter der Alma Mater*; Barbara Cohors-Fresenborg, 'Frauen in der Medizin: Interviews mit Ärztinnen', *Frauenkörper-Medizin-Sexualität – Auf dem Wege zu einer neuen Sexualmoral*, ed. by Johanna Geyer-Kordesch and Annette Kühn (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1986), pp.311-327.

emphatically denied experiencing discrimination and then qualified her comment by associating such instances with other universities.[92] The emphasis is placed by graduates on a sense that they were accepted in the university and they frequently use the collective term 'wir' to indicate the shared experience of being accepted. The graduates often orientate their discussion of university in terms of stamina, needing little sleep and a good memory – they attribute passing their degree with traits they were fortunate to have and had little to do with intellect. Indeed, it is their female friends who are associated with being particularly academically gifted.[93] These responses offer an indication of how graduates remembering university do not conform to the expectations that they would define themselves in ways that are specific to their gender and then in relation to instances of struggle. They frequently define their younger self by the friendships they made at university and by the social life they enjoyed with male and female students. These friendships are further defined by shared interests in social sports such as gymnastics, tennis, ice-skating and hiking.[94] In response to questions about their thoughts on female emancipation, the graduates refer to themselves as "unpolitisch"[95] and "im großen und ganzen politisch nicht interessiert".[96] They define female emancipation as a political concept and do not associate their younger self with this.

The challenge for scholars investigating responses to the issue of 'Frauenstudium' is to find a means of questioning women about their experiences at university where engagement with their position in gendered terms is not assumed. Nancy Chodorow addresses this challenge in her essay "Seventies Questions for Thirties Women: Gender and Generation

[92] Glaser, *Hindernisse, Umwege, Sackgassen,* pp.146, 259.
[93] Ibid, p.260.
[94] Ibid, p.229.
[95] Ibid, p.239.
[96] Ibid.

in a Study of Early Women Psychoanalysts".[97] Her essay examines the methodological problem of eliciting responses about "gender consciousness"[98] from women for whom "gender does not seem like a salient category".[99] She identifies a conflict between the research methodologies of feminist scholars[100], including herself, and the responses of her interviewees who appear to her to neither theorize nor thematize gender.[101] Chodorow initially argues that gender as an analytical category was deemed by the interviewees to have been less significant in their own experiences than for the interviewer. Chodorow highlights a disjuncture between these women's experiences and the means of articulating them. Chodorow recognises that the term 'discrimination' is one that she would apply to her own experience of growing up at the time of the women's movement during the seventies and to her scholarly investigations of gender theory. Chodorow uses the term "generation gap"[102] to refer to differences in reflection between "thirties and seventies women".[103] Scholars approaching thirties women do so through a feminist concern to "allow women's voices to be heard"[104] and the issue is that the voices of the interviewees are conflated with the voice of the interviewer who phrases questions around the views that s/he wishes to elicit.[105] The issue of allowing voices to be heard can be ambiguous if the interviewer is making a judgment as to which voices are to be heard. There is a further issue if the responses are assessed by whether they correspond to feminist expectations. The 'voices' that we hear in the study by Glaser are problematic because the raw data, i.e. the full transcripts, are not made available, thus we only have access

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[97] Nancy J Chodorow, 'Seventies Questions for Thirties Women: Gender and Generation in a Study of Early Women Psychoanalysts', in *Feminism and Psychoanalytic Theory* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), pp.199-218.
[98] Ibid, p.199.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid, p.208.
[102] Ibid, p.216.
[103] Ibid, p.199.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid, p.200.

to brief extracts selected by the author aimed at showing that her interviewees were of the opinion that they had not experienced discrimination.[106] More fruitful analysis may have been gained through including full transcripts of the interviews in order to explore how the graduates prioritised different aspects of self-definition in their narration of university experiences. Chodorow concludes that instead of imposing gender as a category for analysing memories of university and career, gender should be approached as "situated phenomena"[107] – it must be examined in relation to the context in which it is discussed, taking account of the possibility of shifts in terms of what one understands by being a woman, and how gender is just one possible point of self-definition.

Her proposed methodology reinforces the approach taken in this thesis of focusing on the narration of multiple and shifting narrative positions. There is, however, a potential conflict for feminist scholars through undertaking a methodology that in removing the name of the author has the potential of removing her authority and consequently part of her identity.[108] Critics such as Cora Kaplan and Cheryl Walker have approached autobiographies by women from the premise that authors exist as "contradictory, fluctuating presences"[109] in texts and as "sites of possible meaning"[110] This thesis is informed by Barthes' notion of the text as a repository of multiple meanings because it facilitates a departure from the reductive label of 'woman' in readings of autobiographical writing as well as a departure from anachronistic readings of the texts. The approach taken here offers a recognition that the narrators had a different understanding of terms such as 'feminist' and 'emancipated' to scholars reading the texts, or would not necessarily have recognised their relevance. The

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[106] Glaser, *Hindernisse, Umwege, Sackgassen,* p.143.
[107] Chodorow, 'Seventies Questions for Thirties Women', p.218.
[108] See Cheryl Walker, 'Feminist Literary Criticism and the Author', p.553. In her article Walker addresses the role of the author in relation to feminist criticism and poststructuralist readings of autobiographical texts.
[109] Cora Kaplan, *Sea Changes: Essays on Culture and Feminism* (London: Verso, 1986), p.120.
[110] Walker, 'Feminist Literary Criticism and the Author', p.568.

language of positions provides me with terminology that facilitates interpretation without imposing labels on the texts, or without judging what may appear to be conflicting positions through labelling these as inconsistencies in relation to what individuals reading the texts today would expect to find. The notion of multiple readings contributes to more differentiated interpretations of the texts which avoid essentialist ideas about womanhood.

2.3. Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated how expectations that women reflect on their lives in ways specific to their gender have been confounded and this indicates a methodological problem of interpreting experiences where these are not necessarily narrated along gendered lines. The challenge facing scholars is to locate a language for interpreting texts. The main issue is to avoid valorising the responses of individuals according to criteria to which they themselves do not ascribe importance. My concern is with finding ways of exploring the texts in ways that keep apart the 'voice' of the scholar and the multiple and shifting voices of the individuals under analysis. Furthermore, a distinction needs to be made between narrative 'voices' in ways that focus on self-depictions as opposed to biographical 'reality' or 'totality'. This concern calls for a methodology of differentiating between a narrating self and a narrated self, and sometimes between multiple narrated selves. The language of differentiated narrative presences enables me to explore how reflection is undertaken in the narratives without imposing the necessity to reflect or to reflect in certain ways. The distinction between narrative levels reveals how the question of female emancipation motivates complex reflection and cannot be categorised by criteria stating whether an individual identified herself

as emancipated or as un-emancipated, political or as un-political. The language I have developed for differentiating between narrated self and narrating self has the effect of distancing the reader from assumptions that the author and protagonist are identical. The language can, however, be awkward and can disrupt the flow of argumentation in the thesis. It is, however, necessary in a thesis that is about narration not story and where it is not my role to use the texts in order to construct a complete image of the person that is depicted there. Furthermore, in textual readings which differentiate between narrative voices, for the purposes of clarity, it seems necessary to distinguish my interpreting 'voice' occasionally by 'I', a device which is discouraged in scholarly writing.

The analyses in the following chapters show the merit of examining not only depictions but more importantly the question of what is prioritised in the narration. Of significance to the analyses that follow is the question of 'positioning' in relation to other people and where these encounters prompt reflection by the narrating self on their sense of how they perceive themselves. The issue of investigating self, where it shifts, where it cannot be classified and where it seems to defy expectations, reinforces the importance of finding a language that articulates the fluidity of self-depictions. The language that I have developed facilitates a reading of the texts not as stories but as intricate narratives where individuals speak from multiple positions. Chapter Three now investigates how the university, the clinic and the flying machine are depicted in the narration as places for defining self in intricate ways. The textual analyses reveal the prominence given by the different narrative voices to gender, religion, race, religion and sexuality at different narrative points and how the emphasis they place on these points of self-identification sometimes confounds expectations.

3. 'NOT AN ESSENCE BUT A POSITIONING'[1] – NARRATIVES OF SELF IN MEMORIES OF STUDENT DAYS AND CAREER

In each of the texts there is no single fixed category for definition. Self is often articulated in relation to the sense of community that is to be found at school, at university, in the family planning clinic and in the German colonies. Self is also articulated in relation to marginalisation and exclusion from communities and also in relation to associations with new communities. This chapter interrogates the prominence given on the different narrative levels to a sense of belonging to community because this prominence reveals how different aspects of identification are prioritised at certain narrative points. Gender, religion, race, nation and sexuality are elements that may intersect in different communities enabling the interpretation of the intricacies of self-definitions. Exclusivity in the sense of being separate from others is also depicted as a means of articulating self. The key issue is to explore the associations the narrated self in each text makes and how these associations may be refined and what this reveals about the way they valorise their education and profession in the context of their gender, religion and nationality.

3.1. Narratives of Self at School and University in *Wir lebten in Deutschland*

3.1.1. The Problem of Formulating Self – the Significance of the *Mädchengymnasium*

The opening of the *Mädchengymansium* in Karlsruhe is identified by the narrated self as a decisive moment for herself as a thirteen year old. It is decisive because her attendance there

[1] Andrea Hammel, Godela Weiss-Sussex (eds), *'Not an Essence but a Positioning' – German-Jewish Women Writers 1900-1938* (Munich: Martin Meidenbauer, 2009).

apparently prompted her to define her position within the family and to engage with the events that were taking place far from her home such as the Suffragette movement in England and the Dreyfus Affair in France.

The narrated self identifies the family home as a happy place and she positions her mother at the centre of the home. The narrated self is the third of four children – the middle child with two elder sisters and a younger brother. The home is a place where education in all its dimensions is valued. After their household chores and homework are complete the afternoons are spent swimming in the summer or ice-skating in winter and during the winter the family read classic works by Goethe and talk about works of art with their mother who gave tuition in fine art to young women. [2] The home is a place where interests in culture, literature and the arts were pursued, indicating that the mother was concerned with her children's cultural development beyond the school curriculum. The home is also a place where different activities are assigned by the mother to the girls and their younger brother. The narrated self depicts the girls being given more household chores, spending some of their evening playing the piano and drawing whilst their brother went to a tutor to learn Hebrew and to study the Talmud. All the children attended a Jewish school from the age of five years where they learned to read and write in Hebrew and translated prayers from the Torah. They are narrated as receiving a religious education, however, her narration demonstrates that the son received more intensive tuition whilst the girls were engaging in secular cultural activities. Education is defined by the narrating self in terms which extend self-cultivation through the arts and also physical development through certain sports. These attributes have been associated with the concept of 'Bildung'.[3]

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[2] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.63.
[3] Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class*, p.8.

Marion Kaplan has emphasised the importance of 'Bildung' amongst the middle classes in nineteenth-century Germany in pursuit of upward mobility.[4] By giving prominence to their cultural credentials they were able to emulate the life style and values which they associated with the educated upper middle class. 'Bildung' also suggested respectability and refined manners and these aspects centred on the creation of a solid, dependable and respectable family.[5] Kaplan stresses the importance of 'Bildung' to Jewish families as a means of demonstrating their allegiance to Germany through an appreciation of German literature, the arts, customs and dress.[6] She emphasises the gendered contribution of women who fostered an appreciation of cultural attributes which they associated with Germanness as they raised their children and managed their homes.[7] According to Kaplan, despite striving for acculturation in middle-class German society, the home was a place where Jewish customs and traditions were preserved. She also suggests that it was here that women acted as mediators, identifying with being German and being Jewish. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the Jewish mother of this orthodox household assumes exactly that role. Kaplan does not differentiate between liberal and orthodox observance when she refers to 'Jews' or 'Jewish women'. The narrated self, in contrast, identifies swimming and ice-skating as activities which the mother encouraged her girls to pursue. These activities are depicted as being far from the norm within orthodox households. Nonetheless, she emphasises the regularity with which they participated in sports as she states, "wir schwammen im Sommer täglich, der Eistag wurde zum Schlittschuhlauf ausgenützt".[8] Indeed, her narration indicates that the narrated self exhausted all possible opportunities to take part in sports. The narrating self

[4] Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class,* p.8.
[5] Ibid*,* p.9.
[6] Ibid, pp.10-11. See also, Hammel, *'Not an Essence but a Positioning',* p.12; *The Jewish Response to German Culture,* ed. by Jehuda Reinharz and Walter Schatzberg (Hanover/London: University Press of New England, 1985), pp.1-16; Marion Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany 1618-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005)*,* pp.182-183.
[7] Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class,* p.11.
[8] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.33.

gives prominence to her mother's concern that the children had opportunities to enjoy themselves in the fresh air with their friends. There are no references to the anti-Semitic association of Jews with a pale and unhealthy complexion[9] but certainly the physically strenuous activities that are depicted implicitly associate the children with robust health and stamina.[10] In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narrated self depicts the Eastern European Jews at her school as belonging to a different social circle and being unused to authority.[11] She makes no comment on their appearance but she distances her own family from them through the differences in how as children, they spoke and behaved and through emphasising the strictness and fastidiousness of her mother on matters of discipline, conduct and helping with household chores. The narrated self categorises these children by their behaviour, she locates them in a different social group and she then distances herself from them in her narration. In the setting of the Jewish school she finds opportunities to make distinctions between Jews from different countries, indicating how differentiated her understanding is of being Jewish.

The family is depicted in the narration as a place where the children are given opportunities for development on a cultural level. In narrating time the self depicts her struggle, as the middle child, with her quest to develop as an individual. By the time the young girl was thirteen, the elder sisters were training for careers in teaching and in fine art and the mother was asking Rahel to consider which occupation she wished to pursue. She was apparently keen for all her daughters to be able to support themselves financially in life, yet there is no mention that this was far from the norm at that time. The opening of the first *Mädchengymnasium* in her home town is depicted by the narrated self as the miracle she had been waiting for, and in narrating time she depicts the opening as a turning point in her

[9] Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class,* p.56. Kaplan points to the pale and exhausted image of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe as one from which German Jews attempted to distance themselves.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.34.

admission to life.[12] The narrated self gives prominence to the knowledge which she gained and which her elder sisters did not possess. She is depicted learning Latin and Greek and being able to solve complex mathematical problems.[13] She emphasises that her knowledge is in the sciences, mathematics and languages which are different disciplines to music and art, the subjects studied by the older girls. In the following quotation the narrated self encapsulates school as a decisive moment which changed her life:

> So hatte sich besonders mein Leben grundlegend geändert. Ich war plötzlich in einen Kinderkreis versetzt, in dem ich etwas galt, in dem ich gleich-, ja sogar mehrwertig war, und ich lernte im Gymnasium Dinge, die meine beiden älteren Schwestern nicht gelernt hatten und nicht kannten, ich war ihnen nicht mehr in allem unterlegen.[14]

The narrated self identifies the *Gymnasium* as a place where she repositions herself from being effectively below her sisters to a position where she can be an authority on different areas to them. She associates the Gymnasium with the opportunity to form her own sense of individuality rather than in relational roles within the family as a younger daughter and little sister.[15] Here she is taught the skills to reflect, formulate and articulate her own opinions. She depicts the Gymnasium in terms of her exclusive position, separate from her sisters because of the knowledge gap that she constructs between them. Initially therefore she articulates self in non-gendered terms. The next section will explore the prominence she gives to the position of women in society in refining her sense of self.

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[12] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.64.
[13] Ibid*,* p.68.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid*,* p.64.

3.1.2. 'Alle Fragen über die Stellung der Frau in der Gesellschaft, im Recht, in der Politik fingen an, für uns von Bedeutung zu sein'[16] – Narratives of Self in Relation to the Women's Movement

The narrated self frames her depiction of her time at the Gymnasium between the efforts of the women's movement in Germany and the Suffragettes in England, in their campaign for female emancipation. In narrating time she insists how even as children she and the other girls were sufficiently engaged to feel outrage when learning how women could not join political organisations or become court judges and that most professions remained closed to women. In narrated time she gives prominence to the absence of rights and opportunities facing women in Germany and to the determination of some women who had to study for their degrees in Switzerland.[17] In her depiction of the Gymnasium the narrating self also refers to the objections which were raised to the school and which we are told seem ridiculous in the narrating present.[18] Concerns that the female brain was incapable of dealing with the complexities of Latin, Greek and mathematics and that the female body would be weakened by the strain of academic study are all arguments dismissed as ridiculous by the narrated self.[19] In narrated time the young girl is depicted as disinterested in these arguments since she and all her friends were only concerned with the practicalities of settling in and starting a new school. Indeed, whilst the opening of the Gymnasium continued to stimulate discussions about 'Frauenstudium' in public debates, the narrating self claims that these discussions remained on the periphery for herself as a young girl and the other twenty eight girls in her

[16] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.76.
[17] Ibid*,* p.65.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid*,* p.69.

class.[20] Initially, the women's movement which had founded the school[21] also occupies a marginal position in the narration because when leaders of the movement such as Lina Morgenstern come to visit, the narrated self apparently has no idea who they are. She refers to them as the "kämpfende Generation" and to the girls at the school as "beglückte Nutznießer".[22] Her narration indicates an apparent contradiction: on the one hand she distances herself from the achievements of the women's movement through referring to herself as a beneficiary of their struggle, whilst on the other hand, the narrated self positions herself at the centre of the women's movement by the sheer fact that she was studying at the Gymnasium. The tension between these positions is partly explained by the prominence she gives the Gymnasium as a place where,"alle Fragen über die Stellung der Frau in der Gesellschaft, im Recht, in der Politik fingen an, für uns von Bedeutung zu sein".[23] Over time, the narrated self begins to reflect on questions which are specific to gender and this is an indication of the shifts she depicts in narrated time in terms of her response to the women's movement.

The narrated self defines her encounters with the women's movement through the Gymnasium in terms of images of struggle and specifically of the campaign for equal rights with men. It is not clear from her narration if the narrated self refers to the women's movement in general or to the founders of the school. Indeed she refers to the women's movement as a general term without differentiating between the moderate and radical

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[20] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.69.
[21] The Mädchengymnasium at Karlsruhe was established by the 'Frauenbildung, Frauenstudium' one of the radical groups within the women's movement whose leader was Mathilde Kettler. The women's movement and its various local branches had campaigned since the 1880s for educational reform in girls schools. The movement recognised that until girls had access to schools which would prepare them for the 'Abitur' – a prerequisite for university matriculation - their goal of persuading government and university officials to formally admit women to German universities would remain unattainable. The opening of the Mädchengymnasien meant that girls could continue their education until the age of eighteen and study subjects examined in the 'Abitur'.
[22] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.69..
[23] Ibid*,* p.76.

factions. Chapter two has demonstrated that each of these factions had quite different ideas concerning the purpose of a university education for women and the broader position of women in society. In the text the narrated self appears not to associate with the notion of the moderate faction, advanced by Lange who founded the Gymnasium, that women had a special duty to fulfil in society and their education should equip them for nurturing and caring roles. In contrast, her narrative gives prominence to a sense of inequality between men and women that was unjust as well as to a sense that men and women should have the right to pursue the same professional roles. Her narrative has resonance with the discourse of the radical faction with its emphasis on the rights of women. She also ridicules arguments claiming that the female brain is unsuited to the rigours of academic study women. Hedwig Dohm had also criticised similar arguments about the female brain in her essay published in 1870. She surmises of the school's founders: "sie wollten erst Frauen schaffen, die fähig waren, sich in Bildung und Leistung an die Seite der Männer zu stellen und dadurch auch als Vorkämpferinnen zu dienen für alle anderen".[24] The emphasis here is on creating women anew and doing so without engaging in struggle against men. Indeed, she defines emancipation through the pursuit of education, cultivation and achievement and the creation of female role models for other women to emulate. Her narrative fuses a concern with advancing women's rights, pursuing new opportunities for women in education and professional life and doing so whilst defending oneself against hostility from men. Concerns that women are incapable of coping with the rigours of these opportunities are dismissed as insignificant and in this respect the narrated self constructs a unified narrative position where obstacles posed by men are deemed unimportant. The next section explores how her

[24] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.65.

Gymnasium days also prompted reflection on the position of Jews in Germany with respect to the reporting of the Dreyfus Affair in German newspapers.

3.1.3. The Problem of Assimilation in Narratives of the Dreyfus Affair in *Wir lebten in Deutschland*

The narrating self depicts her Gymnasium days as a time of intellectual stimulation and personal development in terms of feeling confident in her opinions. In her narrative she depicts the Dreyfus Affair and the impact she felt it had in destabilising her sense of security in Germany. She gives us glimpses in narrated time of the family at home reading about the events in France. She depicts herself as a young woman gathering around the newspapers to follow the latest accounts from Paris, articulating her opinions on the affair. She attributes the ability to formulate independent opinions on subjects to her Gymnasium education and protests the innocence of Dreyfus. She gives prominence in narrated time to the togetherness of a single Jewish community all certain of the innocence of Dreyfus and all of whom support this victim of anti-Semitism. The young woman questions her earlier assumptions of France as a country representing liberal Enlightenment values, when she quotes 'Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité[25] and the effect is ostensibly one pertaining to the spread of anti-Semitism despite the cultural and political values of France. In narrating time, however, she is critical of the Jewish community, and herself as part of that community, for not making the connections one ought to have made between events in France and possible implications for Jewish people in Germany. In the following extract she expresses regret at not fully comprehending the implications of the Dreyfus Affair in relation to her own situation in Germany.

[25] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.78.

> Rückschauend sehe ich, wie immer auf einem Vulkan gelebt haben, ohne es zu ahnen. Kleine Ausbrüche, dumpfes Grollen ließen für uns die Wahrheit ahnen. Wir verdrängten sie, bis der ungeheure Ausbruch kam, der uns unter seinen Lavamassen begrub.[26]

In narrating time she compares her years in Germany with living on a volcano. The image of the volcano indicates that her life in Germany only had an imagined and temporary stability. In narrating time it is not the anti-Dreyfusards or indeed the French authorities who are criticised but rather it is the narrated self and other, unspecified Jews for suppressing the significance of the events for their own lives. The narrating self creates critical distance between her stance as a young girl and her stance in narrating time and in doing so her narrative demonstrates shifts in her perception of the dangers in Germany. Her narration of the Dreyfus Affair reveals a clear distinction between the narrated past and the narrating present. The image of the volcano, occasionally stirring without completely erupting, indicates the slow fragmentation of her sense of safety which is only made apparent to her after her flight from National Socialism. In narrating time she associates the volcano with the concept of a single 'truth' to be reached concerning the fragility of her position in Germany. The depiction of the Dreyfus Affair in narrating time demonstrates the paradox for Jews who, the narrating self claims ought to have been more concerned with the dangers around them, yet continued to regard Germany as their home and to assume that efforts to assimilate would guarantee safety. Anti-Semitism was on the increase during the 1890s as anti-Semitic parties were elected to the Reichstag.[27] The narrating self also gives us a glimpse of the young woman reading *Der Judenstaat*, published in 1896 by Theodor Herzl who identified the

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[26] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.78.

[27] *German-Jewish History in Modern Times 1871 - 1918*, ed. by Michael Meyer and Steven Lowenstein (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp.221-3; Francis Nicosia, *Zionism and Anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany* (New York/Cambridge: Cambridge Uuniversity Press, 2008), p.31.

creation of a Jewish homeland with protecting Jews from the physical dangers they faced in their homelands.[28] In the narration the Dreyfus Affair appears next to the discussion of Herzl's book. The narrated self gives prominence to the book in encapsulating the hopes of the Straus family for the creation of a Jewish State in Palestine.[29] She also prioritises the hostile reception of many Jews in Germany to the book because they feared being viewed that supporting a Jewish State would be regarded by other Germans as "undeutsch, unpatriotisch".[30] Indeed, the narrated self and her family were labelled "volksfremd" by the Jews in their area.[31] Herzl's arguments were associated by the Jewish critic Karl Kraus with reinforcing anti-Semitic claims about the multiple allegiances of Jews.[32] Such receptions to the publication underline the marginal position of the Straus family. According to the narrated self the Jews who labelled her in this way identified the treatises in *Der Judenstaat* as a threat to their sense of belonging in Germany. The hostility amongst Jews towards Zionism partially explains the narrated self's claim that many Jews suppressed any recognition of danger since they, too, seem to be defined by their belief that they belonged in Germany. In her narration of *Der Judenstaat* the narrated self gives prominence to its polarisation of those who had read the book between those who saw it as nonsense and those who viewed it as a utopia.[33] She also gives prominence to her marginal position in Karlsruhe because of her support for the treatises contained in the book.[34] The narrated self associates Herzl with the possibility of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, yet at the time of publication the text did not prompt her to question her sense of belonging in Germany and where it raised the possibility of a Jewish

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[28] Theodor Herzl, *Der Judenstaat: Versuch einer modernen Lösung der Judenfrage* (Leipzig: Breitenstein, 1896).
[29] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.78.
[30] Ibid*,* p.80.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Karl Kraus, 'Eine Krone für Zion', in *Frühe Schriften 1892-1900*: *Karl Kraus,* ed. by Johannes Braakenburg , Vol. 2 (Munich: Kösel, 1979), p.304.
[33] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.79.
[34] Ibid*,* p.80.

State, it was a place for other Jews suffering persecution and not for her.[35] The absence of questioning is surprising given the importance the narrated self attaches to *Der Judenstaat*. Indeed, as we shall see in chapter four the narrated self often narrates her sense of being German and being Jewish in ways that suggest a conflict, yet she does not given prominence to any sense that she does not completely belong in Germany. Her narration of engaging with the Dreyfus Affair, with the Herzl text and in chapter four with the Passover festival, are not depicted in ways that prioritise the articulation of a fractured self. The questioning of self identities is explored further in the next section which focuses on narrating a shift from an isolated to communal position in the university and the significance of these positionings for negotiating the opportunities which were opening up to her.

3.1.4. The Problem of Gender in Relationships with Male Students and Professors at Heidelberg in 1900

The narrating self introduces her university days by observing that she was the only woman in the medical faculty at Heidelberg for the first two semesters.[36] She orientates her narration of these early days to her gendered position and to the newness of her position at university not only within her own faculty but indeed in relation to the rest of Germany. Of her university days the narrating self recalls: "Heute rückschauend sieht alles so leicht und selbstverständlich aus, aber ich weiß, welch schwere innere Kämpfe ich zu bestehen hatte, bis ich mir über meinen Weg klar wurde."[37] She gives prominence to a series of internal struggles which, in narrated time, she had to deal with by herself without feeling able to approach her

[35] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.80.
[36] Ibid*,* p.87.
[37] Ibid.

mother or brother and sisters for advice.[38] Her arrival at university is narrated in terms of a crisis which is specific to her gender and she lays claim to an isolated position from which she was able to work through her difficulties. Indeed, she connects her isolation to the uniqueness of her role as a female student. The narrating self claims that through this period of struggle she was able to reach clarity about her future. Through her narration of the inner struggles the narrating self prioritises her mastery of self as she finds the self-confidence to deal with difficulties and the determination to fulfil her ambition of becoming a doctor.[39] Her narration of struggle reveals how in narrating time she articulates self not in terms of fragmentation but rather in terms of a complete and lucid vision of the way ahead. In narrating time, thoughts of past difficulties reinforce the sense of wholeness thus her narrative is one of obstacles overcome and thus of a unified narrative position, this is symbolised by the image of a clear path and is thus resonant of the classical model of self in the *Bildungsroman*.

The narrating self characterises her difficulties in terms of her confrontation with a certain professor who refused to admit her to his lectures. The objections are depicted as being based on the physical and emotional demands of the course, in particular the dissection. The professor appears to support the same socio-biologically determinist arguments as those which, twenty years later, would still concern Max Hirsch, i.e. that women may lack the physical and mental stamina required for academic study.[40]

The narrated self frames her depiction of arriving at university between attempts to exclude her from the faculty on gender grounds and her determination as a young student to prove to all men that she was capable of practising medicine regardless of the difficulties associated with that occupation.[41] She defines 'proving herself' as an individual act without

[38] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.87-88.
[39] Ibid*,* p.88.
[40] Hirsch, 'Über das Frauenstudium', pp.1-43.
[41] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.88-9.

reference to other women. The act of proving herself is defined by the narrated self's depiction of the precision and scientific knowledge which she shows in dissecting a human arm, revealing the intricate workings of muscles, nerves and tissue.[42] Two and half years into her degree the narrated self is depicted confronting the professor who had refused to admit her to his lectures. In response to his claim that she would not be able to complete the course the narrated self is depicted responding that he may claim to know "all women" but only when they are sick to which he apparently laughed and they parted as friends.[43] In her response the narrated self apparently refutes attempts to categorise 'women' in a particular respect. Her determination to prove herself is an indication of the emphasis the narrating self places on her individuality. Indeed, she ostensibly copes with such encounters on her own and without reference to a support network, either from her family or initially from other women students. In narrating time she also defines this encounter as a difference of opinions rather than a hostile confrontation. It is a verbal exchange where she seems to have the last word indicating that he cannot counter her argument that he does not know 'women' as well as he claims. At the end of the exchange they both laugh and are depicted as friends, an image which implies parity. Objections on gender grounds appear to be dealt with in a non-aggressive way through applying logic, humour and a little charm to the situation.

In her narration of friendships with the male students on her course the narrating self defines her class at medical school as a community and she locates the narrated self at the centre of it because she is the only woman. [44] The other students collect medical apparatus for her in the laboratory, carry her books and leave small bunches of flowers on her locker[45], acts which I associate as attempts to protect the young woman and flirt with her. The narrating self

[42] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.90.
[43] Ibid*,* p.89.
[44] Ibid*,* p.92.
[45] Ibid.

emphasises that these friendships were completely platonic as by that stage Straus was engaged to her future husband. Her claim that she got along with everyone, "wie ein guter Klassenkamerad"[46], shifts emphasis from her centrality because of her gender to the disappearance of gender. In her claims to feeling a sense of belonging in the student community the narrated self alternates between prioritising the importance of her gender to those around her, and being just another classmate.

In her narration of accepting invitations to go out driving in one of the first cars in Heidelberg, go hiking with fellow students as well as cycling the narrated self again prioritises her gender.[47] She frames her discussion of university between working hard and enjoying a social life with the other students, demonstrating that she did not occupy an isolated position inside or outside the classroom. Harriet Pass Freidenreich and Hiltrud Häntzschel have emphasised the significant absence of a sense of fighting spirit in this text. They identify it as a paradox for the first woman to study medicine at Heidelberg as they expect her to be concerned with modifying a gender hierarchy.[48] However, the narrated self does not define her relationships at university in terms of a hierarchy to be dismantled. The paradox which these scholars identify can be partly explained through the emphasis which the narrated self places on her social life at university, which is in fact greater than her discussion of professional aspirations and her studies. The narrated self positions herself at the centre of the classroom community, yet also depicts an unwritten code of conduct which informed the activities she should decline. Invitations to go rowing and skiing with one of her fellow classmates are declined because another student advised her that the lack of a chaperone in

[46] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland, p.92*.
[47] Ibid, p.98.
[48] Häntzschel and Bußmann, *Bedrohlich gescheit*, p. 237; Pass Freidenreich, *Female, Jewish and Educated*, p.153.

these activities would be frowned upon.[49] Whilst the narrated self characterises the university as a place where she feels protected and integrated on a social level, yet where she also feels confused because of expectations of the male students that she should behave in ways specific to her gender. In her narration of university she prioritises her ambiguous position in relation to her classmates and she does so through depicting her exclusive position, protected by the other students, as well as her position as just another classmate. Within her narrative she depicts shifts between joining in the same activities as the male students, and moments which prompt her to adjust how far she is able to participate. On occasions where her classmates see a contradiction between a particular activity and her gender she is required to adjust what she does in order to preserve her apparently accepted position.

The next section examines the prominence that she gives her 'Studentinnenverein' as a place for negotiating her day to day life at university and to undertake these negotiations in relation to her gender.

3.1.5. Frameworks for Negotiating the Woman Question in the 'Studentinnenverein'

The foundation of a 'Studentinnenverein' by the narrated self after two years at Heidelberg is identified by her as being part of university tradition for forming fraternities.[50] She emphasises the 'Studentinnenverein' as a forum for discussing issues which the members select because they are of interest to them. She founded the society with the expectation that she would lead and indeed she did almost throughout her time at Heidelberg. The narrated self emphasises the absence of agendas and minutes which she claims was intended to keep meetings as informal as possible. The narrated self emphasises how the 'Studentinnenverein'

[49] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.98.
[50] Ibid*,* p.94.

is organised differently to the male fraternities with their initiation ceremonies, drinking sessions and political affiliations.[51] She gives prominence to the struggles women students have had to contend with against family and society in their ambitions to go to university. She also genders these struggles and in doing so orientates the student society to a place where, once at university, struggle disappears and discussion, debate and indeed enjoyment are prioritised.[52]

Harriet Pass Freidenreich has referred to a conflict between the 'Studentinnenverein' at Heidelberg and Marianne Weber, a leading member of the women's movement over the issue of affiliation to the organisation, "Frauenstudium-Frauenbildung".[53] The narrated self characterises the 'Studentinnenverein' as a young organisation in terms of the age of its members. She sets the society in opposition to the women's movement through age and also through the sense of freedom which she associates with the atmosphere within the 'Studentinnenverein'.[54] The narrated self emphasises the communality of the 'Studentinnenverein' and this extends to women regardless of nationality or religion.[55] In narrating time she articulates a tension between the narratives of Heidelberg as a happy place to study and the growing hostility towards Jewish and foreign students amongst the female members. Her prioritisation of the tensions within the organisation reveals that gender was not necessarily a unifying factor whilst at university and that being president apparently did not also enable her to control who associated with the society.

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[51] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.94.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Pass Freidenreich, *Female, Jewish and Educated,* p.153.
[54] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.95.
[55] Ibid*,* p.94.

3.1.6. The Problem of Anti-Semitism – Narrating Ostracism from the 'Studentinnenverein'

Marion Kaplan claims that women were more likely to be affected by gender discrimination rather than anti-Semitism in the universities.[56] Whilst the narrated self initially characterises her university days by her difficult encounters with professors, at the time of her graduation in 1905 she gives prominence to the growing anti-Semitism and xenophobia within the 'Studentinnenverein' that she had founded. We are told how:

> Die neue Studentinnengeneration wollte eine echte 'Studentenverbindung' ins Leben rufen mit allem Klimbim, der dazu gehörte. Alle 'Fremden'(sic) wurden ausgeschlossen – auch die Juden. Unsere ganze Gruppe (ich gehörte ihr als einzige Jüdin) trat geschlossen aus. Wir nannten uns die 'Alt-Heidelbergerinnen' und hielten einen Zusammenhang noch lange über den Weltkrieg hinaus aufrecht.[57]

The narrated self constructs a tension between her own peers and her successors at Heidelberg predicated on their differing expectations from the student society. The narrated self claims that for the younger women, belonging to an organisation that is exclusively female is not of importance and instead these students give prominence to a non-gendered society. The narrated self seems more concerned with the hostility towards Jewish and foreign students and she emphasises the speed with which anti-Semitism permeated Heidelberg, as within just a few weeks the society that she founded has been 'aufgeflogen'. The passive voice does not make explicit who has broken up the society although the use of this particular colloquial term initially implies that it was broken up from outside and not from within.[58] There is ambiguity here, however, since the narrated self juxtaposes narratives of severance within the group on

[56] Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class*, p.151; Keith J Pickus, *Constructing Modern Identities: Jewish University Students in Germany 1815-1914* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1999).
[57] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.96.
[58] Ibid.

different levels. She implies that the society was disbanded violently from outside and she then claims that the Jewish and foreign members were singled out and excluded, indicating that the leadership of the society was supplanted and the membership reorganised. The narrated self then prioritises the fragmentation of the society as a partially voluntary act with all the original members not only opting to leave the group but doing so in united terms. Her reference that she is the only Jewish woman in the group emphasises the centrality of her position as she now surrounds herself in the narration with women who apparently do not share the anti-Semitic views of the younger students.

The organisation which the narrated self had associated with opportunities to define new identities as individuals seems to subsume individuality through classifying students by nation and religion. Gender is initially dismantled as a unifying concern within the society. However, through her narration of women who show solidarity with her, the narrated self harmonises an event which one may expect to prompt her to question her sense of belonging in German society, particularly given her interest in Zionism. The narrated self gives prominence instead to preserving her society now named "Alt-Heidelbergerinnen". The name attributes importance to the members as women who had completed their degrees although in the narration it is the longevity of the group, lasting at least a further decade, that she prioritises as well as to preserving the spirit of the original society which she suggests had been tolerant of different religions and nationalities. She thematises the practical steps she and her peers had taken to resist the permeation of anti-Semitism and xenophobia at Heidelberg and she does so in ways that do not articulate rupture between her sense of being German and being Jewish. The absence of rupture is emphasised through her juxtaposition of the 'Studentinnenverein' episode with her claim that although she worked hard at Heidelberg, she also found plenty of time to enjoy student life there.

In narrating time she depicts Heidelberg as a place that was synonymous with being young and happy and where she emphasises living in an atmosphere of, "Wohlwollen, Freundschaft und Liebe"[59]. She characterises her student days by her sense of well-being, attributed to happy days spent punting with her friends on the Neckar and walking in the beautiful forests and mountains nearby.[60] In narrating time she tentatively states that she took her sense of well-being there for granted although she does so in such a way as not to fragment her sense that she was happy and indeed that she felt she belonged there. Within the text there are moments when being German and Jewish seem to conflict and it seems inconsistent that, given her earlier criticism of Jews, including herself, for not recognising the dangers as early as the Dreyfus Affair, in narrating time she does not scrutinise her sense of belonging further. Apparent tensions are harmonised. However, the prominence she gives to different aspects of her time at Heidelberg indicate just how intricately she weaves the threads of her gender and her religion in her narration and how analysis of her text should keep interpretation of the text apart from questions of her intent or absence of intent.

The narrated self defines her sense of self at university in relation to the communities she finds there and specifically to the shifting prominence that she gives to each of these communities. University is depicted as offering her opportunities to prepare for her career. Her narration gives greater prominence to the opportunities for social interaction and for debate with other women in ways that were not defined by a sense of struggling for the rights of women. However, gender is redefined as a non-unifying element in relation to the student society and the protected place she had initially assumed in the classroom also cannot be assumed. Section 3.2 examines the depiction of the university and the medical clinic in Charlotte Wolff's *Hindsight* twenty years later during the Weimar Republic. The section first

[59] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.97.
[60] Ibid*,* p.95.

explores how the narrated self depicts her sense of freedom in relation to the communities that she finds at university in Freiburg and specifically how she relates her time there to reflection on the world around. The section then explores how the narrated self prioritises the newness of her professional role at a State funded ante-natal clinic and family planning clinic. In narrating time she refines the image of working at the clinics by identifying these settings in terms of 'protected places', where the welfare needs of working- class women are cared for, as a practitioner she has access to other health specialists who can advise her on complex cases. The narrating self depicts the clinics as places which offered her glimpses into the growing violence on the streets of Berlin and which, in reconstructing her memories decades years she associates with helping her to transcend the 'protected place' she had initially constructed for herself through her work there. Her narrative of the university and the medical practice demonstrates her shifting perceptions of self and reveals a nuanced understanding of her gender and sexual identities.

3.2 Narratives of the Self in Relation to University Studies and Medical Practice during the Weimar Republic in *Hindsight* by Charlotte Wolff

3.2.1 Narratives of Freedom in Relation to Emancipation - Remembering the Twenties

In *Hindsight* the narrating self reflects on her youth in Berlin through questioning,

> "Who were we all and all those other young women of the twenties who seemed to know so well what we wanted? We had no need to be helped to freedom from male domination. We were free, nearly forty years before the Women's Liberation Movement started in America. We never thought of being second-class citizens. We simply were ourselves. [...] In my youth, the Women's Liberation Movement

> seemed to have neither place nor sense for women of the upper and middle classes."[61]

She defines herself by her sense of freedom and she characterises freedom by the absence of discrimination and by not questioning her sense of freedom. She defines herself in individualist terms and seems to assume that all other young women did the same. Women are not depicted in terms of their thoughts on their role in life. She does define women by class and identifies the women's movement in Germany as being of relevance to the working classes but not to herself as a middle class woman.[62] In an earlier passage she describes days spent hiking in the Black Forest with two of her male classmates at university. The narrated self describes how, "the three of us had achieved more than a long walk through the Schwarzwald: the naturalness of comradeship between woman and man [...] There was no hint, and certainly no problem, of a 'weaker' or 'stronger' sex. I had experienced freedom".[63] The narrated self discusses gender relations within the framework of her own social circle at university. Gendered hierarchy is absent from her narration, offering an indication that the narrated self does not define relationships by ideas of gender difference. The use of the pluperfect tense in "I had experienced freedom" is open to multiple interpretations. On the one hand, the pluperfect may suggest that freedom ceased to exist at some point and this indicates a shift in reflection between narrated time and narrating time. On the other hand, it may be an indication that this was a first realisation of freedom, in which case indicating a shift in perception within narrated time.

Examining the text in relation to different narrative voices enables me to interpret how gender becomes a valid point of reference on different narrative levels and to show that the potential for emancipation is to be found where it has not previously been looked for by

[61] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.106.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid, p.62.

scholars analysing *Hindsight*. In the passage describing the Women's Liberation Movement, the narrating self qualifies how she felt in her youth with the verb 'seemed'. Her use of this term indicates how in narrating time she tentatively questions the assumptions she once held that the political cause of female emancipation was not relevant to her position as a woman student. In narrating time she appears to question her earlier view that narratives of freedom are unconnected to politics and it is this process of questioning that also applies to her nuanced depiction of her sexuality. The assertion of Barthes that a text is composed of multiple writings reinforces the merits of a methodology that differentiates between reflection undertaken on different narrative levels.[64] This methodology demonstrates that the construction of her sense of identity is nuanced and is negotiated multiple times. The section below focuses on the depiction of medical practice in *Hindsight* and examines the models of self which the different narrative selves find to negotiate professional roles there.

3.2.2. 'The medical side was only half the job': Defining New Approaches in Health Care Provision

The narrated self is depicted working in the antenatal care service of the *Verband der Krankenkassen Berlins* from 1924 to 1931. She was therefore among the staff from the inauguration of the ante-natal clinic in 1924. The staff consisted of five other female doctors and an unspecified number of female social workers.[65] Before that time she had spent her probationary year at the Virchow hospital in Berlin, her first post after qualifying as a doctor in 1923 at the University of Berlin. The service was run by Dr Alice Goldmann-Vollnhals to

[64] Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', p.146.
[65] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.97.

provide a comprehensive welfare service for women in Berlin.[66] During the evenings the narrated self is portrayed holding consultations at the family planning clinic on Alexanderplatz, an outpost of the main clinic. These consultations involved distributing the contraceptive diaphragm, known as the Dutch cap, to patients, fitting the device and teaching them how to use it on their own. She also gave lectures on parenthood and birth control to Berliners.[67]

The narrated self defines the surgeries of the public health insurance system as offering new approaches in medical practice. These new approaches concern a more holistic form of healthcare which took the form of monitoring throughout pregnancies as well as delivering medical care in case of complications. The services offered at the clinics are also depicted as new because they extended holistic care to women from all the lower classes.[68] She identifies the medical side as being just half the job as the practitioners were also concerned with women's social conditions.[69] She does not elaborate on what she understands by social conditions, but comments only that where she had concerns she consulted with a social worker based at the clinic. The newness of the clinic is also defined through the professional collaboration between medical practitioners and social workers.[70] The narrated self depicts an image of crowded waiting rooms and a professional life criss-crossing Berlin to visit patients, seeing "life in the raw" through her poorer patients.[71] Her work at the clinic is portrayed by the narrated self with offering her glimpses of a different world. She orientates her work towards providing health care to a specific social group with whom she has had little previous contact. She gives prominence in her narration to bringing different forms of

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[66] Atina Grossmann, 'German Women Doctors from Berlin to New York: Maternity and Modernity in Weimar and in Exile', *Feminist Studies*, 19 (1) (1993), pp.65-88:68.
[67] Wolff, *Hindsight*, p.105.
[68] Ibid, p.98.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid, p.97.
[71] Ibid, p.98.

healthcare to people who, without the State's provision, would not have had access to a doctor with a range of healthcare provisions.

The narrated self defines the ante-natal clinic along gendered lines only in so much as it as a place which dealt with medical issues relating to pregnancy; the health of the pregnant woman and her baby. She identifies the family planning clinic, where she held her evening surgery, as a place which dealt with the prevention of pregnancy.[72] In the following quotation she discusses her work:

> I had been chosen to take part in the first birth control clinic in Germany. I started this pioneer work with the enthusiasm of a reformer, and not without amusement at the contradiction of looking after pregnancy for some hours during the day, and preventing it during the evenings. The exploration of a new territory in family planning, which entailed psychological consultations, had a strong appeal for me. Already in my student days, I had looked out for unexplored borderline subjects which tended to be dismissed by academic science, like the lectures on graphology by Dr Ludwig Klages.[73]

In narrating time she identifies a contradiction in her work in the sense that in the course of her working day she is helping to protect pregnancy and also to prevent it, and the absence of further reflection on the apparent contradiction is surprising. Her narrative gives no indication that she is uncomfortable with the contradiction that she identifies, rather it demonstrates that her interest lies in the psychological aspects of her work than with the practical application of her medical skills. In her narrative she locates herself in a liminal position in relation to her interest in psychology, psychotherapy and graphology – she defines this position as liminal because it involved working within new areas of medicine. The question of how far her consultations gave options to women is not thematised in her discussion of professional life, for example, choices concerning the size of their families without being restricted to a

[72] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.102.
[73] Ibid.

constant cycle of pregnancy and childbirth. The question of giving choices specifically to women is associated by Atina Grossmann with the family planning clinics of the Weimar Republic[74], yet the narration of the clinics in *Hindsight* indicates that it was not how the narrated self initially defined her role and she has not subsequently modified her roles in narrating time.

The holistic approach of the State welfare system is presented as a "progressive step in the right direction"[75] and "a new outlook on medicine" which positioned the doctor "in the avant-garde of medicine and social care".[76] The narrating self situates the narrated self therefore at the forefront of the new field of preventive medicine. She also presents the clinic as a place for finding new ways of approaching patients' intimate concerns with a need for "empathy, warmth and human understanding".[77] She introduces emotional counselling and advice on social issues in addition to medical diagnosis and treatment. In this respect the narrating self identifies medical practice as a place for collaboration between doctor and patient on all aspects of their health and lifestyle and that of the "whole family".[78] The patient-doctor hierarchy is absent as the narrated self focuses instead on the relationships between the healthcare practitioners which she defines in terms of a hierarchy.

3.2.2. The 'Busy Beehive' – Positioning within a Professional Hierarchy in the Clinic

The narrated self compares the surgeries to "a busy beehive"[79] where doctors and social workers "collaborated closely and discussed every case in detail".[80] She reveals an image of

[74] Grossmann, 'German Women Doctors from Berlin to New York', p.68.
[75] Wolff, *Hindsight*, p.97.
[76] Ibid, p.100.
[77] Ibid, p.97.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.

everyone working there being concerned with the welfare of individual women and of their family. She emphasises the special area of expertise of each member of the professional community in the clinic. She identifies the role of social worker within the clinic as being of equal importance to the doctors there. The prominence she gives to the intelligence, knowledge and social conscience suggests the absence of professional hierarchy in this particular clinic.[81] In complex cases the narrated self locates herself within a hierarchy with the director at the top whom she can consult for a second opinion. The narrated self presents the team at the clinic as a professional community in which her, "responsibilities had been shared and discharged without fear".[82] She locates herself in the position of "protected second"[83], her preferred place, as opposed to "exposed first place"[84], distancing herself from the exposed and isolated place at the top. She juxtaposes being "at the avant-garde of medicine", a highly visible position at the forefront of medicine within clinics which provided "a controversial talking point over the whole town"[85], with positioning herself "as protected second" without engaging with the apparent paradox of these different positions. She defines her professional role through positioning and repositioning, indicating just how shifting her identities are and how carefully constructed. The narrated self emphasises how important it was to her to explore the avant-garde within medicine but she appears careful to reposition herself within the protected space of her "busy beehive" which is purposeful and productive and where everyone has their own roles to perform. It is useful to draw comparison here with the depiction of heightened public visibility in *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* in which the narrated self identifies a tension for Jews operating in directorial positions during the Weimar

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[80] Wolff, *Hindsight*, p.97.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid, p.98.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid, p.102.

Republic which made them prominent in public life. She associates these visible positions as dangerous places for Jews. In *Hindsight* the narrated self initially associates exposure with her concern for misdiagnosing a patient and her preference for a professional senior with whom she can consult. She also associates exposure with the financial insecurity of running her own practice, which she wishes to avoid.[86]. Exposure is thus depicted as a risk that is professional and financial and it is one that the narrated self masters through locating herself in the second position that she claims is protected. She constructs a sense of herself as a person who knows her limits and stays within those limits, of a person who tightly controls where she positions herself professionally. She identifies no contradiction between her claim of avoiding the exposed position of a directorial career, and her claim to pursue borderline professional roles in surgeries that were becoming talking points all over Berlin. Her narrative brings together these apparently contradictory positions and arranges them in a unified model of self.

The narrated self also associates the clinic with providing her with the financial security of a regular salary in a period that she represents as one of economic insecurity.[87] She associates the clinic with the opportunity to work a six hour day giving her the time to enjoy a social life and creative pursuits outside work. These pursuits included sharing time with her partner and spending evenings at the cabaret and gay nightclubs of Berlin. She reflects how, "our six hour day suited me well, and after I had finished work I could start a different life".[88] In narrating time she separates her work in the day from her social life at night through defining her evening activities as interests of a quite different kind.[89] In narrating time she questions how it had been possible to "combine all these professional activities with private interests of a very different nature. How did one find time and strength for love, pleasure,

[86] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.102.
[87] Ibid, pp.97-98.
[88] Ibid, p.98.
[89] Ibid.

friendship, the arts and one's own creative output as well as the ups and downs of a close partnership?"[90] She tentatively engages with the apparent differences between her work and her interests. Yet her focus is on the practical matter of the time and energy at hand, and not the concerns of society for her own relationship with another woman with whom she lived openly. She attributes her different roles to "Berlin's effervescent air and animated cultural life"[91], defining her different roles by her assertion that in this city anything was possible. In her narrative the narrating self brings together the different elements of her life within a unified model of wholeness and she attributes that wholeness to the spirit of Berlin during the Weimar Republic. The construction of a unified self has resonances with her narratives of sexuality. In order to examine this further it is necessary to first examine how sexuality is constructed in childhood memories because it is in relation to the psychological development of the self in childhood that the narrating self initially situates her discussion of sexuality.

3.2.3. Constructions of Self in Relation to Love of for Other Women

In her narrative the narrating self identifies specific moments when she first became aware of her body and when she had her first experience of falling in love with another woman and both of these experiences are associated with her childhood, specifically at the age of three. This section explores how these experiences are constructed in the text, in particular that these early encounters, along with her later relationships in Berlin during the Weimar period, are constructed without the application of labels such as "lesbian" and "homosexuality". The section then explores how the narrating self partially refines some of her earlier assumptions of acceptance as a lesbian woman.

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[90] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.105.
[91] Ibid.

The narrating self identifies a specific moment in her bed when, as a three year old child, the narrated self suddenly felt compelled to stand up and touch every part of her body. The narrated self identifies this as a moment of "intense pleasure"[92], of happiness that she could hardly bear and that moved her to take quick deep breaths[93] and gave her a warm glow throughout her body[94]. The little girl associates this with the process of birth and the moment that, "I had been born to my Self"[95], when "I was I and in the centre of my life"[96]. It is at this moment in the narration that the narrated self identifies feeling distant from her "beloved father"[97] and her "rather frightening mother" for the first time.[98] She associates the moment when for the first time she could look in whichever direction she wished and respond to what was happening around her in her own way.[99] The narration of this experience can be interpreted on several different levels. The intensity of the images demonstrates how the narrated self identifies feelings of sexual pleasure and indeed of sexual climax. The narration also indicates this as the moment when she was born to her own sense of self. In the narration the young girl apparently skips several stages of development. On one level, this kind of narration has similarities with a tradition of autobiographical writing, exemplified by the *Confessions of St Augustine* and Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, in which childhood experiences are associated in terms of stages in the process of maturation.[100] On another level, the connection that the narrated self makes between this sensory moment of exhilaration and her discovery of her "Ich" has psychoanalytical dimensions.[101] In the narration the little girl

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[92] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.11.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Puw Davies, et.al, *Autobiography by Women in German*, p.9.
[101] I use a definition of "psychoanalytical" offered by Gillian Lathey in *The Impossible Legacy: Identity and Purpose in Autobiographical Children's Literature Set in the Third Reich and the Second World War* (Bern:

assumes a position of 'power' as she takes control of her own gaze and formulates her own impressions and responses to what she sees. She reconstructs herself as the subject, as opposed to the object, her parents' little girl.[102] The narrated self assumes a sense of centrality, relegating her parents to a peripheral position. She assumes a sense of self-identification that is fixed, unified and whole and she claims to achieve this without the developmental processes associated with the rest of childhood and adolescence. Through her reworking of a sense of self she assumes control of her consciousness on the physical, aesthetic and spiritual level that Lathey's definition of the term "psychoanalysis" suggests.[103] In the narration the little girl positions herself at the centre of all things. In examining the narration in terms of a construction I identify this as the point in the narrative when the narrated and narrating selves merge because there is no critical distance between what the three year old girl had experienced and how the narrating self interprets this later.

In her narrative of childhood she depicts her first experience of falling in love for the first time, with her mother's cousin. The following passage encapsulates her feelings at this first encounter which she asserts had followed her sensory experience in the cot:

> I know that I fell in love for the first time when I was three years old. [...] She passed the beautiful birds to greet us – a lovely black haired girl with dark eyes in a pale round face. She walked towards us, her full lips smiling. She had a womanly figure, looked older than her age and a short neck that made her appear smaller than she was. It was love at first sight. The glow of a new feeling had hit me, [..] During our visit I had eyes only for her. I always managed to sit next to her at table, and cuddled up to her. And I didn't want to go anywhere without her.[104]

Peter Lang, 1999), p.45. She defines the term as a quest for the sources of the emotional as well as spiritual, intellectual and aesthetic aspects of consciousness".

[102] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.11.

[103] Lathey, *The Impossible Legacy*, p.45.

[104] Wolff, *Hindsight*, p.10.

In this passage the narrating and narrated levels are brought together through her insistence that this experience amounted to love at first sight, the assertion is not refined in narrating time to indicate that this may have been a childhood crush on an older girl. Indeed, the image that is constructed of the beautiful face, striking colouring, her full lips and figure all indicate a sensual image of the young woman. The setting of this scene, with the peacocks in the garden "displaying their feathers in full splendour"[105] accentuates the beauty of the girl, her sense of nobility and possibly purity of the feelings of the young child for her. Characteristics that may appear sensual, notably the depiction of the girl's physical appearance, are not labelled as such in the text, instead these characteristics are subsumed within the notion of love and specifically of first love for another woman. The certainty with which these feelings are constructed is not refined in narrating time indicating that love for other women is narrated in a clear and uncomplicated way, feelings that do not prompt self-doubt or indeed concern for how these may be received by others. The narrative constructs a unified model of self and this is reinforced by the absence of other family members from this particular episode, thus emphasising the intimacy of the encounter and the clarity of the narrated self in her feelings.

The narrated self defines herself in her youth by her love for other women and she uses metaphors of freedom in narrating her feelings. In the following passage, set in Berlin during her early medical career, the narrating self introduces Walli, a young artist, whom she had known since childhood.

> Since schooldays, her presence had held me spellbound. She had been a perfect lover, an instructive savant of the erotogenous zones [...] I forgot everything else when I was with her. The atmosphere which surrounded our excursions to Dahlem, Grunewald , and risky visits to the flat she shared with an aunt was

[105] Wolff, *Hindsight*, p.10.

> charged with that sensuous glow which makes one see the world around through rose tinted spectacles.[106]

The narration of their relationship is infused with the passion and excitement of a new relationship and despite some trepidation at being seen by the aunt, the narrating self describes their liaison in terms which suggest freedom and that Berlin and the countryside around is a place where such freedom is possible. This image of sexual liberation is attributed by the narrating self to the narrated past and the reference to their, "rose tinted spectacles"[107] suggests that she tentatively questions the sense of freedom in narrating time. Indeed, her observation that "people like Walli and myself were probably freaks in the eyes of the majority of German people"[108] indicates that others may not have been as accepting of their relationship as the couple may have assumed in the narrated past. In narrating time the older self insists that at the time, "we just loved"[109] without applying terms such as 'lesbian' and 'homosexual' as labels for her sexual feelings. The narrating self attributes the apparent irrelevance of labels to her claims that since the age of three she had known that she was attracted to other females. The narrated self defines herself from a young child by the pleasure she takes in her own body. She further defines herself by her feelings for other women.

Her narratives of sexuality demonstrate that the construction of sexual identity is nuanced. In the episode relating her physical self exploration at the age of three the narrative levels are conflated because there is the no critical distance between what the child had experienced and how this is interpreted in narrating time. In the narration of the relationship with Walli years later the narrating self separates her stance from that of her younger narrated self because she questions the acceptance she had assumed during the Weimar Republic. The

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[106] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.106.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid.

narrating self reveals how the majority of the German population probably thought of the narrated self and her lover as, "freaks [...] but we thought of ourselves, if we thought at all, as 'different', as members of an international avant-garde who recognised one another in any language. I certainly felt that I belonged with them".[110] The narrating self suggests that it is only in the narrating present that she reflects on the responses of others to her sexuality. She then locates the narrated self in a further avant-garde community, which although visible, was also protected. It was protected because it was a closed community. Those individuals who may have regarded its' members as "freaks" were not seen to penetrate that community in narrated time, because it was a community where every member knew everyone else. This depiction of lesbianism also attributes a certain intuition to lesbians enabling them to recognise others, regardless of language or nationality. The term 'freak' is one that she associates with narrating time and is imposed on the narrated past. Her narrative demonstrates the partial dismantlement of a model of self that in narrated time had assumed she had been accepted as a woman who loved other women. The term "freak" acknowledges that not everyone in Germany accepted these sexual choices, regarding them as subnormal and deviant.

In 1931 the narrated self depicts her transfer by the Physician in Chief of the *Krankenkassen* to what he refers as being a "more neutral occupation"[111] at the Institute for Electro-Physical Therapy because the antenatal service and family planning clinic was dangerous "for political reasons".[112] In 1932 she was promoted to Director of the Institute in Neukölln. The narrated self identifies her sense of unease when she was moved although it appears to be her supervisor who moves her. It is unclear whether the reasons for moving her from this space are because she is lesbian (and whether a lesbian could be a good role model

[110] Wolff, *Hindsight,* pp.106-7.
[111] Ibid, p.108.
[112] Ibid.

for women), because she is Jewish or because of her involvement in the Independent Socialist party. The absence of reflection here is significant when narration of her transfer is compared to the narration of the clinic as a place where she finds opportunities to engage with events taking place on the streets of Berlin.

3.2.4. The Problem of 'Protected Places' – Narrating the Clinic as a Step into the Outside World

The narrated self depicts her world before she began working at the antenatal clinic as one of, "poetry, the arts and philosophy, my own desires were those of an individualist in all and everything".[113] She identifies professional life at the clinic as the point at which she steps onto "the rung of the ladder to climb out of her grand and self-centred world - up to a point".[114] She relocates herself from her isolated exclusive position into a world where she is not the only point of reference. In narrated time she dismantles her self-enclosed world of the arts, identifying the clinic as a place which enables her access to an outside world which is not defined by creative pursuits. Consultations in the "poor areas" of Berlin at Neukölln are presented by the narrated self as, "contact with a world I had scarcely known before which gave me a new and vital interest [...] I saw with my own eyes life in the raw. As work made it necessary for me to travel from one end of Berlin to another, I had the opportunity to see Berlin's many faces at close range".[115]

The narrated self represents the clinic as *the* place where, "I shed the impenetrable skin of the purely private person"[116] and where "the veil of political ignorance had been torn

[113] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.101.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid, p.98.
[116] Ibid, p.95.

from my eyes at last".[117] The incongruous images here indicate that Wolff is not a professional writer but they do show how the narrated self makes claim to the images she had seen through the veil as having been false images. As a literary image, the representation of shedding a skin suggests removing a false outer layer. In this context the narrated self is depicted discovering her 'true' and 'real' self beneath, a self that was there all along. The veil suggests a protected space because it shields the wearer from the gaze of others. It protects but it can also distort as the wearer can see the outline of objects but cannot see her surroundings in detail, instead these seem blurred. The narrated self represents the clinic as a place which allows the narrated self the space to take a "political plunge"[118] and this plunge is compared in the narrative to the removal of a veil. The dropping of the veil suggests a rite of passage or the loss of virginity and thus of innocence. This is part of growing up but can be painful and difficult. The narrated self here represents the dropping of her veil as an act which allows her to see the world more clearly. Her narrative demonstrates a shift in perception from an incomplete or distorted view of the world to a clear view of what was taking place on the streets of Berlin. There are clear points in the narrative where her sense of self is refined. She now constructs a new model of self that she claims is clear-sighted, it is an apparently omniscient position.

She identifies this clear sightedness with her relationships with colleagues at the clinic, "who became my friends and influenced me in different ways".[119] The narrated self associates the clinic with an opportunity for discussion with five women who, "embraced a mixture of racial and political commitments"[120], suggesting the broad background and political outlook of those employed there. The narrated self singles out Minna Flake for

[117] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.102.
[118] Ibid, p.101.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid.

particular attention. She recalls Flake discussed her Communist views with Wolff and in doing so prompted her to play a more active role in social affairs.

> "I did not join any political party but became a fellow-traveller of the Independent Socialists and an active member of the Association of Socialist Physicians who were closely connected with them. I distributed leaflets on their behalf in the streets of Berlin when threatening signals of Fascism appeared".[121]

It is not made clear in the text when this took place but the reference to threats from Fascism in Berlin suggests that this was during the early 1930s at a time of increased street fighting between Communists and Fascists in the city. It is also clear that in distributing leaflets on behalf of the Association of Socialist Physicians, which was a political organisation, the narrated self positions herself at the centre of political affairs. The narration suggests that in this case the centre is a dangerous position to be although the narrated self does not narrate any such threat and does not interpret her actions as a stand against Fascism by a Jewish woman.

In narrating time she portrays moments when, despite her constructed image of climbing the ladder towards recognition, she questions why she was not more aware of what was taking place in Berlin. She explains her absence of recognition through her assertion that "in spite of greater awareness of the world around me, wishful thinking still made me feel safe".[122] As a young woman she makes distinctions between violent events such as street fighting and the rise of Fascism, and the danger which these events posed for her. She affirms her protected position despite the events on the streets. In narrating time she dismantles her protected position through observing that she had not been as safe as she had once assumed. The fixity of her sense of safety is thus dismantled as the narrating self makes a distinction

[121] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.101.
[122] Ibid, p.102.

between her perception of danger in narrated time and in the narrating present. In the narration the sense of feeling safe is positioned next to references to her professional success; a growing list of patients, promotion to deputy director of the antenatal services and the fulfilment she finds in her "beehive".[123] These references also indicate her professional visibility yet she does not discuss a tension between heightened visibility and the shifting political situation, particularly facing Jewish people. The absence of discussion is significant given the prominence associated by the narrating self to her colleagues at the clinic, the majority of whom were either Jewish or had Jewish husbands. The narrating self emphasises the variety of their "racial and political commitments".[124] However, in her brief description of each she identifies them by their religion as Jewish women or as the wives of Jewish men. She introduces "Minna Flake as a Communist and Jewish, the director Alice Vollnhals as Polish with a Jewish husband, Hella Bernhardt as not Jewish but has a Jewish husband".[125] The narrating self does not present this as a social community predicated on being Jewish. Jewishness in this context is defined as a denominational point of identification as by that point the narrated self was no longer practising Judaism. There is also little sense of connection to the religious teachings of Judaism, in particular the significance of the first born and indeed that the Jewish religion is passed from mother to child. The pursuit of careers in family planning clinics appears to put Jewish women in conflict with Judaism, yet Jewishness is narrated as a point of identification without associating it with any conflict with their scientific work. The absence of reflection here is significant in showing that Jewish women

[123] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.102.
[124] Ibid, p.101.
[125] Ibid.

also located themselves in discourses and practices which sought to regulate family size and indeed, determined who populated the national community.[126]

In narrating time, she singles out a fifth doctor at the clinic and identifies her as a threat to the protective busy beehive image which she had not recognised until 1933. She is the only woman at the clinic who remains nameless, being referred to in *Hindsight* as Frau X. The narrating self presents her as "a reserved woman who was courteous to her colleagues"[127] and whose, "opinions and loyalties remained inscrutable until 1933. She had in fact been an active Nazi since 1924. She had probably watched us and reported her observations for all those years I had been a doctor in Germany."[128] In narration of Frau X she dismantles the beehive image and she does so through questioning allegiances within the professional community. Indeed, the earlier image of peeling back an outer layer and dropping a veil to reveal a real self beneath is significant in the narration of Frau X. The year 1933 is depicted as the year when this woman's political allegiances became known. However, she does not identify the year as a turning point. Instead, she emphasises the concealed support of Frau X for National Socialism which had been there since the inauguration of the clinic. In narrating time, the beehive community is portrayed as a divided community.

To conclude the sections on *Hindsight,* the narrated self defines herself through her position in professional roles where she finds opportunities for protection. Within the beehive community she constructs of the clinics the narrated self finds opportunities to glimpse the dangers on the streets and eventually to glimpse the dangers from within the community itself. It is through her glimpses that she partially dismantles the beehive community and

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[126] Claudia Prestel, 'Die deutsch-jüdische Presse und die weibliche Sexualität "Freie-Liebe" oder die Rückkehr zu traditionellem jüdischem Familienleben?', in *Frauen und Frauenbilder in der europäisch-jüdischen Presse von der Aufklärung bis 1945,* ed. by Eleonore Lappin und Michael Nagel (Bremen: edition Lumière, 2007), pp. 123-142: 125.
[127] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.101.
[128] Ibid.

questions her safety there, and she does so, on the basis of her Jewishness. In narrating time she questions her assumed sense of freedom in the exclusive community of the Berlin gay scene. Protected places are identified by the narrated self as a means of defining professional and personal identities but in narrating time these places are a locus for questioning her sense of belonging because of her religion and her sexuality.

Looking at the world beyond the self is something that the pilot undertakes in her professional capacity and she does so from her isolated position high above the ground. The following section will explore how Elly Beinhorn positions and repositions herself in her machine and in relation to the places she visits on the ground. I will then analyse this process of positioning in terms of how she defines her sense of self and how this process of positioning motivates choices in the text.

3.3. The Flying Machine as a Narrative Position in *Alleinflug – Mein Leben*

3.3.1. 'Ich war eine andere' – Memories of the Flying Machine as Giving the Pilot her Direction in Life

Elly Beinhorn began learning to fly in 1928 at the age of twenty-one after attending a lecture by Hermann Köhl, a celebrated long distance pilot. In 1929 she was granted her pilot's licence and was permitted to fly solo. Elly Beinhorn made flying her profession and took part in aerobatic displays and flying races all over Germany. She then put the proceeds of these freelance ventures towards the cost of her own aeroplane.[129] In 1931 she was given her first commission, and she flew an anthropologist to East Africa where he was carrying out research

[129] The aeroplane was a Messerschmitt M23b with an 80hp engine. Beinhorn exchanged this aeroplane for a "Klemm" which could land on water and was therefore more suitable for the African terrain.

on the indigenous population. The mission was her first successful flight and encouraged her to fulfil her long held dream of travel. In 1932 she undertook her first flight around the world.[130] These flights were reported by the media and the publication of her travel accounts made Beinhorn a household name and gave her the financial security with which she financed further flying ambitions.

In *Alleinflug* the narrating self presents the machine, a Messerschmitt, as a place of her own which provided her with new opportunities and life choices. I define the machine not just as a flying machine but as a constructed position. The machine made it possible for her to travel unencumbered by conventions that would normally be placed on women who travelled by land and sea.[131] The machine is too small for a second person to travel with her. It should be noted that pilots were not only responsible for flying the aeroplane, they also had to combine this with a number of other roles. These roles included acting as navigator and mechanic since they had to plan and follow their routes and fix their machine often in remote areas where specialist help was not available. The narration of her flights suggests that the narrated self took on all these roles for necessary practical reasons.

She identifies the machine as a place where she develops and displays the skills which are necessary to her role as an aviator. The narrating self defines her sense of self in relation to her machine and presents the machine as a site where she was able to determine her own direction, i.e. her navigational direction in the air[132], her professional direction in life[133] and her personal sense of self on a clear path in front of her.[134] The machine is constructed by the narrating self in *Alleinflug* as an escape from the claustrophobic space of her parental

[130] Beinhorn travelled from Berlin across the Persian Gulf to India and then on to Thailand and Singapore. The route then continued to Australia and New Zealand and then around South America to Bahia were she travelled by ship back to Europe.
[131] Beinhorn, *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt*, p.72.
[132] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.26, p.42.
[133] Ibid, p.9.
[134] Ibid, p.16.

home, i.e. the family community on the ground. In this respect, she associates stepping into the machine as the narrative moment when she repositions herself outside the family community and outside the influence of her parents. The narrating self suggests that the absence of brothers and sisters meant she became increasingly independent of her parents as she searched for a different "Gemeinschaft".[135] She does not specify her age when this search for "Gemeinschaft" took place thus suggesting that throughout childhood and adolescence she sought to reposition herself away from the family community. The absence of siblings and the lack of influence that her parents were apparently able to exert upon her, reinforces the determination of the pilot to pursue her goals. The absence of family from the narration suggests that the pilot is presented as "an achiever with a self-sustaining ego-system"[136], a trait of the classical tradition of autobiography. This interpretation is partially rethought in the narrative through the claim of the narrating self that she enjoyed the company of other children suggesting that independence did not necessarily mean complete autonomy from other people. The physical structure of her home town of Hanover is also presented as claustrophobic: the narrating self observed her younger self as living, "zwischen hohen Häusermauern".[137] Family holidays to the countryside are identified by the narrating self as a happy time in childhood because they represent open spaces and fresh air as well as the opportunity to play with other children. In the narration of these holidays the quest for "Luft, Natur und Freiheit"[138] is associated with the quest for her own sense of self. The formation of this identity is presented by the narrating self in terms of a shift away from the physical presence of her parents and their authority. The narrating self presents adolescence as a time

[135] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.7.
[136] Estelle C. Jelinek, 'Women's Autobiography and the Male Tradition', in *Women's Autobiography. Essays in Criticism*, ed. by Estelle C.Jelinek (Bloomington/London: Indiana UP, 1980), pp.1-20: 11.
[137] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.7.
[138] Ibid.

when she searched for a vocational future which could provide an escape from aimlessness[139] and would provide an opportunity to travel. In *Alleinflug* there is no indication of how Beinhorn spent the time between leaving school at the age of sixteen and starting her flying lessons at the age of twenty one. Biographical information reveals that Beinhorn spent the intervening years working as a secretary.[140] The fact that this is not narrated in *Alleinflug* or indeed in any of her earlier texts reinforces the image of flying as the narrated self's exclusive vocation in life. The lecture by Köhl in Hanover is presented as the narrative moment when, "mein Leben hatte seine Richtung bekommen".[141] She subsequently leaves home for the first time to undertake her training in Berlin. The response of her parents to her career plans was shock and a threat by her mother to have her declared insane.[142]

The shift away from the family home can be interpreted on a number of different levels. The narrating self identifies her first solo flight as a departure for good from her previous aimlessness. She presents this moment as a time of awakening:

> Ich war eine andere. Ich war sehr glücklich und andächtig vor dieser neu geschenkten Welt, auf die ich wohl von meiner frühen Jugend an, zuerst ganz unsicher über den Weg, dann aber in immer geraderer Linie zugesteuert war. Das Tor zu dieser Welt hatte ich an diesem Tag erreicht.[143]

Flying solo is defined by the narrating self as the moment when she found her own path in life and identifies this path in ways that suggest wholeness and completeness. This is constructed as a pre-ordained, straight path without branches leading off. In the machine the narrated self is represented by the narrating self as a highly self-reliant and autonomous individual who did

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[139] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.9.
[140] Zegenhagen, *'Schneidige deutsche Mädel'*, p.194.
[141] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.9.
[142] Ibid*,* p.12.
[143] Ibid*,* p.16.

not struggle with self doubt. The narrating self reconstructs her earlier path which was "ziellos"[144] and replaces it with a path that now has a direction in life after all. In this respect, the narrating self does not define flying solo as an act which gave her a sense of self where this had been missing before. Instead she defines it as an act which made her realise that her previous aimlessness had actually had a direction. Childhood is therefore reconstructed as a straight path after all and the trajectory ahead is clear. Flying solo is therefore not presented as a rebirth, or even first birth of her sense of self, rather it is presented as an awakening to a sense of self which had been there all along. Yet the image of being "zugesteuert" implies that the narrated self was steered here by a presence other than herself. In the narrative context this does not detract from the sense of wholeness which the narrating self presents. The image instead indicates an extraneous force where the narrated self is predestined to follow this course in life with the implication that everything that had gone before had led her to this point. Instead of detracting from the machine as her own place, rather the images of fate and destiny reinforce the sense that within the flying machine the narrated self becomes a whole person and is in communion with her machine. The sense of communion is created through a fusion of narrative levels. The narration of flying solo indicates a single omniscient narrator who constructs a unified narrative position – pilot, narrator and aeroplane are a single narrative presence. Indeed, through the omniscience of the narrator the narrative demonstrates coherence and linearity. The self is in pursuit of a career, for which she seems predestined and there is a sense that everything has led her to that point. From the moment of flying solo her narrative reveals a sense of harmony that she has found her vocation and in this respect *Alleinflug* appears to embody many of the traits of the classical autobiographical tradition. The section below explores how narrative omniscience is constructed and also how it is

[144] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.9.

dismantled in relation to the depiction of dangerous adventures in the air. Indeed, the narrative reveals her exceptional status as a woman who experiences great danger and adventure and who assumes many different roles. There are rare moments in the narrative which depict her sense of fear and doubt and it is those moments which reinforce the need for an approach that examines texts on multiple narrative levels.

3.3.2. The Problem of the Wilderness – Narratives of Communion with the Flying Machine

The narrating self presents her time in the machine in ways that suggest the machine was a part of her physical and emotional self. She represents oneness with her machine in ways that suggest she sees herself in communion with her machine. This idea of communion underlines the importance of interpreting the narration of the machine as a constructed position. The narrating self presents her first flying lesson in ways that suggest a natural affinity with the aeroplane as, "es war alles so selbstverständlich und so natürlich".[145] The narrating self explains how she was able to control every movement of the aeroplane with just the slightest movement of the joystick. She presents herself in complete technical control of the machine and at the same time able to determine its direction in ways that were "gefühlsmäßig".[146] The narrating self represents her first time in the air in ways that position her in charge of the machine in a technical, emotional and almost predestined way. The narrated self presents herself as the sole occupant of the machine until the instructor is reintroduced in the narrative to land the plane.

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[145] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.12.
[146] Ibid.

The machine is presented by the narrating self as a place of her own but it is also a space where she must interpret and respond to outside events such as difficult weather conditions. Danger is presented by the narrating self but in ways that show the pilot in control of her machine in psychological and technical terms. The narrating self also presents us with ways that suggest that she mastered the environment outside as well as inside the cockpit and in doing so ensured her own survival. Danger outside is presented in ways that reinforce the idea that the narrated self is in communion with her machine. En route to East Africa with the anthropologist in 1931, the narrated self presents her response to a severe snow storm near the mountainous Rhine valley area as follows,

> [...] mir blieb absolut nichts anderes übrig, als mich schleunigst und vertrauensvoll auf die Schneedecke zu setzen, mit der Hoffnung, daß unter dem Schnee nicht gerade an meiner Landestelle ein Graben war. Ich hatte Glück.[147]

The narrating self presents us with an image of decisiveness and technical skill which enables her to ensure her own survival. She also has the luck which complements her skill in handling the machine in extreme weather conditions. This image also reveals how the narrated self identifies the machine as an extension of her own body since she refers to landing with a reflexive pronoun and not to landing the aeroplane. The narrated self also refers to the machine in ways that suggest she had control over all parts of it; wings, engine and propeller.[148] The machine is narrated as a unique and special place which becomes part of her self. It is also endowed throughout with certain protective qualities. In the same flight the narrating self presents heightened danger as she travels further from Europe. As she crossed Spain Beinhorn had to fly through a whirlwind. The narrating self presents an image of

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[147] Beinhorn, *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt,* p.10.
[148] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.12.

struggle as she fought to maintain control of the plane and avoid, "immer tiefer zwischen die Felsen gedrückt" where "ich glaubte jeden Moment irgendwo aufzuschlagen.[149] Danger is presented by the narrating self in particularly violent terms with the constant threat of being crushed in the narrow confines of the rocks and crashing into the unknown. At this point, "alle Steuerausschläge waren vollkommen nutzlos".[150] The narration of the whirlwind suggests powerlessness. Yet there remains, "einen gut funktionierenden Schutzengel"[151] within the machine despite outside forces that are ostensibly stronger. The machine is introduced as a further narrative presence, separate from the pilot, but nonetheless there to protect her. It is identified as the guardian angel and consequently technology is presented as a stronger power than nature. The narrating self often refers to the aeroplane in ways that serve to humanise. The plane becomes a "kleiner Reisekamerad"[152] and "mein Schutzengel".[153] She gives the plane a name, 'Taifun' and presents moments in the text when she cares for her machine, for example, she covers the plane during a sand-storm in the desert[154] and she weeps behind a bush[155] when she must temporarily leave the plane to seek help in the nearest town. The narrating self presents different relationships with her plane, sometimes it is simply presented as part of her self and sometimes it becomes a separate presence protecting her. The narrating self presents herself in control of her flying machine in which she places her trust. It is also an object that prompts the partial dismantling of her unified narrative stance because in moments where she depicts the plane as a guardian angel or travel companion, the narrative reveals her vulnerability and in these instances authority is transmitted from the pilot who controls the machine, to the machine who protects her.

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[149] Beinhorn, *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt,* p.12.
[150] Ibid, p.11.
[151] Ibid, p.12.
[152] Ibid, p.112.
[153] Ibid, p.12.
[154] Ibid, p.151.
[155] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.29.

3.3.3. Narratives of the (Woman) Adventurer – Engagement and Negation of Gender

The representation of a number of dangerous situations is significant in terms of how choices are depicted in the narrative. The narrating self presents critical moments in her flights when she must decide whether to turn back or to continue with the journey. During her first long distance flight to Africa Beinhorn experienced several problems with the oil pressure gauge. On the first occasion she was able to fix the problem. On the second occasion the gauge malfunctioned just as she was about to begin the crossing between Europe and Africa. Beinhorn chose to continue to Africa. The narrating self presents an image of herself willing to take risks in her pursuit of success, "ich sagte mir: es muß einfach gut gehen – und wenn Bruch, dann in Afrika, denn zu Hause sprach man inzwischen nur von der Afrikafliegerin – Elly Beinhorn, die überhaupt noch nicht existierte".[156] The narration indicates an assumption that others expect her to fail because she is a woman and these assumptions have an impact on the decisions which she makes. The narrating self expresses confidence that she will make it to Africa. She does not explain the reasons for her confidence thus reinforcing her wholeness and her determination that because she wants to get there she will get there. Her narrative gives prominence to a combination of confidence and technical control as well as sheer resolve. She privileges deeds over reflection in ways that adhere to masculine gender norms of the 1930s.[157] Her narrative in relation to the oil gauge episode is one of obstacles overcome and of determination to continue with her flight because failure is not an option. Her narrative offers a glimpse of the narrated self overcoming the doubts that others have in her abilities

[156] Beinhorn, *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt,* p.12.
[157] Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, 'Flying and Killing: Military Masculinity in German Pilot Literature 1914-1939', in *Home/Front: The Military, War and Gender in Twentieth-Century Germany,* ed. by Karen Hagemann and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum (Oxford/New York: Berg, 2002), p.213.

precisely because of her gender. She gives prominence to the action as opposed to her reflections on the difficulties of succeeding in the face of fixed notions of gender norms. In this respect, there are similarities with the narration of Straus's time at Heidelberg which is depicted as a narrative of obstacles overcome and with little sense of engaging in a gender struggle.

In Beinhorn's narrative the pilot's exceptional status as a woman who engages in daring adventures is ever-present, although rarely mentioned. The absence of gender as a prompt for reflection is a prominent feature of her travel accounts published during the 1930s and her autobiography. Adventures from her travel accounts *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt* and *180 Stunden über Afrika* are republished, with little revision, in *Alleinflug. Mein Leben* and the effect is to suggest a single narrative of flying where the emphasis throughout the decades remains on the spirit of adventure, on action and daring rather than on thoughts and reflection. Even in one of those rare episodes when gender is depicted as significant in the narrative, it is still the adventure that takes precedence. In the travel account *180 Stunden über Afrika* published in 1933 the narrating self recalls an episode in which the steering system had become jammed by her luggage which had been dislodged during the flight. In order to identify and fix the problem the young pilot was able to use her compact mirror to move the luggage. The narrating self questions what would have happened had this situation befallen a man since, "ich kann mir nicht vorstellen, daß ein richtiger Mann mit einem Spiegel in der Tasche herumfliegt".[158] She defines gender with reference to dualistic notions of gender roles and does not question her understanding of these roles. Indeed, she assumes that she would have a compact mirror inside her aeroplane and that she wishes to make herself attractive by using it during her flights or shortly after she has landed. More significantly, she engages with

[158] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.34.

being a woman here by associating gender with a certain superiority, since it is apparently unthinkable that a man would carry such a 'tool'. She emphasises the importance of her mirror in averting a crash and not her own sense of reason and logic which gave her the idea of using it. Her application of logic to the situation at hand is clear, yet her narration reveals that she emphasises the outcome and not the thought process which led to the outcome. Through the images constructed in the text and through the incorporation of photographs it appears that she prioritises the variety of roles she makes claim to.

The narrating self defines self through the interplay of roles that she takes on without engaging with the apparent gaps between them and these are roles that suggest extreme femininity on the one hand and roles that suggest extreme masculinity on the other hand. In *180 Stunden über Afrika* a photograph [**Illustration 1**] shows Elly Beinhorn bending over the corpse of a leopard that she has ostensibly shot. Her pose, standing over the corpse, and the caption, "mein erstes erlegtes Raubwild" suggest that the creature is her trophy of a day on safari and bears witness to her skill with a gun and to her mastery over a dangerous wild animal. Furthermore, the position of her rifle could be interpreted as a phallic image, suggesting virility. In this photograph the narrating self lays claim to the extreme masculine role of a hunter. **Illustration 2** shows Beinhorn dressed in her flying kit, and standing in front of her flying machine. In contrast to illustration 1 where femininity is absent from the shot, here one can discern that the pilot is an attractive young woman. Furthermore, she is standing in front of the propeller the functional part of the plane that she, a woman, controls. The propeller, like the rifle, could also be interpreted as a phallic symbol that she controls, yet what seems more significant is that she is alone in the shot. The inclusion of photographs illustrates the narrated self's claims to technical mastery, within the cockpit and in front of the visible moving propeller. **Illustration 3** takes her claims to technical mastery a step further to

demonstrate dominance over the geographical landscape. Here the tip of the wing can be seen indicating that it is ostensibly from her aeroplane that the narrated self is taking the photograph, either by holding the camera herself or through securing the camera to the wing. The photograph makes claim to the skill of the pilot who takes the shot whilst also controlling her machine, it also makes claim to the mastery of technology in capturing the ruins of a temple in Mexico, a religious and cultural landmark. Furthermore, the shot makes claim to the uniqueness of the pilot who is able to view this landmark from an angle, possibly never seen before and this is significant in reinforcing the centrality of her position and her control of the images she projects to others. Through her photographs the narrated self emphasises that her central position is a privileged one whereby she is able to travel to distant lands and to see landmarks that would be difficult to access by any other means.[159] Her photographs contribute to her narrative where daring and adventure are prioritised above reflection and certainly reflection on gender. Indeed, her prioritisation of adventure partially explains a narrative stance that appears unified and coherent throughout her texts. Mastery of a dangerous wilderness, epitomised by the landscape below, reinforces the strong self-image presented by the narrating self that she is able to master this hostile world.

In *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt* the narrated self presents the sight of "einen großen 'fliegenden Holländer' […] – ein großes verlassenes Schiff, das inzwischen gänzlich verrottet war,".[160] The only landmark that the pilot identifies after hours spent flying above desolate coastline is an image of decay and death. Similarly, in *Alleinflug* the narrating self presents the journey after leaving Agadir and travelling over desert in terms of a series of deadly way-marks. These way-marks are the wreckages of crashed aeroplanes below. After 1 ½ hours she sees: "ein im Sand verlassenes Flugzeug. Nach einer weiteren Stunde noch zwei Maschinen

[159] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.295.
[160] Beinhorn, *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt,* p.14-15.

von deren einer Besatzung man nie wieder etwas gehört hat".[161] The narrating self presents an image of the landscape below as an existential void. Her narration of these expanses reinforces the threats facing the narrated self from the natural world and her dominance of that wilderness. The act of flying for 700km across vast desert with nothing but sand and debris below and not the smallest path or oasis opens up a tension for the narrated self. At this point she reveals how her imagination runs wild and she becomes fixated with the sound of her engine in case it should start to fail[162]. This image suggests a strong technical and sensory affinity with the machine. The sound of the engine is something which is known and familiar to her, yet the affinity she has with the engine seems to prove problematic when the pilot comes under pressure in the air. Indeed it causes her to have doubts in the technical strength of her machine. The pilot locates herself therefore in a psychological void as well as a geographical and topographical wilderness. The pilot manages to navigate her way safely through the desert to her landing point, thus she presents her mastery of that world through her technical skill as well as psychological mastery of herself as she has conquered fear. Furthermore, in flying above these wrecked aircraft the narrating self presents an image of her own success at surviving where others have failed.

3.3.4. Narratives of 'Alleinherrschaft' – the Flying Machine as a Position to Defend

The narrating self not only controls the space within her machine, she also identifies it as her own autonomous space which must be defended from others. During her flight across Africa she is called upon to fly the celebrated pilot Theo Osterkamp to Algiers to collect his own aeroplane, a request which is met with reluctance from her "denn in punkto Passagier war ich

[161] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.44.
[162] Ibid.

jetzt nach meiner langen Alleinherrschaft im Flugzeug recht empfindlich".[163] The narrating self presents an autocratic self-image with the term "Alleinherrschaft". This is reinforced by her insistence that she will only fly him to Algiers on the condition that he is "ohne Steuerrecht".[164] The fact that she effectively wrests him from the "Steuerknüppel"[165], a phallic symbol given its position in relation to the pilot, suggests that the narrated self wishes to be in complete control of this space. In this respect, she resists attempts by other flyers to reposition her to the margins of her machine. The narrating self describes how: "er gab seinem Fliegerherzen einen Stoß und biß in den sauren Apfel, sich von einem Mädchen durch die Weltgeschichte fliegen zu lassen. Und das war wirklich eine ganz große Leistung von ihm".[166] In this particular example gender becomes important within the machine because it is on the grounds that she is a woman that he resists being flown by her. The pilot neither camouflages this fact, nor does she associate Osterkamp's attitude towards her as a base to debate gender hierarchies. She does, however, take a personal stand in refusing to allow him to fly *her* machine. The narrated self does not engage in open conflict with the pilot but rather asserts her independence by responding in a humorous way that ridicules his claims to control. In this episode the use of the term 'Mädchen' has the effect of mocking those who do not have faith in her flying skills. The comic and ridiculous image of the famous flyer's sour expression as he submits to being flown by this 'girl' serves to displace the hero from his status as a world renowned pilot to the benefit of the female pilot who single-handedly takes control. The narrating self elaborates upon her attitude towards *male* passengers and her preference for flying alone, "ein richtiger Mann würde sich nicht monatelang dem Kommando eines weiblichen Kapitäns fügen – und einen nicht ganz richtigen Mann wollte ich schon gar nicht

[163] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.37.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Ibid.

neben mir haben".[167] Her use of the term "Kommando" constructs an image of herself as a military leader and suggests a gradual progression through her texts of images of herself from "Alleinflieger" to an "Alleinherrscher" to finally at the end of her autobiography, a "Kommando". This creates the effect of the narrated self rising through a chain of command and eventually positioning herself at the top of that hierarchy. Her resolve, however, that she would not tolerate "einen nicht ganz richtigen Mann" suggests that she has clear ideas about what constitutes masculinity. Her narration indicates a level of acceptance of gender hierarchy in the context of marriage, in particular in the case of the depiction of marriage to her racing driver husband, Bernd Rosemeyer.

The machine is not just represented as a space that she controls but also as a space which reinforces her dominance of the natural world. Whenever other people enter the machine the narrating self represents them as threats to her control of that space. She positions herself, therefore, within a hierarchy with herself at the top. One may expect that the single biggest obstacle to being in complete control within the machine would be marriage and pregnancy, which is indeed how the narrated self positions her aeroplane within the marriage. In 1936 Beinhorn married the racing driver Bernd Rosemeyer. In her biography of his life published after his death in a racing accident in 1938 the narrating self presents a communion between husband and wife in terms of the grand passion. She represents their courtship in terms of a whirlwind romance between two sportspeople whom she defined as "Freiheitsfanatiker".[168] The narrating self stylises freedom in the text through images of speed and risk-taking. The narrating self also associates her husband and herself with instinctive abilities which suggest they were destined for their particular professional paths. We have already seen how from her days of learning to fly the narrated self presents a natural affinity

[167] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.377.
[168] Elly Beinhorn-Rosemeyer, *Mein Mann der Rennfahrer. Der Lebensweg Bernd Rosemeyers* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag, 1938), p.22.

with her machine. The couple enjoyed racing through country lanes at night in his racing car. In *Mein Mann - der Rennfahrer* the narrating self presents an image of her husband's excellent eyesight which allowed him to see in the dark. She takes this image further to suggest that he seemed to instinctively know what was around the next bend. The narrating self presents a hierarchy in his car with her husband in a superior position to herself since he had abilities which left her amazed and which extend beyond technical skill. In her own plane she identifies special innate skills of her own which suggest the machine is part of her own self. Both pursued careers which required them to act decisively and take risks. These professional requirements did not, however, fit in gender terms. They did not fit in terms of the expectations which the husband had of the narrated self's behaviour either. Significantly absent from the photographs in her texts are images that locate her in roles that suggest she is not unique or that she assumes roles beyond that of adventurer. She is photographed either alone, with her husband – also a sportsman - or with other pilots who were then performing similar feats to her. It is significant that her husband is a racing driver and therefore engaged in a dangerous and individualistic sport. After her marriage Beinhorn continued to fly but was increasingly to be found accompanying her husband to races and supporting him at training by timing his laps with a stop watch.[169] The wife is therefore repositioned on the sidelines supporting her husband in his own career as well as providing companionship and comfort.[170] The marriage communion is therefore presented by the narrating self in ways that suggest a non-egalitarian relationship that is gendered which the narrating self identifies as problematic for her independence as a pilot.

Marriage is constructed by the narrating self as a hierarchical space and the narration of the aeroplane suggests that both partners saw control of their respective machines as the

[169] Beinhorn, *Mein Mann, der Rennfahrer,* p.44, p.46, p.152.
[170] Ibid*,* p.44, p.152.

means of reaching the top of the chain of command within marriage. Shortly after their marriage Rosemeyer learnt to fly and after passing his licence, regularly flew his wife's plane. Her husband's flying licence is represented as a threat not just to her independence but to her "letzte Vorherrschaft".[171] The sight of her husband flying off in her machine is marked in funereal terms by her "leisen Trauerfeier".[172] As early as during their honeymoon, she longs for the chance to fly alone, even just for a short stretch, in order once again to be an "Alleinkämpfer in meiner Maschine."[173] The narration of marriage suggests that the narrated self defines her relationship within communities, even intimate communities such as marriage, in terms of a hierarchy. Her narrative demonstrates her disquiet at losing her independence and her area of superiority over Rosemeyer, however the narrative also demonstrates a level of acceptance that his career should take precedence and her primary role was now that of the supportive wife. Indeed, since Rosemeyer is depicted as the "richtigen Mann" her narrative indicates an adherence to gender hierarchy. Her exceptional status as a woman who is a pilot, navigator and explorer of uncharted spaces is ever present, although rarely mentioned. In her narrative of marriage the narrating self depicts the conflict between her professional role and her role as a wife. She depicts the demise of her superiority in the plane and her isolated place in the air, images that indicate the fragmentation of her unified adventurer self as an "Alleinkämpfer" in her aeroplane. Her narrative demonstrates the fragility of her professional role and indicates that her narrative position as a woman pilot is nuanced, indeed she depicts her career as a pilot as one that has been carefully negotiated.

In *Alleinflug – Mein Leben* the narrated self lands in Thailand, formerly Siam during her round-the-world flight in 1932 and meets the Siamese royal family. In narrating time she recalls that prior to her meeting, "ich hatte eingedrillt bekommen, durch einen Hofknicks zu

[171] Beinhorn, *Mein Mann, der Rennfahrer,* p.125.
[172] Ibid*,* p.125.
[173] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug. Mein Leben*, p.248.

beweisen, dass die Fliegerei keineswegs die guten Sitten des weiblichen Geschlechtes verdirbt."[174] The narrating self locates her discussion of womanhood within a performative framework where she had felt compelled to exhibit ways of behaviour that were specific to her gender in order to gain social respectability.[175] The rehearsal of her curtsey and her reminder to herself to perform it, suggests that on the ground she is defined by others, not only in terms of her capacity to fly her aeroplane but also by her capacity to preserve what she understands to signify her 'Weiblichkeit'.[176] In this passage she appears to define 'Weiblichkeit' in terms of politeness, modesty and humility, specific characteristics which are encapsulated by the curtsey. The narrating self recognises that others identify a tension between flying and womanhood and through her narration she thematises gender in ways that suggest to the careful reader that the image she projects to others is carefully constructed. The significance of her depiction of the curtsey lies in the sense that it is a rehearsed act indicating that on landing gender becomes a valid point of self-definition in what was an ambiguous professional field in gendered terms.[177] In his biography of Beinhorn, published in 1940, Rolf Italiaander locates her in a special position which is predicated on her apparent uniqueness. Italiaander separates her from millions of others because of the extraordinary feats she had performed.[178] Italiaander writes of Beinhorn, "überall weiß sie sich zu bewegen, ganz gleich, ob es am Steuerknüppel ist, bei einem Diplomatenempfang oder im Busch auf Safari ... und dabei bleibt sie doch immer Dame!".[179] Italiaander does not explain what he understands by "remaining a lady", which suggests that his definition is assumed. Significantly, Italiaander

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[174] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug. Mein Leben,* p.118.
[175] Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (London: Routledge, 1993).
[176] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.118.
[177] Bernhard Rieger, *Technology and the Culture of Modernity in Britain and Germany 1890-1945* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), p.138, p.142.
[178] Rolf Italiaander, *Drei deutsche Fliegerinnen*, *Elly Beinhorn, Thea Rasche, Hanna Reitsch. Drei Lebensbilder* (Berlin: G.Wiese, 1940), p.16.
[179] Ibid, p.30.

claims that roles which may appear to differ are in harmony. He frequently invokes images of newness when referring to the women pilots themselves and the period in which they lived. The political regime is not mentioned by name, making it unclear whether Italiaander refers to the political climate as exemplifying newness or whether he is referring to technological change. He claims that, "unendliche Möglichkeiten gibt es im neuen Deutschland für denjenigen, der erfüllt ist vom Geist des 20. Jahrhunderts, der sich in so vielem wesentlich von dem der Vergangenheit unterscheidet".[180] He associates Beinhorn specifically with being "kaum mehr mit den Schlacken einer alten Zeit behaftet"[181] and an amazon of the twentieth century who should be a role model for every German girl.[182] His narration suggests a new interpretation of women flyers and the roles they are to fulfil. His emphasis on the newness of their roles offers some explanation for the ambiguous framework within which the pilot was operating.

3.3.5. The Problem of Communality – Narratives of Acceptance and Competition in Relation to a Community of Flyers

Secondary literature has positioned Beinhorn and other German women pilots within a non-gender based community of flyers where for the most part they found acceptance as fellow sportspeople.[183] In each of the texts the narrating self presents relationships with other flyers as personal friendships. The narrating self reveals, for example, how she followed Marga von Etzdorf's progress during her flight to Japan, how she met Amelia Earhart during her own flight to America in 1934 as well as her close friendship with Ernst Udet. Friendships are

[180] Italiaander, *Drei deutsche Fliegerinnen*, p.15.
[181] Ibid, p.16.
[182] Ibid, p.42.
[183] Karolina Fell, *Kalkuliertes Abenteuer. Reiseberichte deutschsprachiger Frauen 1920-1945* (Stuttgart: Metzler Verlag, 1998), p.223.

presented in non-hierarchical terms and these friendships are also not gendered. However, good relations are not always narrated in *Alleinflug* and we have already seen how the narrating self has the pilot defend her machine from other flyers who attempt to reposition her to the margins of that space.

The narration of the novice flying community (flying school) is presented in the context of a struggle; struggle to be permitted to join the flying club in the first place[184], struggle against her parents, struggle against the elements since flying at that time meant primitive machines with open cockpits in freezing temperatures.[185] Struggle is also associated by the narrating self in terms with relations between the flyers, "dann kämpfte jeder gegen jeden"[186], all of whom were determined to get in as many hours in the air as possible. Struggle in this context is not defined by the narrated self along gender lines but it is clear that flyers who were slow to complete their flight could provoke tension amongst the other pupils who were waiting on the ground. The airfield is represented by the narrated self as an ambiguous space. It represents exciting new opportunities to travel to new geographical spaces as well as to see the space she knows from a different angle in the air. On the ground, however, the narrating self identifies being stared at in her helmet, goggles and flying suit with a sense of embarrassment. The narrating self locates the airfield as the site of her professional ambitions. Yet she also identifies this space as one that she struggles to navigate and where she is made to feel isolated and marginalised. The narrating self does not reflect on this particular episode but the way she juxtaposes it with an image of wholeness and freedom when she is alone in the air suggests that from the early days of her career she was making a distinction between her whole sense of self in the air and then fragmenting this sense of wholeness when she is

[184] The flying school in Hanover refused to train a woman to fly which is why she joined the flying school at Berlin-Staaken.
[185] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.13.
[186] Ibid*,* p.14.

back on the ground. The narrating self presents the ground as an ambiguous space where others are not sure how to respond to her when she is in her flying gear. At an airfield in Spain, therefore, we are told that the other pilots see her as "ein wunderbares Fliegergeschöpf".[187] It is unclear whether this image refers to her appearance which, in her flying suit and goggles may make it difficult to distinguish whether she is a man or a woman. The image also suggests that flying is represented by the narrating self as a new space which could also mean opportunities to redefine gender images and where the woman flyer may just be identified with her wonderful achievements and not with her gender.

The inclusion of a photograph in *Alleinflug* which shows the pilot smoking, opens up new possibilities for examining how self-image is redefined in the text. **Illustration 4** shows Beinhorn lying in the grass as another pilot, named in the caption below as Ernst Udet one of the most successful fighter pilots of World War One[188], leans towards her and lights her cigarette from his own cigarette. The caption beneath the photograph defines the relationship between the young pilot and Udet, as that of mentor and friend.[189] The airfield setting and the fact that both are dressed in their flying gear locates them literally in their professional field and the relaxed pose which is suggested in the picture suggests professional parity and close personal friendship between the two flyers. The lighting of cigarettes suggests that the two pilots not only share the same professional interests, but also share personal intimacy with the possibility of cigarettes acting as substitute for kissing. For Beinhorn this suggests a level of acceptance not only by members of the more general flying community but specifically acceptance by a highly decorated World War One flying ace. Specifying this particular association has the effect of reinforcing the professional credibility of the pilot. Smoking in

[187] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.42.
[188] Ibid*,* p.32.
[189] Ibid.

public is an act which has been associated by academics with the New Woman[190] and one which deviated from traditional values which suggested that well brought up girls should not smoke. Smoking in this image suggests acceptance that has been achieved rather than acceptance which she is still struggling towards. Many of the photographs in *Alleinflug* depict the pilot standing next to or in front of her flying machine as well as inside the cockpit. Wherever photographs show her with others this is most often with a colleague, for example her friend Ernst Udet or a group of other pilots, for example, the pilots with whom she trained. Her photographs indicate the uniqueness of her role as a pilot, and indeed as a woman as other women pilots are absent from the photographs. Her photographs suggest that where she seeks community it is most often with other aviators. In **illustration 5**, for example, Beinhorn is pictured with the other pilots at her flying school in Berlin. The caption makes no reference to being the only woman in the photograph suggesting on one level that gender is negated. On another level, she is clearly the only woman visible in the shot and that makes her unique. It is more significant that the narrating self includes a photograph which reinforces her central superior position as she sits in the middle of the other flyers raised above them on the flying machine. All of those in the shot are ostensibly learning to control the aeroplane yet it is the narrated self who is in physical contact with the machine. The positioning of the narrated self in relation to her machine is significant because it represents a shift from women occupying a marginal position, detached from the action of the machine. Traditionally, they are mothers on the home front of World War One who receive letters, they are girlfriends waiting at home and they are mothers-to be of the next generation of pilots.[191] Here the woman is in the closest position to the flying machine.

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[190] Kerry Wallach, 'Mascha Kaléko Advertises the New Jewish Woman', in *'Not an Essence but a Positioning': German Jewish Women Writers 1900-1938,* ed. by Andrea Hammel and Godela Weiss-Sussex, (Munich: Martin Meidenbauer, 2009), pp.211-232: 225.
[191] Schüler-Springorum, 'Flying and Killing', p.212, p.220.

In representing her negotiations in this ambiguous space the narrating self does not identify with other women pilots as a source of support in the same way that the narrated self positions herself in a community of university women in *Wir lebten in Deutschland.* She prioritises images of herself as an adventurer engaged in a physical and psychological struggle against the natural world but not in terms of challenging gender hierarchies. The narrating self defines her sense of self in terms of a pilot, navigator, engineer and explorer of uncharted spaces. Her exceptional status as a woman who performs these roles is ever-present yet rarely mentioned. Her narrative demonstrates little sense that in the narrating present gender became any more significant to her than in the narrated past. Instead of identifying with a community of women the narrating self presents her female fans in ways that indicate her sense of superiority over them as opposed to solidarity with them. Instead of encouraging her female followers who wished to pursue a career in aviation, the narrated self either does not respond to their letters or openly discourages them since, "die wenigen unter Tausenden, die es wirklich wollen und auch durchsetzen, machen trotzdem ihren Weg. Und den anderen, denen die letzte Zähigkeit fehlt, hilft man, unnötige Ausgaben zu ersparen".[192] The passage suggests a Darwinist and autonomous image of the narrating self who identifies her success as that of the self-made individual. The narrating self attributes her success to hard work and her own personal reserves of determination rather than the support of other networks or individuals. The narrating self presents an egotistical self-image as she positions herself in a small closed community of flyers and does not provide others with the encouragement to enter that community themselves even though she acknowledges the support she received from within the flying community. This suggests that the narrated self is only able to function within hierarchies and, where within these hierarchies, she is able to position herself at the top. She

[192] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.11.

presents pilots as "seltsame Wesen"[193], beings which exist in a different world. Within this different world the narrating self positions the pilot at the top of her chain of command and does so in ways that distract from her gender. The narration of the machine suggests that the narrated self did not generally identify gender as relevant in that space. Technical skills and a 'natural' affinity for the plane are presented as more important. This suggests that she had no sense of gender solidarity which made her feel obliged to support other women. Attention has been given in secondary literature to the friendship and support within the community of flyers, however, I also find that the skills which enable the narrated self to perform her role are skills which she can only develop within herself. The act of controlling the machine and of interpreting weather conditions and identifying places to land are solitary acts, particularly since there is no radio fitted in her machines. The narrating self constructs the machine as her own special place which requires unique qualities to control it. Other pilots are identified as a threat to that space and non-flyers are relegated by the narrated self to a separate world entirely. This suggests a sense of dominance over her space and with it the assertion that she alone belongs there. There are examples of flyers helping one another but only on the ground and this does not extend in the case of the narrated self to would-be flyers. Gender is not identified by her as a unifying factor and even professional skill is not always associated with a common sense of identity.

3.3.6. The Problem of Gender in the German Colonies

The narration of flying to the former German colonies in East and South-West Africa suggests womanhood to be a temporary construct that the narrating self defines and redefines in

[193] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.7.

different social settings. These redefinitions underline the ambiguous social and cultural position of the aviatrix[194] who, as has been shown above, identifies the tensions between the demands and indeed practicalities of flying and the pressures to look and behave in certain ways back on the ground. Within twenty years of unification in 1871 Germany had become a colonial power encompassing territory in Africa, China and the Pacific. Her African colonies included Cameroon, East Africa (now Tanzania), Togo and Southwest Africa (now Namibia).[195] By the early twentieth century there were a growing number of colonialist associations engaged with issues relating to national and racial identity and the relationship between the German culture and society and those of the colonies. These associations included a number devoted to German women who had emigrated to the colonies and sought to define a role for themselves there.[196] These roles were predicated on preserving Germanness abroad through promoting a sense of community amongst Germans who were living far from the Reich. This became particularly acute after the loss of German colonies under the terms of the Versailles Treaty.[197] The colonialist associations established schools and recruited German women to teach in them. They also helped in the recruitment of nurses for German hospitals in the former colonies.[198] By travelling to the former German colonies, the narrating self locates the pilot in a tradition of German women creating roles for themselves in the African colonies. She does so by emphasising the contribution she makes as an "alleinfliegendes Mädchen", travelling to distant places where she is always able to find German people as well as symbols which she associates with Germanness.

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[194] Rieger, *Technology and the Culture of Modernity*, p.139.
[195] Kristina O'Donnell, 'Home, Nation, Empire: Domestic Germanness and Colonial Citizenship', in *The Heimat Abroad: The Boundaries of Germanness,* ed. by Krista O'Donnell, Renate Bridenthal and Nancy Reagin (Michigan: University of Michigan, 2005), pp.40-57: 40.
[196] Lora Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire 1884-1945* (Durham &London: Duke UP, 2001), pp.172-200.
[197] Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire,* pp.172-3.
[198] Ibid*,* p.175.

Wildenthal underlines the significance to Germans of sovereignty post World War One, at a time when Germans no longer had legal citizenship in the former colonies they inhabited. The Germans who remained there redefined their sense of who was German with reference to "cultural public enactments".[199] Wildenthal cites church attendance as an example of these enactments[200], while in *180 Stunden über Afrika* Beinhorn the pilot refers to the German institution of the school[201], and to German enterprise such as gold-mining companies in South-West Africa.[202] The narrating self defines the German school as a symbol of her expectation that the colonies would eventually be returned to the possession of Germany. She then associates the willingness of the English there to employ German nannies as a sign that they expect German to one day become the language of business in South-West Africa.[203] The narration of her hopes for a revision to the Treaty of Versailles is an aspect of her sense of Germanness which she shares with the members of the colonialist associations. It should also be noted that, as outlined below, the narrating self defines her sense of self as a German citizen rather than as a member of a community of women.

The pilot positions herself in a distinct category of her own without referring to any of the German women's colonialist organisations, which seems surprising since it is likely she would have come into contact with them as teachers in the places she refers to such as German schools and which she photographed for her travel accounts.[204] Zegenhagen has argued that, by flying in the name of national interests, Beinhorn follows similar patterns of

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[199] Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire,* p.176.
[200] Ibid. In her essay 'German *Brigadoon* ? Domesticity and Metropolitan Germans: Perceptions of *Auslandsdeutschen* in Southwest Africa and Eastern Europe' Nancy Reagin explores Germanness as a gendered construct and locates this construct in the home and domestic arrangements of German settlers in the colonies. In *The Heimat Abroad: The Boundaries of Germanness*, ed. by Krista O'Donnell, Renate Bridenthal and Nancy Reagin (Michigan: University of Michigan, 2005), pp.248-266.
[201] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.64.
[202] Ibid, p.66.
[203] Ibid, p.65.
[204] Ibid, p.64.

collective engagement as the conservative women's movement.[205] I find that examining narrative constructions of the expatriate community suggests that, although she praises that community in collective terms, she also identifies this community as a space where she can be an authority. She represents herself as an ambassador of Germanness but does so in ways that lay claims to her special role. Women are defined by the narrating self through their relational roles as the wife of the local German businessman[206] or the wife of the ambassador. They are people whom she meets at social functions and who offer her hospitality during her stay. This implies that the pilot is the only woman in the colonies to create a professional role for herself which was based on her abilities as a pilot and technician rather than as a wife and mother. This different role reinforces the idea that she is therefore exceptional. She identifies herself as a representative of Germanness and her machine as a vehicle for carrying that Germanness to nationals living abroad. She bases her exceptional status on her belief that she is able, "Freunde für [das] Vaterland zu werben"[207] precisely because she is a young girl flying alone.[208] She therefore acknowledges not only her gender as significant in determining her roles but also her youth and essentially her immaturity. She defines the pilot in terms which suggest a girl, not yet fully developed and not yet a woman. The narration suggests therefore that defining herself as a girl gave the pilot a sense of freedom which she would not have as a woman. Furthermore, in juxtaposing the self-image of a girl with perilous images of the oceans and deserts below reinforces her vulnerability and also reinforces the risks she was taking to promote her idea of "Vaterland".

In Africa and Australia the narrating self presents herself and the aeroplane as a, "lebender Gruß aus der Heimat" and the machine itself as the first German aeroplane they had

[205] Zegenhagen, *'Schneidige deutsche Mädel'*, pp.281-3.
[206] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.66.
[207] Ibid, p.114.
[208] Ibid.

seen. The narrating self positions herself in a unique space where she alone acts as a connection between Germans abroad and the "Vaterland".[209] Whilst the pilot and the members of the colonialist organisations contributed to the same goal of promoting Germanness abroad, the pilot defines a different role for herself that was predicated on her efforts as an individual role rather than as a member of a group and certainly not a group of women. Increasingly during the Weimar Republic of German women were travelling in a professional capacity to Africa and indeed to other countries in order to document social and economic conditions there for travel accounts and newspaper articles which they published in the Reich.[210] These journeys were undertaken without a chaperone and often using the most modern forms of transportation such as the motor car and the aeroplane.

The flying machine is depicted in ways that bring out the fluidity of narrative positions within her texts. Her relationship with the machine is narrated as a communion particularly at dangerous moments when she refers to it as her guardian angel. Long flights over the desert are characterised as lonely experiences with only her machine for company, yet in her narration she also emphasises her mastery of the wilderness below. She gives prominence to events which emphasise her uniqueness and her separation from others. Indeed, the flying machine is characterised by her as a place of her own to be defended from usurpers, particularly from her husband, whom she identifies as a partial threat to her freedom. Outside the machine the narrated self appears to find a level of communality with other flyers because of their shared technical and professional interests. The narrated self distances herself from the young women with ambitions to fly who write to her for 'career advice' and her narration of refusing to respond to their letters emphasises the unique narrative position in which she situates herself and her determination to retain that uniqueness.

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[209] Beinhorn, *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt,* p.122.
[210] Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire*, p.195; Fell, *Kalkuliertes Abenteuer*, p.31.

3.4. Conclusions

The readings undertaken here have demonstrated that the label of 'women' turns out to be inappropriate to the intricate ways that self is articulated in each of the texts. There is clearly nothing essential between the autobiographies of even this small group of educated women professionals. The narratives reveal discernible differences in terms of the nuanced construction of their sense of self. Gender is not absent in terms of how self is constructed, however, it is narrated in the context of individual circumstance and experience. These explorations do problematise the argument put forward by Chodorow that gender is not a salient category for 'women' in their reflections, as discussed in section 2.2.2 above. It is a salient category in the texts considered here in so far as the narrated selves claim others have attempted to impose gender as a category of importance upon them. Gender becomes relevant when others attempt to define them exclusively in gendered terms. The determination to prove her doubters wrong in *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt,* prompts the narrated self to take substantial risks by flying on despite a faulty oil gauge in order to reach her destination. She gives prominence in her narration to making decisions which are informed by what she perceives to be the gendered expectations of others back home. She gives priority to the moment when a flyer attempts to usurp her from her machine and, in this moment, her machine becomes a site of conflict between the sexes as the narrated self emphasises her ability to fly safely and her refusal to relinquish control of her own machine. She gives priority to retaining control of the machine and her emphasis suggests this is as much about controlling her narrative position as it is about preserving her own place. The sense that there is only 'space' for herself as the pilot in charge of the machine is obviously a practical matter, because only one person can sit at the controls. Her narration and the prominence she attaches

to keeping control underlines the importance to her of uniqueness. The preservation of her exclusive status is reinforced in her refusal to send words of support to the women who write to her expressing a wish to fly. She attributes her career to her own resources which she implies are innate and emphasises her minority position as one of the few who has these resources. Gender is not an invalid concern for the narrated self, but it becomes a concern when others prompt her to consider it, and this underlines the importance of an approach that interprets texts on different narrative levels. This methodology reveals the nuanced construction of gender identity in the texts.

The narrated selves all identify specific events in their individual contexts where gender is significant. In *Hindsight* the narrating self refines her notion of gender as a point of identification that became important later in life when she was remembering her youth during the Weimar Republic. Her narration indicates that her love for other women was also important in her construction of a sense of self and specifically how her assumption that her sexuality had been accepted by others, is destabilised in narrating time. By differentiating between narrative levels, one is able to explore how gender can assume importance where it had ostensibly been absent from the considerations of the narrated self. However, the interchangeable use of 'she' instead of repeatedly referring to the 'narrated self' or 'the narrating self', in order to facilitate reading, is problematic in those examples where my argument lies in exploring the disappearance and absence of gender. There is a danger here of the reader gendering the self and also of reintroducing the author as a narrative presence. Yet on a basic level the gender of the narrators and thus the use of 'she' is inescapable. It is a limitation of employing narrated self and narrating self where repeated use can sound stilted. Notwithstanding this limitation, keeping the narrated self separate from the narrating self is a fruitful means of revealing how gender is given prominence within the text in different ways

and at different times. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narrating self presents a unified model of self in relation of her depiction of university days as a narrative of obstacles overcome, notably with respect to her relationship with the professors who doubted she would cope with her studies. There are similarities in this respect to the pilot's accounts where the narrated self presents the dangers of the wilderness as missions accomplished and adventures which she survived. Her status as a woman who performs such roles is ever-present yet rarely mentioned. Indeed, the narration of her refusal to reply to fan mail from female admirers reveals that she had no sense of gender solidarity. The question of gender solidarity stands in contrast to *Wir lebten in Deutschland* where the 'Studentinnenverein' is constructed as a place for women students to meet, indeed specifically women of the same age. The narrated self keeps this forum separate from the women's movement. She gives prominence to the generational differences between 'women' despite her acknowledgment of apparent common ground such as a concern for female access to higher education. Her narration of the subsequent disbandment of the society because of growing anti-Semitism reveals the prominence given by the narrated self to the group as a place where communality may not be absent, but it is selective, and the willingness to extend communality to women depended increasingly on religion and nationality. Her narrative demonstrates that gender cannot be examined in isolation to the context in which it is narrated.

It is striking that, where communality is emphasised at the ante-natal clinic in *Hindsight*, the narrated self makes little association of communality along gendered lines – this is surprising because in the context of the clinic the exclusively female team is made apparent in the text. The narrated self gives prominence to the newness of the medical approaches instead of emphasising that it was women practitioners who were dispensing these approaches and that women were the main recipients of these approaches. Newness is here constructed in

terms that seem inconsistent. On the one hand, newness is associated with being in an exclusive position that is protected because of the opportunities to be a pioneer and also to seek advice in case of uncertainty. On the other hand, the narrated self characterises the clinic as a place which gave her a view onto events taking place in Germany in the late Weimar period. Exclusivity and the separateness she associates with exclusivity, is dismantled and taken back.

The narrative process of dismantling a way of viewing the world that seems inappropriate is integral to the way self is articulated in each of the texts under analysis. Examining the texts in terms of prioritisations reveals the importance of the narrator's omniscience in articulating and refining self. We have seen how gender can assume different importance in different contexts and on different narrative levels. The next chapter examines how engagement with a sense of being German and being Jewish further problematises attempts by scholars to label by criteria related to religion and nationality. It investigates the connection between constructing a sense of being German and also of being Jewish, and the prominence given to these concepts in attempts to make sense of the world around.

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4. "WIR WAREN GANZ SELBSTVERSTÄNDLICH BEGEISTERTE DEUTSCHE MIT GROßER LIEBE FÜRS VATERLAND"[1] (STRAUS): CONSTRUCTIONS OF GERMANNESS AND JEWISHNESS

This chapter demonstrates the intricate ways that the narrated selves in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* and *Hindsight* define their religion and their sense of Germanness through positioning themselves within specific communities. The narrating selves may subsequently refine their sense of self through re-positioning themselves within these specific communities or by positioning themselves within new communities. Explorations of positioning and repositioning are integral to demonstrating the intricate ways that ideas of religion and nationhood are constructed in the texts. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* and in *Hindsight* the narrated selves define themselves by their observance of German customs and their allegiance to the German Kaiser. They differ in their liberal and orthodox levels of observance. Home, Synagogue, school and university are narrated as places where the narrated selves bring together their sense of being Jewish and being German. These are also places where the narrated selves make distinctions between being Jewish and being German and also where they differentiate between different levels of religious observance. Exploring positioning and repositioning within communities enables me to refine the conclusions of Harriet Pass Freidenreich that Jewish men and women who attended university in the early twentieth century were more likely to distance themselves from Jewish religious customs and rituals

[1] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland*, p.43.

because of their secular studies and their friendship with non-Jews.[2] In her biographical analyses Pass Freidenreich categorises Jewish women at university in the first three decades of the twentieth century by their level of religious observance.[3] I intend to explore the intricate ways that self is articulated in relation to Jews and other Germans and to demonstrate that Pass Freidenreich's approach imposes categories that do not withstand closer analysis. Such categories imply that articulating a sense of being Jewish is narrated in a vacuum. Indeed, her claim, that for some of the university women in her study being Jewish was not how they defined themselves until the Third Reich, further diminishes the intricacies of articulating self.[4] In differentiating between narrative levels the chapter demonstrates the nuanced construction of national and religious identities in texts by a small group of educated German-Jewish women.

4.1. Narratives of Belonging in the German Reich

4.1.1. The German Community in Riesenburg, West Prussia – The Narration of Centrality at the Margins of the Reich

Both in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* and *Hindsight* the narrating selves narrate childhood as a time when clear ideas were formulated by the younger selves about their sense of national allegiance and of belonging in Germany. I will focus first on how the narrated self in *Hindsight* defines herself when a little girl by her sense of Germanness and how this sense of being German is strengthened by her position on the margins of the German Reich.

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[2] Pass Freidenreich, *Female, Jewish and Educated*, p.141. Cited in Meyer, *German-Jewish History in Modern Times,* p.152.
[3] Pass Freidenreich classifies them as, 'Jewish Jews' who observed in their daily life, 'Just Jews' for whom their religion was a nominal denomination and 'Former Jews' who had converted to a different religion. .
[4] Pass Freidenreich, *Female, Jewish and Educated,* p.141.

In *Hindsight* the narrating self positions the younger self at the centre of her very small community which for her also stands for the national community. She defines her past self in geographical, cultural and social terms as firmly German.[5] Indeed she labels chapter one in the text, 'A German Childhood'. This sense of all-round Germanness is set within the geographical boundaries of the town of Riesenburg, a small rural town in West Prussia with only about 4,000 inhabitants during the narrated self's childhood.[6] Her narration gives prominence to the town's isolated position, its' "immediate surroundings were fields and meadows"[7] as well as a "large virgin forest"[8], the "Sorgensee"[9] and the river Liebe.[10] The narrating self constructs the town as a "watershed"[11] place between East and West in the German Reich, locating it as a small town on the margins of the vast expanse of the German Reich. The rural location was important to the family business as Charlotte Wolff's father was a corn merchant. His work brought him into contact with other townspeople from different religions and various social classes.[12] Whilst it is unclear whether he was the only corn merchant in the town, it is highly probable that the family business provided both employment and credit and therefore the business would have been relied upon by others living in the town. Indeed, the narration emphasises how the Wolff family were quite an affluent and well-respected family.[13]

The majority of Jews in Prussia at the turn of the twentieth century were employed in trade and commerce and often had their own business. Discrimination in areas such as the Civil Service, universities, the armed forces and the judiciary, even after the Emancipation

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[5]Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.1.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid p.3.
[13] Ibid, pp.3-4.

laws in 1871, explains why many Jews continued to be strongly represented in trade. Rapid industrialisation also meant that many Jews in the German Reich benefited economically and socially from the growth of trade and commerce.[14] Wolff's father benefited from the wealth that came from the agricultural sector; he made deliberate efforts to acculturate and did so through socialising with the people with whom he did business and with the neighbours.[15] Many middle-class Jews came to observe the same social norms, ideals and cultural values as other upwardly mobile Germans.[16] Judaism became increasingly secularised.[17] This was the case for the narrated self and her family. According to the narrated self, the family's geographical location on the margins of the Reich has the effect of strengthening their sense of belonging to the "heart"[18] of the German national community. The narrated self assumes a wish to be seen as a thoroughly German citizen and she does so by emphasising the proximity of their Polish neighbours in and around nearby Danzig. The location of her hometown, Riesenburg, is pivotal in constructing the narrated self's sense of belonging in the narrated past. The town is presented as a model of Germanness, "amidst Polish land and villages, and was a few miles from the Polish border" .[19] In narrated time the young girl claims that "the German 'face' was stamped on the appearance and character of the inhabitants, which no foreign traits had ever altered"[20]. In her narrative the narrated self emphasises the fixity of the townspeople's sense of Germanness which she defines as a set of physical characteristics and mannerisms imprinted upon them. The reference to the "mighty Deutsche Ritterorden (Teutonic Order of Knights)"[21] which had held the town "in its grip during the Middle Ages" emphasises the strength of the town's German heritage. The strength of that heritage is

[14] Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany*, p.215, pp.225-6.
[15] Wolff, *Hindsight,* pp.3-4.
[16] Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class*, pp.25-63.
[17] Ibid*,* p.69; Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany,* p.236.
[18] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.15.
[19] Ibid*,* p.1.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.

reinforced by references to the history of Riesenburg which had at one time belonged to Prussia and to Poland at another time. It would appear that despite those times when Riesenburg was part of Poland, the German 'face' had never been erased from the townspeople. The prominence of Germanness in her account is demonstrated by the narrated self's assertion that "Germany was the heart of the world for me, and other countries, other folk, had to be pitied".[22] The sense of Germanness conveyed here is reinforced by the alterity of the nearby Poles. By the turn of the century when Wolff was growing up, the territory of West Prussia, and thus Riesenburg, was politically connected to the rest of the Reich. However, Riesenburg was also surrounded by Polish territories.[23] The fact of being in an enclave may help to explain the emphasis that is placed on her strong sense of belonging to the apparently very German town of Riesenburg and further, to the German Reich.

The narrated self demonstrates awareness in her narrative of the Polish people who lived all around, but she emphasises their marginal presence. On her way home from visits to Danzig during childhood, she passed through train stations with Polish names "as though they didn't exist".[24] The narrating self constructs a hierarchy in narrated time with the young self at the top and the Poles below. She does so by representing the condescension as well as pity displayed by the child self towards their „drab houses and neglected gardens ".[25] The young girl is depicted distancing herself from a group of people who were perceived as completely different from Germans and thus the object of her pity.[26] The narrated self assumes a sense of belonging to an imagined community, one that is beloved by her and which in the narration she identifies as superior to other nations and nationalities. Martin Broszat has pointed out

[22] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.15.
[23] The Congress of Vienna in 1815 ensured that Prussia acquired the territory of Danzig which had previously belonged to the Kingdom of Poland and had divided East Prussia from West Prussia and other Germanic territories, see, Paul Robert Magocsi, *Historical Atlas of Central Europe* (Washington: University of Washington, 2002), p.68.
[24] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.15.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.

that from the 1870s until World War One when Wolff was growing up, German was stipulated as the language of communication in this area.[27] It seems surprising that in narrating time she does not discuss the importance of language in defining identity in the context of living at close proximity to people who only spoke Polish. Following her later flight from National Socialism she expressed discomfort at articulating herself in her native language. The narrating self claimed that the German language was brutalized by the Nazis.[28] The significance of language is examined further in Chapter Five below. By depicting the Polish people as marginal and as inferior the narrated self positions herself towards the heart of the German Reich in a cultural and linguistic sense, and in doing so at the heart of the world.[29] The strong sense of German centrality demonstrates the unity of her narrative position in narrated time because it indicates her conviction of knowing how things stand in the world and her position as a German at the centre of that world. In narrating time, she criticises her attitude towards the Polish people as "misplaced nationalism".[30] She censures earlier constructions of community as flawed because of the hierarchical value she had placed on other human beings.[31] The narrating self dismantles her conviction of German centrality, repositioning herself in relation to a more diverse world of foreign countries and people. Through this act of repositioning the narrating self dismantles that particular unified narrative position. The construction of her sense of national identity is nuanced and this is demonstrated through examining how self is defined on different narrative levels. The next section examines the nuances by which a sense of Germanness is first reflected upon and then refined in relation to the observance of German customs.

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[27] Martin Broszat, *Zweihundert Jahre deutsche Polenpolitik* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1972), p.145.
[28] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.137.
[29] Ibid*,* p.15.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.

4.1.2. "Their Germanness would not shield them forever"[32] – Defining Germanness by Allegiance to the Kaiser in *Hindsight*

The narration of allegiance to the German royal family mirrors the veneration of many Germans, both Jews and non-Jews, towards this symbol of German nationhood. This veneration was often expressed in events shared within the smallest community, the family. In *Hindsight* the narrating self presents a childhood image of Germany as a tolerant and benevolent place for Jews to live.[33] This section examines how the Royal family is narrated in ways that emphasise this spirit of tolerance. The narrating self constructs happy memories of the Kaiser's visits to his Prussian hunting lodge, occasions which saw the family travelling quite some distance to see him. Journeys to see the Kaiser were family events which included not only the immediate family of parents and sister but also aunts, uncles and cousins. The narrated self's excitement at seeing the monarch as he waved to the crowd was, "a great little moment of ecstasy"[34] which she shared with the other spectators, all of whom "were stretching their necks, leaning forward, nearly trampling down the hedges" [35] in their determination to see the Kaiser. The narrated self assumes a shared sense of community and belonging between herself and the others present as the approach of his car set "everyone's hearts beating faster".[36] This sense of communality reinforces the young girl's belief that, even at the margins of the Reich, Germans were connected to the rest of Germany by their national allegiance. Her narration indicates that in the narrated past she assumed that Jewish

[32] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.12.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid, p.13.
[36] Ibid.

people did not view themselves differently from other Germans and that other Germans did not treat Jewish families differently.

The narrating self presents the reader with similar happy childhood memories of the family home on the Kaiser's birthday, its windows illuminated by candles. Such displays of national allegiance were practised by Jews and other Germans alike. Yet, for Jewish families they provided opportunities to show their loyalty to the state and their adherence to German patriotic values and cultural norms.[37] In observing this custom the narrated self takes for granted the view that the homes of "the few Jewish families in the town were no exception" and "they were acting as all Germans did".[38] The act of lighting candles is a private one that takes place in the home, yet the placing of candles in the windows is a symbol visible to those outside the home of the family's allegiance to the Kaiser. The candles have the symbolic effect in the narration of connecting the private life of the family with public articulation of belonging to a national community. The narration of this event reveals a sense of equality between Jews and other Germans which mirrors the narration of Christmas celebrations. The family of the narrated self and indeed the other Jewish families in the town are revealed by the narrating self as acting in exactly the same way as their non-Jewish neighbours. The narrated self and her family conveyed to the world outside their wish to assimilate. The narrated self's sense of belonging, and that of the other Jewish families she refers to, is dismantled in narrating time to reveal that the child's view was not after all a valid interpretation of how things actually stood for Jews. The narrating self reveals how "the few Jewish families were probably quite unconscious of the fact that their Germanness could never be fully acknowledged by Gentiles, and would not shield them for ever".[39] She identifies the image of lighting candles as an opportunity to dismantle her earlier assumption of acceptance in

[37] Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany,* pp.180-1.
[38] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.12.
[39] Ibid.

Germany and reposition the narrated self outside the margins of that community. She now thinks in terms of a dichotomy. Despite the lit candles in the Jewish homes, their occupants could never be accepted as a full part of that community. The image of assimilation as a "shield of Germanness"[40] is identified in narrating time as an illusion since it could not protect the narrated self and other Jews from the ultimate reality that, despite seeing themselves as central members of the community, they had actually stood at its margins. In narrating time she defines her younger self by her liminal position in relation to the German community. In rethinking this sense of belonging, the walls of the family home become permeable and they each become the object of those neighbours' views and concerns about a Jewish family observing this ritual. The gaze of the neighbours takes prominence in the narration as this penetrates the home. The neighbours are shown by the narrating self to make judgments on the question of who should and should not be regarded as German. In narrated time the narrative gives prominence to the significance of Germanness to the family's sense of identity, and to the fixity of that identity. The narration of the neighbours' questioning the German credentials of the Wolff family demonstrates that there are differences between perceptions of belonging within narrated time as well as between narrated and narrating time. The narrating self is demonstrating in her narrative that identity is not fixed, although it may be perceived as such. In this respect, the narrated self is repositioned by the narrating self on the margins of the German community, the same position as the Polish people whom she had previously relegated to the periphery. In narrating time she dismantles the sense of a unified identity that is fixed, thus demonstrating the validity of an approach that examines the different narrative levels upon which the text can be interpreted. This approach reveals her

[40] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.12.

shifting perception of self and demonstrates her nuanced understanding of national and religious identities.

4.1.3. "Living in Peace on the Margins of the Reich"[41] – Positioning the Narrated Self in Relation to the Jewish Community in Riesenburg

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Jewish families became socially and economically mobile, they also had new opportunities to establish relationships with their non-Jewish colleagues and neighbours.[42] The narrating self identifies Riesenburg as a quiet place where relations were "de bonne volonté [...] regardless of wealth, class or religion".[43] In the narrated past the Wolff family are presented as being on friendly terms with other Germans in the town, as they sat on the porch „exchanging greetings and gossip"[44] with passers-by. These exchanges continued during the winter months when the protagonist's parents would sit next to the open windows which had a good view of the street.[45] The fact that these friendly chats took place in the main street of the town reinforces the sense that the narrating self locates the young girl and her family at the centre of the community where she lived.

The narrating self acknowledges that West Prussia may have had a "simmering Polish question", however, "no incident in my early surroundings suggested that there was a *Jewish* question".[46] She represents Germany in the early twentieth century as „a place where Jewish

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[41] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.5.
[42] Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class*, pp.6-7.
[43] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.5.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid*,* p.4.
[46] Ibid*,* p.2. The narrating self in *Hindsight* seems to use the term to signify how the Jews dealt with anti-Semitism. In narrating time her understanding of the Jewish Question is informed by the treatment of the Jews during National Socialism. As we shall see, National Socialist ideology and terminology is frequently used to present childhood memories, i.e. pre- National Socialist, in the narrative.

people could live in peace and comfort and where they did well in business and the professions".[47] In narrating time, on the other hand, she reveals how "history speaks of an innate German anti-Semitism, viciously revivified in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries".[48] In the narration Adolf Stöcker and Ernst Jahn, Protestant preachers who promoted anti-Semitic views, stand for anti-Semitism even though these individuals were preaching during the 1870s – almost three decades before her birth.[49] Anti-Semitism did not disappear from Germany with the rights guaranteed to Jews following unification, as suggested by the use of the term "revivified" above. As Jews benefited from social, cultural and economic prosperity during the late nineteenth century many also faced new challenges. These challenges included integrating into Wilhelmine society. The growing prosperity of many middle-class Jewish families through expansion of trade and industrialisation meant that they were associated with capitalism. The economic crisis from 1873-1893 provided an impetus for anti-Semitism and led to the formation of new political parties during the 1880s and 1890s with anti-Semitic and anti-democratic views informing much of their agenda.[50] These included the formation of the *Christlichsoziale Partei* in 1878.[51] Furthermore, sympathy for anti-Semitic views and policies existed across the conservative parties. As the economic situation improved during the 1900s, the appeal of anti-Semitic parties declined and may explain why Germany is constructed by the narrating self as a tolerant place during her childhood. Nonetheless, the potential for conflict between Jews and other Germans seemed to be always present. Evolutionary theories based on race claimed to provide scientific proof that certain groups were inferior to others. Such theories provided an ideological basis for anti-Semitism and could easily be manipulated by those wishing to marginalise certain groups.

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[47] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.6.
[48] Ibid*,* p.2.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany,* p.264.
[51] Meyer, *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, pp.204-5.

Adolf Stöcker and Ernst Jahn, the figures cited in *Hindsight,* made use of theories purporting to the inferiority of Jews on racial grounds, as an integral part of their speeches. The first anti-Semitic political party, the *Christlichsoziale Partei*, was founded in Berlin. Its founder, Stöcker, had all the trappings of respectability which allowed such views to appear acceptable to all social classes.[52]

Against this historical backdrop, the narrating self identifies her home town as a "peaceful place for the "handful of Jewish families"[53] living there and where the influence of Stöcker and Jahn "had not penetrated".[54] It is depicted as a haven from the sort of anti-Semitic prejudice which existed elsewhere in Germany and positions the child self and indeed the other Jewish members of the community in the centre of that community, protected from what went on beyond the town's borders. The image of a haven for Jews is not dissimilar to the image of Riesenburg as a haven of Germanness against the surrounding Polish culture and way of life which is seemingly all around. Indeed we have seen how her narration presents us with an image of the narrated self belonging to a community with a very strong sense of Germanness precisely because of her town's position at the margins of the Reich. The narrating self also constructs, through the figure of Adolf Stöcker, the image of Berlin, the Capital of the Reich as a potentially hostile place for Jews since this is where his party had been founded and where he had preached. The narrating self indirectly constructs Riesenburg as a haven by virtue of the distance of the town from Berlin.

A comparison with Rahel Straus's narration of life in Karlsruhe in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* reveals similar assumptions of acceptance within the local community, emphasising her regional Baden sense of identity as well as her sense of Germanness.

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[52] Ernst G. Lowenthal, *Juden in Preussen: Biographisches Verzeichnis. Ein repräsentativer Querschnitt* (Berlin: Reimer, 1982), p.251.
[53] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.2.
[54] Ibid.

4.1.4. Defining Belonging through Regional Identity – The Narration of Karlsruhe in *Wir lebten in Deutschland*

Rahel Straus was raised in Karlsruhe, which had a strong regional identity of its own. It was separate from the Reich until 1871. The narrated self takes for granted her Baden roots, as exemplified through her veneration of the local ruler. The familiarity assumed by the narrated self for the Grand Duke of Karlsruhe as a symbol of Baden heritage and identity suggests that she felt part of that heritage and that regional community. The local ruler is described as, "unser geliebter Großherzog, der mit seinem gütigen Gesicht, seinem weißen Haar und Bart die Liebe nicht nur aller Kinder, sondern die Liebe seines ganzen Volkes besaß".[55] The personal possessive pronoun "unser" suggests the shared bond that the narrated self felt she had with the Grand Duke. In the description of his kindly face, white hair and beard the narrating self imbues him with the features of a father or grandfather. Of her school-friends, Christian and Jewish, the narrating self asserts: "wir waren ganz selbstverständlich begeisterte Deutsche mit großer Liebe fürs Vaterland, waren noch mehr begeistert für das Badnerland, das wir als die engere Heimat am besten kannten und das uns in der Person des allgeliebten Großherzogs Friedrich verkörpert schien (*sic*)".[56] The narrated self assumes a sense of German national allegiance, yet her sense of regional loyalties, symbolised by the local ruler, seems stronger in her narration. Certainly, Southern Germany had a tradition of strong regional allegiance, particularly to the local ruler.[57] German unification, which had been achieved in 1871, seventeen years before the birth of Straus in 1888, was still met with some

[55] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.11.
[56] Ibid*,* p.43.
[57] Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany,* p.180.

resentment[58]. Baden had a long tradition of separatism from the Reich and its identity was that of a State within a State, with its own customs. The sense of artificial German centrality which is so pronounced in *Hindsight* is absent from *Wir lebten in Deutschland.* The narrating self identifies regional identity as something positive which did not conflict with the child self's sense of belonging to a German national community. This suggests that in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narrating self attributes to the young self a level of tolerance towards non-German cultures and regional identities. This interpretation of the text is supported by the construction of Polish national identity.

In 1895, at the age of fifteen, Straus and her family visited Posen where her mother had been born and, where her relatives still lived. The narrating self observes that by that time Posen had become a German town with a beautiful parliament building, gardens and a concert hall. The market place is "die eigentlich polnischen Viertel der Stadt"[59], thus in contrast to *Hindsight* where the Poles are narrated as a marginal presence, here they are concentrated in the marketplace, which one would normally associate with the major thoroughfare and centre of the town. Nonetheless, her narration also suggests that the Polish population are a minority group in Posen and are encircled on all sides by signs of Germnanness, albeit in ways which seem neither threatening nor aggressive. In contrast to *Hindsight,* however, where the marginalized Polish population are revealed as living in run-down poverty, the Polish population in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* are associated by the narrating self with a strong sense of pride in their Polish identity and determination to preserve that identity through the Polish language and traditions. She illustrates this pride by narrating an incident on a tram ride. The conductor, "ein echter Preuße"[60] asked a respectably dressed man where he wished to travel. The conductor only received a reply from the man once he addressed him in Polish.

[58] Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany,* p.180.
[59] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.58.
[60] Ibid.

Her aunt told the young self that the man was a Polish aristocrat who did not speak a word of German on principal and that he was one of many to take that stance in the town. Her narration of continued "Spannungen und Feindseligkeiten"[61] in the town reveals a different image of a Polish community, which unlike that in *Hindsight,* is not content to allow its culture and language to be marginalised. In *Hindsight* the separateness reinforces the strong sense of German national belonging of the narrated self. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* no such superiority is attributed to the narrated self. She is seen to express neither admiration for the Polish aristocrat's stance nor criticism of it. The narrating self does, however, present us with a clear image of the significance of language as it creates a sense of national and individual cultural allegiance and of national belonging.

These sections have explored the different prominence given to images of national belonging in the texts under consideration although they also shared ideas of what their Germanness meant to them. This is despite clear differences of where authors positioned themselves in their respective Jewish communities.

Straus was the daughter of a Rabbi and after he died, when Straus was only a toddler, she and her siblings were raised as Orthodox Jews by their mother in Karlsruhe. Wolff, on the other hand was raised in an assimilated Jewish family which, while observing Sabbath and the Jewish New Year, was careful not to be associated with Orthodox Jews.[62] Indeed, Orthodox Jews are branded by her parents as redolent of the ghetto.[63] These different levels of religious observance impacted, as we shall see in subsequent sections, upon the ways in which the narrating selves revised over time what being Jewish meant to them. Christmas is not celebrated in the orthodox Straus household. It is, however, narrated as an important festival in the Wolff family calendar. At the same time, observance of certain Jewish religious rituals

[61] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.58.
[62] Ibid*,* p.26.
[63] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.26.

was becoming less important in many Jewish households.[64] The narration of Christmas celebrations in *Hindsight* reveals further ways in which the narrating self represents the young self as an assimilated and accepted member of the German community.

4.1.5. The Celebration of Christmas in the Context of the Secularisation of the Jewish Family

In *Hindsight* the narrating self presents the reader with happy memories of Christmas as a special time spent with the family and in the privacy of the home. It had become increasingly secularised in Germany[65] and by the nineteenth century was widely celebrated in the home among all sections of society. The rituals associated with this festival such as decorating the Christmas tree, giving presents, singing carols around the tree and eating Christmas dinner all reinforced this as a time for families.[66] By the late nineteenth century Christmas had become an important day for the German family, yet the observance of domestic practices and customs also helped to create a common feeling of national belonging.[67] This was no less the case for Jewish families in Germany.[68] In *Hindsight* the narrating self constructs a sense of equality between Jews and other Germans in their observance of this feast. The Christmas tree stands in the Wolff household, "just as beautifully decorated as those of the Christian neighbours".[69] Carols are not merely sung but indeed "rang out from our house"[70], reinforcing the enthusiasm and conviction with which Christmas was celebrated. It is significant,

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[64] Lowenthal, *Juden in Preussen*, p.248.
[65] Nancy R. Reagin, *Sweeping the German Nation. Domesticity and National Identity in Germany 1870-1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p.44.
[66] Charlotte Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.12.
[67] Reagin, *Sweeping the German Nation.* p.45.
[68] Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class,* p.76; George Mosse, 'The Secularisation of Jewish Theology', in *Masses and Man: Nationalist and Fascist Perceptions of Reality,* ed. by George Mosse (New York: H.Fertig, 1980), p. 258.
[69] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.12.
[70] Ibid.

however, that even though the various Christmas rituals present an image of private celebration, the narrating self positions the Wolff family as the object of attention for their non-Jewish neighbours and creates an image of how the world beyond the family witnesses the celebrations of this German-Jewish family. The detailed narration of similarities between her own German-Jewish family and non-Jewish families elsewhere reveals Christmas as a time for public articulation of national belonging.

There are clear similarities in the narratives in terms of how the narrated selves associate with a sense of Germanness. The celebration of Christmas does present us with one difference since Straus, the Orthodox Jew, does not observe this festival. Despite the differences in religious observance between Straus and Wolff, both are connected by the fact that the narrating selves in both narratives represent the child selves as more assimilated outside the home than at home with the family. This was also the place where Jewish families mediated between their Jewish and German identities.[71] These identities centred on values which were formulated within the intimate family sphere. Whilst to the outside world both are represented by the narrating selves as quite assimilated members of the community, within the home the narrating selves identify the young selves with a renegotiation of religious and political issues which come to inform their view of the world beyond the home. For the Orthodox Jewish family in *Wir lebten in Deutschland*, these values were directly connected to their religious faith. In the case of *Hindsight*, the narrating self represents observance of Jewish religious life at the Synagogue (i.e. outside the home) as a problematic matter for the young self, yet the celebration of the Sabbath each Friday evening is identified by the narrating self as a happy time. The secularisation of Jewish life as narrated in *Hindsight* reveals different ways adopted by liberal Jews of relating to their religion. The narrating self

[71] Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class,* p.25.

depicts the Sabbath, for example, as a ritual with little sense of how observing this custom relates to her sense of faith and this stands in contrast to the narration of Jewish festivals in Straus's account.

4.2. Narratives of Self in Relation to the Construction of Jewishness

4.2.1. The Narration of the Sabbath in the Context of the Secularisation of the Jewish Family

The narrating self in *Hindsight* positions the narrated self at the intersection of two worlds: assimilation and adaptation to German culture on the one hand and the observance of some Jewish rituals and customs on the other. In this respect, the narrating self identifies the young self and many other secular Jews in ways that suggest they were "agents"[72] as they defined what Jewishness meant to them in a country where they faced restrictions and resentment. They adapted to German cultural and social life by identifying aspects of Jewish life which were important to them and assimilating them into their daily routine. In *Hindsight*, the narration of the Sabbath illustrates these negotiations.

In *Hindsight* the narrating self represents the Sabbath as a "special day of the week to look forward to"[73], thus this appears to have been a happy day different to other events in the young self's weekly routine. On the Sabbath evening the narrated self, her parents and younger sister enjoy a meal with food which was "special and plentiful"[74] and a small glass of port afterwards. The table is decorated with silver candlesticks. Family togetherness has

[72] The term 'agent' is inspired by Marion Kaplan's use of the term in her introduction to *Jewish Daily Life in Germany 1618*-1945 (p.3). In this thesis it is defined as the construction of a sense of self and the subsequent negotiation and defence of this self-identity in response to social and political events.
[73] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.21.
[74] Ibid.

certainly been observed by scholars as an intrinsic part of Jewish religious practice, the one reinforcing the other.[75] The sharing of cooked food, as represented in the narrative, is a religious symbol within the Jewish faith of this togetherness and the Sabbath which centres on a special meal to be shared with the family, enables the affirmation of belonging to a close family group.[76] During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Judaism became increasingly secularised as many Jews sought to assimilate the cultural and social ideals of the non-Jewish community. At the same time, traditional observance of certain Jewish religious rituals became less important in many Jewish households.[77] The narration of the Sabbath in this particular household, which the narrated self refers to as a liberal and secular Jewish home, indicates that although the custom is narrated as a positive time for the family, the rituals which were observed were not particular to Judaism and, as we shall see, were little different from those observed in Christian households where Sunday complete with Sunday roast was also a time of family celebration.

The mother is the active person in the description because it is she who prepares the special meal, places the candlesticks on the table and lights the candles. It is the mother who preserved Jewish religious and cultural identity even though the family as a general rule did not practice other Jewish rituals. The memoirs of many women across a range of historical periods indicate that it was the women of the family who upheld the tradition of observing certain festivals in the Jewish calendar as well as particular rituals and foods in the home[78].

Nonetheless, it should also be recognised that Judaism was not the only religion where women have and indeed still do take charge of domestic religious rituals. In many Christian homes it has been the mother who prepares Christmas dinner and indeed the Sunday roast.

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[75] Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class,* p.75.
[76] Esther Goody, *Contexts of Kinship* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1973), cited in, Kaplan , *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class* p.76.
[77] Lowenthal, *Juden in Preussen*, p. 48.
[78] Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class,* p.75; Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany,* p.237.

The stress which Kaplan places on the mother as the person who seems to organise religious and seasonal festivities in the household should, therefore, be placed in the context of role distributions in other German families.[79] Wolff's narrative suggests that whilst Jewish women appeared to be the main agents of the family's continued observance of certain Jewish customs, they were also actively involved in assimilating German Christian festivals. In Wolff's text, it is the mother who prepares the Christmas dinner, a non-Jewish meal.

The narrating self depicts the Sabbath as a happy time for the narrated self even if she does not associate it with a time of religious affirmation. In narrating time the Sabbath does, however, allow her to renegotiate her sense of belonging within the German national community. Kaplan argues that the home was the place where Jewish families mediated between their German and Jewish identities.[80] There is no indication that the narrated self had associated observance of the Sabbath as a part of her sense of self which needed to be mediated. She was also not made to feel that in observing this Jewish custom, she also had to defend her German credentials. In narrating time, however, the observance of this custom is presented quite defensively by the narrating self: it is in no way to detract from the family's sense of Germanness. The narrating self asserts that, "in spite of keeping to this Jewish custom, we thought of ourselves as Germans, and of Germany as our homeland.[81] She reconstructs her sense of self in terms of a dichotomy. Whilst she positions the child self at the centre of the German community, in narrating time the Sabbath prompts the self to reposition that child self to the margins of that community. It is significant that this dichotomy is juxtaposed in her narration with a memory of childhood as a time of freedom of movement since, "in the world of our small town I could walk anywhere alone [...] no limit was set to my

[79] Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany,* p.245.
[80] Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class,* p.25.
[81] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.21.

wish to explore the world around me".[82] The narrating self constructs an image of her home-town as a place where she was free to come and go without any threat to her safety. In this respect she locates the narrated self in a protected position at the centre of the community. We have also already explored how the father's profession as a corn merchant meant that he must have been an important figure in this small town. In trading with local landowners he would also have provided employment for the local people. The narrating self positions her family at the centre of the local community; economically, professionally and socially. The Jewish Sabbath may be observed but it is done so in a secularised context and in such a way so as not to detract from the family's sense of belonging to the German community. This is reinforced by the absence of any mention of other Jewish families observing the Sabbath elsewhere in the town. The narrating self does not associate this particular Jewish custom with creating a shared feeling of belonging to a Jewish community.

In *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* as one may expect of an Orthodox household, prominence is given in the narration to the religious rituals which were observed during the Sabbath. In this respect, there is a stronger sense in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* than in *Hindsight* that the narrated self's routine was planned in careful consideration of her religious beliefs. The day was observed as a strict day of rest. All homework and household chores had to be completed before Friday evening[83]. The narrating self emphasises the Sabbath as a happy time to be spent at home. The image of the custom as, "ein Fest durch Spiel und Geselligkeit"[84] suggests similarities with the narration of the Sabbath in *Hindsight*. Indeed, this is a time for special treats such as her mother's special Sabbath biscuits as well as being the one time in the week when she could read and play games to her heart's content.[85]

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[82] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.21.
[83] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.45.
[84] Ibid*,* p.3.
[85] Ibid*,* p.45.

Stronger emphasis is therefore placed by the narrating self on the Sabbath as a time of family togetherness than as a time of religious affirmation and in this respect there are unexpected similarities with the secular Jewish household in *Hindsight*.

As in *Hindsight,* the narrating self makes a connection between the observance of Jewish customs and the response of the non-Jewish community. She reveals how her Jewish identity had to be mediated alongside her German identity and this mediation took place as early as primary school since she was obliged to attend school on Saturday as was then the norm for schoolchildren. The narrating self constructs a tolerant image of the primary school community where teachers are particularly considerate towards the Jewish pupils and ensure that important exams never take place on a Saturday.[86] Similarly, since household chores were forbidden on the Sabbath, domestic science classes were also scheduled for another day in the school week and several non-Jewish pupils were always willing to carry the subject's schoolbooks for her.[87] The narrating self identifies that she was in a minority community of Jewish children within the school. She does not position the young girl on the margins of that school community. In this respect the narrating self reveals how the other school children and teachers created a space not only to practically assist the young girl in her observance of Jewish customs, school is also constructed as a place where the other children could ask the narrated self questions about Judaism. An image is constructed by the narrating self of her young classmates' interest in Judaism. She represents the narrated self as the first port of call for all their questions on the subject.[88] The narrating self identifies the young self as confident in her response to their questions thus locating her at the centre of this particular community. The school is narrated in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* as a metaphor for tolerance, reason and

[86] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland*, p.45.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid, p.41.

humanity[89] - cornerstones of the Enlightenment. The school community is, as we have seen in chapter three, not only constructed by the narrated self as a place of religious tolerance, it is also constructed as a place where the education of girls is valued by the teachers and where, in the case of the *Mädchengymnasium*, young women are encouraged to fulfil their academic potential and to aspire to a university education and a career. In this respect, the school experience is represented by the narrating self as decisive in terms of how the child self experiences her gender and her sense of who she is in national and religious terms. School is constructed by the narrating self as a progressive place which provided opportunities for Jewish women, who suffered discrimination in Germany because of their gender and their religion. She identifies school as a model for showing the narrated self's mediation of her wish to achieve acceptance in the German community alongside her wish to preserve her sense of Jewishness. It is constructed in narrating time as a site where her Germanness and her Jewishness intersect as well as a place which facilitates the mediation of different aspects of her sense of self. It is not constructed in this context as a place which leads the narrating self to question the validity of this dual identity.

When the narrating self thinks back to her school days and the concessions which her teachers and classmates made in consideration of the Sabbath, "wundere ich mich, wie groβ dies Entgegenkommen war und wie selbstverständlich wir es hinnahmen".[90] When the school community is interpreted in narrating time the self tentatively questions having taken her experiences at school for granted. She does not, however, question her sense of belonging to the German community epitomised in the small example of the classroom. The significant distinction between *Hindsight* and *Wir lebten in Deutschland* which is highlighted by the narration of the Sabbath concerns the differences which are revealed in terms of how the past

[89] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.41.
[90] Ibid*,* p.42.

is interpreted. The narrating self in *Hindsight* uses the Sabbath as an instance to reveal her earlier belief that she had belonged at the centre of the German community as naive and invalid. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narrating self does not reconstruct the Sabbath as a prompt to re-evaluate her earlier sense of acceptance in the narrated past. Indeed, she brings together the secular community of the school with her religious sense of belonging in the home and she never deconstructs her position within these different communities.

4.2.2. Defining Identities by Disassociation with Judaism – The Narration of the Synagogue

In *Hindsight* religious observance outside the home is narrated in ways that suggest the narrated self had a limited knowledge of Jewish religious traditions. It also suggests that she was unable to develop a meaningful relationship with the religion. Apart from the Sabbath, Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah [Jewish New Year] were the only Jewish festivals observed by the Wolff family. Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah were also the only times that the family went to Synagogue. In the Jewish religion Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah are times for private thought; of solemn reflection on the past year through a period of fasting and of expressing hopes and aspirations for the future.[91] In *Hindsight,* however, the narrating self does not comment on the significance of these events in the Jewish calendar nor does she associate the customs surrounding these festivals with inspiring in her much personal reflection during childhood. Indeed, she associates the experience of public worship with negative aspects of Judaism.

[91] Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *Judaism* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp.87-9.

The narrating self attributes her earlier inability to develop a meaningful relationship with the Jewish religion to the sense of exclusion that she felt at the Synagogue. She associates this sense of exclusion with her gender because as a girl she must be separated from the male members of the congregation in the gallery with the women. She associates this physical separation of the congregation with the discrimination of the women there and with an inability to take part in the religious service.[92] She defines herself by her liminal position as a woman within Judaism, criticising a religion which positions women below men and treats them like "second class citizens of God".[93] The Synagogue is depicted as a place where women are not able to participate in religious and spiritual worship. The narrating self questions in turn whether even the men can ever feel belonging within the Synagogue as a religious community when, despite attending the services on the main floor, they are unable to understand Hebrew.[94] She then attributes the "hollow holiness"[95] of the service to their lack of understanding.

It is not only the lack of spiritual community that the narrating self associates with the Synagogue but also the absence of an intellectual and social community. She patronizes the women in the gallery who spend the service "chatting about children, house and clothes, and parading their fineries to one another".[96] Indeed, she patronizes the triviality of their conversation, just as she patronizes the men for their inability to understand the service. In the narration the young girl positions herself apart from the other people at the Synagogue. She has decided for herself that she does not wish to belong to the religious community at the Synagogue as she criticises the rituals there as meaningless and irrelevant to her. At the age of sixteen the narrated self is depicted vowing never to return to the Synagogue, marking an

[92] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.46.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid, pp.47-8.
[95] Ibid, p.48.
[96] Ibid, p.47.

abrupt end to her participation in Jewish religious life and no further mention of Jewish rituals or customs is made in the text. In the narration the sixteen year old self leaves the Synagogue, labelling herself a "renegade" [97], thus taking control of her sense of where she belongs, apparently without the influence of anyone else. The narrating and narrated selves merge in the narration since neither is able to identify with either a spiritual or a social community there.

In narrating time she defines the attendance at the Synagogue as alien, not only to many Jews but also to many non-Jews.[98] She identifies how Jewish people were viewed as a "foreign body"[99] because of their attendance at Synagogue. She defines herself in narrating time by her separation from the religious customs taking place at the Synagogue and from the social community there. She also takes the opportunity to reflect on the position of the other Jews attending Synagogue who believed they were accepted in Germany. She defines all Jews by their marginal position within the German community.

The narration of *Hindsight* indicates that neither narrative self was able to develop a meaningful relationship with Jewish religious life. Indeed, in narrated time the young girl identifies Christianity[100] as the source of the emotional and spiritual warmth which she finds is lacking in Jewish places of worship. It should be noted that the young self's understanding of Christianity is attributed to stories she heard second-hand from her friends, nonetheless it is these stories which highlight to her the "sense of deprivation"[101] that she finds in Judaism. She focuses on certain messages of the Bible stories which seem attractive to her, particularly that Jesus was "the Saviour of the world, who loved everybody, particularly children".[102] She

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[97] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.48.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid.
[100] The narrated self uses this single term without making a distinction between Protestantism and Catholicism.
[101] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.7.
[102] Ibid.

identifies the figure of Jesus as embodying safety and protection. In the narrative the young self identifies school as a place where she could test the role religion should play in her sense of self and where she could decide that Judaism was not for her. It is here that the young girl is able to reframe what religion should mean to her and where she decides that faith does not necessarily entail formal worship in a particular place but rather should be based on emotional concerns. It is not clear whether the family provides a place where the young girl discusses her religious views with her parents. The narration indicates that the narrated self neither sought nor required the guidance of others on this matter but rather formulated and later redefined her views about religion alone.

4.2.3. "Eine tiefe Verbundenheit zwischen den Juden der ganzen Welt" - The Narration of Passover in the Orthodox Jewish Household and the Construction of Separateness within the Jewish Religious Community

In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* school is narrated as a place where the young girl's German sense of self and Jewish sense of self intersect in positive and harmonious ways. The narrating and narrated selves come together in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* through depicting the classroom as a place where the young girl felt happy and accepted at the centre of the German community.[103] In narrated and narrating time it is a place where she was not obliged to compromise her Orthodox religious practices. However, the narrated self identifies the specific Jewish festival of Passover as a time when she refines her sense of belonging to the German community, and she does so during every Passover from the age of ten.[104] The Passover feast is a celebration of freedom in the Jewish calendar but it is also a time to

[103] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.41.
[104] Ibid*,* p.49.

remember the suffering of Jews in Biblical history.[105] In Exodus the Israelites were enslaved by the Egyptians and forced to build their cities. The Passover feast commemorates the liberation of the Israelites who were led to freedom by Moses. The festival is observed with a family dinner, the Seder meal, where the story of the Israelites' flight is told. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the young girl associates the sight of the Seder table and of hearing the stories from the Book of Exodus with a sense of being closer to God[106] but also with a sense that she is in awe of his spiritual power. The narrated self thus identifies Passover as a time of spiritual communion with God.

Beyond this experience Passover is characterised in the narration as a time when the narated self feels the presence of many generations of Jews, thus reinforcing "eine tiefe Verbundenheit [, die] bestand zwischen den Juden der ganzen Welt, daß wir ein Volk waren mit eigener Tradition, eigener Geschichte, eigener Religion".[107] In narrated time the Jewish community is constructed as one which spans generations as well as different locations – they are people that the young girl did not know but with whom she nevertheless feels an innate connection. She homogenises the Jewish community as a "Volk" connected by a shared ethnic and cultural heritage. There is no indication in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* that Straus was familiar with Martin Buber's writing on Zionism but it is clear that the young self shares his view that Jewishness was not only a religious denomination but also an innate sense of self based on belonging to a community of descent.[108] Indeed, she constructs Passover as a time that reveals how for her the Jewish community is the only viable community where she feels able to belong. In her narration she gives prominence to the dangers potentially facing

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[105] Cohn-Sherbok, *Judaism*, p.35.
[106] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.49.
[107] Ibid*,* p.154.
[108] Jehuda Reinharz, *Fatherland or Promised Land – The Dilemma of the German-Jew 1893-1914* (Michigan: Michigan University Press, 1975), pp.148-9; Martin Buber, *Der Jude und sein Judentum: Gesammelte Aufsätze und Reden* (Cologne: J. Melzer Verlag, 1963), p.9.

Jews in Germany and she attributes awareness of the dangers to herself as a young girl in narrated time.[109] She grew up convinced that Jews were destined to share in a long history of persecution.[110] It is credible that a child with an Orthodox upbringing should be made aware of the Bible stories and should potentially make connections between the Bible stories which are integral to Passover and her own surroundings. The narrating self seems to take for granted, however, the level of introspection which the young girl apparently undertakes.

Indeed, it is claimed by Kaplan that many Jews did re-interpret the Old Testament and Jewish festivals as a response to persecution during National Socialism.[111] *Wir lebten in Deutschland* was written after Straus had left Germany in 1933. Kaplan claims that a new hierarchy of Jewish customs was created in response to persecution during National Socialism. Customs which commemorated persecution and suffering, such as Passover and Purim, took on new significance.[112] All the Jewish festivals are narrated in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* yet it is Passover which prompts deeper reflection on her sense of belonging within the Jewish community and how that community then relates to the community she finds in the secular context of school.

The narration of Passover demonstrates some bold claims which are made to understanding truth. In contrast to the narrative of the Dreyfus Affair in which the narrating self expresses regret that she had not recognised danger during her childhood, in the Passover episode the narrating self makes claims to her complete recognition, whilst still a young child, of the potential for Jews to suffer persecution in Germany. The methodology of analysing texts on different narrative levels offers a framework for examining shifts in perception, within narrated time, and indeed for examining the multiple self interpretations

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[109] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.49.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany*, p.329.
[112] Ibid.

which reflect how individuals construct their sense of who they are in the narrating present. In the following quotation the narrated self expresses her association of Passover with the potential dangers for Jews in Germany.

> Vielleicht kam es von diesen Sederabenden, daß ich als Kind schon in dem damals so friedlich aussehenden Deutschland es immer für möglich hielt und immer erwartete, daß auch für uns der Tag kommen könnte, an dem das alte Judenschicksal: Verfolgung, Austreibung, Not und Tod, uns treffen würde.[113]

The narration of Passover demonstrates how narrative levels are conflated in several respects. It is the narrated self as a child, who claims to recognise the potential for Jews to experience persecution in Germany. In childhood she makes a bold claim to seeing and understanding the potential for anti-Semitism to develop in her native country. Through her claims the narrated self also conflates the experiences of Jews in biblical history with the Germany of her childhood. Her narrative demonstrates the construction in narrated time of a coherent and omniscient self who sees and understands the world around and whose claims to 'already' recognising danger locates her in a separate position to everyone else and specifically to other Jews. Indeed the narrated self refers to generations of Jews connected across time by the observance of Passover yet in narrated time there are few references to specific individuals and this heightens the sense that the young self is alone in her apparent comprehension of the dangers. The absence of references to other people suggests that the narrated self is capable of a level of critical reflection that others are not. The construction of a childhood self who appears to be fully cognisant of the world around and coherent in her expression of the potential dangers, is to suggest a 'unified self', of continuity between narrated time and narrating time. The model of the unified self is the focal point for the narrative structure that

[113] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.49.

the narrating self finds to make sense of her world. The concept of a unified self is also detectible in her negotiation of the secular world of school, alongside her observance of Jewish customs.

In the context of Jewish observance in her daily life the narrated self frequently makes the analogy of moving between two worlds.[114] She attests to the different values of these worlds without thematising the difficulties of moving between these two worlds and this seems surprising considering her narrative of Passover and the strong spiritual sense of Jewishness which this festival prompts in her discussion about Jewish community. The following quotation reflects how German life and Jewish life are constructed in her narrative.

> So wuchsen wir in einem ganz bewußten Doppelleben auf. Auf der einen Seite Schule und deutsche Volksgemeinschaft, auf der anderen Seite das Haus und das Leben in der jüdischen Gemeinschaft. Selten überschnitten sie sich.[115]

Her narrative demonstrates how the narrating self thematises the duality of her sense of identity and of her sense of belonging to a German community and to a Jewish community. In her narrative of Passover the narrated self gives prominence to her anticipation of persecution in Germany and she does so without questioning her sense of belonging there. In the quotation above different communities are brought together in narrating time without questioning the apparent gaps between them. In the following quotation the narrating self depicts a similarly harmonious picture of how different worlds were brought together during her childhood.

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[114] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.51.
[115] Ibid, p.44.

> So war unser Jahr im Rhythmus des jüdischen Lebens voll erfüllt, im jüdischen Kreis mit jüdischen Freunden – und daneben lebte das bürgerliche Jahr mit seinen Freuden, seiner Schule, seinen Feiertagen und seinen Ferien.[116]

The articulation of her dual identities has further resonance with the autobiographical model of a unified self. The image of a rhythm suggests congruity and circularity of customs regularly observed without interruption. There is also a sense that the narrated self was able to lead a completely fulfilled religious life and that this life could flow alongside her secular life of friendships, schooldays and holidays. Her narrative suggests coherence and continuity and it appears that in narrating time the self gives prominence to her harmonious childhood in Germany, a place where she felt she belonged and was accepted. The narrating self brings together her multiple aspects of self in a way that suggests her mastery of the narrative. The narration of the Dreyfus Affair and Passover suggests certain contradictions between her sense of being German and being Jewish. There are fluctuations between her belief that, on the one hand, as a young girl she ought to have been more aware of the dangers facing Jews in France, and on the other hand her claim in the Passover episode that she already recognised the dangers as a little girl. The multiple narrative stances indicated by the narration of Passover and the Dreyfus Affair demonstrate the fluctuation of identities and the means by which those identities are negotiated in the text. Perceptions of self in relation to Jewishness also shift in *Hindsight* but the narrative points at which those shifts take place are defined far more clearly in the narration. There is a clearer distinction between perceptions of self in narrated time and the complete deconstruction of those perceptions in the narrating present. In the narration of dual identity in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narrative demonstrates that apparent contradictions are arranged in a unified way without prompting a fundamental

[116] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.54.

revision of her sense of belonging in Germany. This model of the unified self which is suggested by the narrative structure suggests the mastery of the narrating self over her narrative. Claims to omniscience and specifically to understanding the truth concerning the position of Jews in Germany are also incorporated by the narrated self in her depiction of Zionism.

The narrating self identifies the narrated self's growing interest in Zionism as a response to the Dreyfus Affair, which she followed in the newspapers from the age of thirteen.[117] In the text her childhood depictions of the Zionism movement are located next to her narration of the Dreyfus Affair and the narration of Passover, points which prompt reflection on her identification with Jewishness in relation to Germany. When *Der Judenstaat* by Theodor Herzl was published in 1896 she associated it with "all unser Hoffen, all unsere Sehnsucht, nicht mehr nur traumhaft erschaut, sondern geformt und gestaltet, ein Weg, den man man gehen konnte".[118] Straus read this when it was published at the age of sixteen.[119] Herzl promoted a Jewish State as the solution to the problem of discrimination and hostility towards Jews. The publication of the book was divisive amongst the Jewish community in Germany and the splits that ensued are thematised by the narrating self.[120] Some Jewish people regarded it with enthusiasm and were inspired to organize fundraising initiatives for the movement.[121] Straus belonged to this group. Other Jewish people opposed the ideas promoted by Herzl and feared that the promotion of a Jewish State would increase anti-Semitism and threaten their efforts to assimilate. In narrating time, the self claims to have read the book with a more critical eye[122], suggesting that she detected aspects which she had not

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[117] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.78.
[118] Ibid, p.79.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Meyer, *German-Jewish History in Modern Times,* p.292.
[122] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.79.

noted previously. She does not, however, explain what this entailed. The narrating self represents *Der Judenstaat* as an authority for the young self which gave her family a goal, yet this goal is not explicitly defined. During Passover the narrated self makes the following observation of her situation in Germany. She asserts, wir hatten nie mehr Ruhe gefunden, und von hier floß die zweite Quelle zum Strome des Zionismus. Wir müssen wieder Ruhe finden, Ruhe in der alten Heimat".[123] The term "Heimat" is associated by the young girl with an imaginary haven and not necessarily with a specific territory where "Heimat" should be understood as a nation. In her narration of Zionism she presents a unified and cohesive sense of self. She positions herself in a Zionist nationalist community and does not question the gap between her position in this community and her self-identification with a German community, a community within which she acculturates. Yet this was not unique to Straus. Buber's speeches found widespread support among assimilated young Zionists who were trying to deal with their sense of self as German-Jews.[124] It should be noted, however, that it was not until 1932/33 that the narrating self represents emigration to Palestine as the firm goal of the narrated self, and by then National Socialism was gaining ground and Jews were facing increasing hostility. During the late 1890s and early 1900s, however, the goal of establishing a Jewish State in Palestine is associated by the narrated self as a safe place for East European Jews as a refuge from the pogroms then taking place in Poland and Russia. In the narration the narrated self identifies Palestine as a potential place of safety and protection for Jews but not where she and her family intend to live, instead she continues to identify Germany as their "Heimat".[125] It is interesting that "Heimat" is invoked by the narrated self as a homeland for other Jews. In his article "Zionism and the Rhetoric of Jewish Self-Hatred" Paul Reitter argues that many philanthropic Zionist Jews who donated to Jewish causes in Palestine,

[123] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.51.
[124] Reinharz, *Fatherland or Promised Land*, p.149.
[125] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.154.

identified a Jewish State as an act of solidarity with other Jews but many also wished to distance themselves from groups of Jews whom they saw as conspicuous as they did not acculturate.[126]

Straus continued to support Zionism when she was an adult. In narrating time the self reveals how her support of Zionism complicated her relations with non-Zionist Jews[127]. The following passage encapsulates the tensions which her Zionist beliefs prompted between herself and other Jews.

> Die jüdischen Freunde standen der Idee [Zionism] ärgerlich, weil sie das Judesein so stark betonte, [...] und gefährlich, weil man undeutsch, unpatriotisch erscheinen konnte. Es war zuzugeben, daß der Zionismus einen Schlag bedeutete für alle die, die an ein völliges Aufgehen in die deutsche Umwelt glaubten. Darum wurde der Kampf gegen uns vom ersten Augenblick gehässig geführt. Man war gesellschaftlich halb geächtet, man denunzierte uns als 'volksfremd'.[128]

The language in this passage is belligerent indicating the strength of feeling on the subject of Zionism amongst assimilated Jews. The narrated self splits apart the homogeneous Jewish community which she had apparently assumed in her reference to the Jews as a "Volk" during Passover. She attributes this split to her interest in Jewish nationalism. Her narrative demonstrates that there are shifts in narrated time in terms of how other Jews regard her family because of their Zionist convictions. It is clear from this passage that the concept of a single Jewish identity is dismantled in narrated time. The use of the term "volksfremd" is interesting as it demonstrates the conviction with which many Jews assumed their sense of belonging and the terminology they adopted to define this sense of communality. Indeed, her

[126] Reitter, 'Zionism and the Rhetoric of Jewish Self-Hatred', *Germanic Review* 83 (4) (2008), pp.343-363: 346.
[127] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.79.
[128] Ibid*,* pp.79-80.

use of speech marks around the term suggests that she is critical of such homogenising terminology and the concepts behind it, particularly of the emphasis that other Jews placed on assimilation and an assumption that this necessarily fostered belonging and acceptance. She also explains how Zionists were viewed by other Jews in Munich as, "die Störenfriede"[129], thus positioning them on the margins of the social community. Indeed, her narration emphasises that anti-Jewish sentiments could exist within the Jewish community and not only amongst anti-Semites. Her narration also gives prominence to the splits between Jews who were concerned to assimilate and other Jews who were unconvinced that assimilation would protect them from anti-Semitism. The narrating self claims that the views of many Jews of her acquaintance in Munich aligned with the tenets of the *Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens* (CV) of which her uncle was a founding member.[130] This organisation identified Jewishness as a community of religion and not a community of descent. The organisation emphasised its commitment to German culture but was also committed to preserving Jewish culture and traditions.[131] Her narrative demonstrates that other Jews perceived a tension between support for Zionism and allegiance to Germany. The narrated self asserts that no such tension existed for her.

> Trotz der Liebe zur Heimat – den Deutschland war uns Heimat – trotz des Erfülltseins mit deutscher Kultur – wir lebten ganz in ihr – trotzdem die deutsche Sprache unser einziges Ausdrucksmittel war und immer bleiben würde, doch darum wußten, daß es ein Judenschicksal gab, dem seit Jahrtausenden kein Teil des jüdischen Volkes entgangen war; daß eine tiefe Verbundenheit bestand zwischen den Juden der ganzen Welt".[132]

[129] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.154.
[130] Ibid*,* p.62.
[131] Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany,* p.249.
[132] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.154.

The narrated self brings together her Zionism and her cultural allegiance to Germany within this passage and the effect is to harmonise conflicting ideas concerning belonging. She brings together interests that to other Jews appear incongruous within a unified model of self. She constructs awareness of Jewish separateness that is self chosen and that stems from the sense of faith that is cherished during Passover and other Jewish festivals. Within that same autobiographical model she preserves her sense of Germanness through the German language and culture. The harmonious duality that she constructs here seems to be contradicted by her concern that too much assimilation with German life can be dangerous.

In narrating time she reflects further upon the concern of other Jews to assimilate and concludes that they associated assimilation with finding acceptance, belonging and a buffer against anti-Semitism.[133] She criticises those Jews who were so concerned with assimilating into German society that they occupied the most prominent positions in public life for example as Ministers and as civil servants. She associates this with the start of the "jüdischen Katastrophe".[134] Her concern with public visibility is also narrated in *Hindsight*. The narrated self, as seen in Chapter Three, is depicted avoiding a directorial position at the family planning clinic. She is depicted occupying a deputy role, "the protected second position"[135], a less prominent place. She does not attribute this less prominent place to her religion as in *Wir lebten in Deutschland*. Nonetheless, both narratives demonstrate that on different levels prominence and visibility are significant in formulating a sense of self and that frequently those perceptions of self can fluctuate.

The narration of Jewishness in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* and in *Hindsight* demonstrates the aspects by which the narrated selves define their sense of being Jewish are more differentiated than assumed by Harriet Pass Freidenreich who has categorised Jewish

[133] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.154.
[134] Ibid*,* p.225.
[135] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.98.

women by levels of religious observance.[136] Indeed, my analyses demonstrate the impossibility of referring to a Jewish community in a holistic sense and indeed without investigating the texts on different levels. The question of assimilation crystallises tensions amongst the Jewish narrated selves in terms of how they each differentiate their sense of being Jewish.

4.2.4. "A Certain Separateness between Jews and Gentiles was Self-Chosen"[137]: Reflections on Assimilation in *Hindsight*

The narrated self identifies her sense of being a "German-Jew living in peace with her neighbours" as part of her daily life that she and her family take for granted.[138] As we have already examined, her sense of self is assumed in narrated time to encompass multiple elements, her religious denomination and her sense of German allegiance and observance of German customs. Through her narration she identifies her town as a place where Jews could live in peace and comfort and where they were able to do well in business and in the professions.[139] However, the narrated self juxtaposes this harmonious image of life in her town that she constructs with a sense of "separateness"[140] in relations between Jews and non-Jews. She assumes this to be "self-chosen as no sign of anti-Semitism reared its ugly head in my early surroundings".[141] The narrated self narrates conflicting images of a town community that is tolerant of Jews, and her subsequent dismantlement of that sense of community. She identifies the interaction between Jewish people and others in terms of a hierarchy. The family

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[136] Pass Freidenreich, *Female, Jewish and Educated*, p.xx.
[137] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.6.
[138] Ibid, p.7.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid, p.6.
[141] Ibid.

was at the top, "a closely knit community bound together by mutual help and affection".[142]The narrating self situates friendships with other Jews in second place, "redolent of pleasant family ties but on a rather casual level".[143] She positions relations with non-Jews in the lowest position. They never extend beyond acquaintances.[144] The narrating self assumes this hierarchical model is general to all Jewish people, which suggests a level of arrogance. She locates her family, therefore, in an elite position and assumes that they are able to opt for this position as opposed to being marginalised. She identifies how Jewish people shift voluntarily between the different familial and social groups she has constructed.

After fleeing Germany for France in 1933 the narrated self reframes her sense of Jewishness as a fixed identity that is imposed on her through National Socialism. She dismantles her sense of Germanness and replaces it with a sense of belonging to a Jewish community. She invokes racialist terminology in her definition of this Jewish community. She connects German-Jews in essentialist terms as a "race"[145] connected through an "emotional affinity, which drew them together"[146] and defines this affinity as a "racial bond".[147] The narrated self associates the persecution and hatred which had driven them in ghettos with the almost incestuous marriages that "preserved a racial identity".[148] The narrated self dismantles assimilation assuming that the place where they live is a "host country"[149] rather than a homeland. She associates being Jewish with impermanence and rootlessness and implicitly criticises her earlier assumptions that being recognised as an equal citizen assumes a level of social acceptance. She replaces her sense of belonging to the German community as flawed and invalid and replaces this with a sense of identity based on belonging to a

[142] Wolff, *Hindsight*, p.6.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid.

'Schicksalsgemeinschaft'.[150] She defines the Jewish community as based on historical suffering and suffering in the present. Her understanding of a Jewish community is not based on spiritual or political belief, yet it still suggests a community of the blood and an ancestral community and thus has similarities with the narration of Passover in *Wir lebten in Deutschland*. During her exile in France the narrated self in *Hindsight* redefines her position in communities in ways that distinguish between false ideas of belonging and claims to the 'truth' about how things actually stood. She engages with her experiences during National Socialism through polarising Jews and non-Jews. Her notion of a single truth concerning Jewish identity is exclusively informed by the experience of persecution and the anticipation of future persecution. Her sense of self is predicated on her belief that by race she is Jewish and she articulates that racial identity as a new identity position, a new unified self to replace the old unified self that took Germanness for granted.

The Jewish community that the self comes to identify with is not, however, a community with which she identifies on a spiritual, cultural or social level. It is not a community to which she opts to belong because her parents insist she attends Synagogue on High Holy days. Instead of criticising the Germans for their treatment of Jewish people the narrating self criticises Jews for their eagerness to assimilate and their failure to see what she refers to as the 'truth' about the futility of such efforts and, "their lack of collective identity".[151] As in *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* the narrating self criticises assimilation as dangerous, chastising Jews who in their efforts to belong had, "pushed themselves"[152] into prominent positions in public life. The narrating self identifies the less visible margins as the safer position for the German-Jewish community. In evaluating the past the self does not

[150] Herlinde Koebl, *Jüdische Portraits: Photographien und Interviews* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1989), p. 256.
[151] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.137.
[152] Ibid, p.138.

present herself as victim but rather as an agent who has awakened to the way things actually stood. The narrating self positions herself in control, having abandoned her "self-protective blinkers".[153] She redefines her sense of self in ways that make use of community as a point of navigation. As she does not associate spiritual or emotional union with a Jewish community she does, however, not shift from her earlier sense of non-belonging at the Synagogue.

In narrating time the self ascribes certain features and mannerisms to Jewish people and thus claims to be able to detect a Jew regardless of whichever country s/he comes from.[154] With her blonde hair and blue eyes Wolff's mother could be mistaken for a German housewife[155], were it not for her "Jewish posture and expressions".[156] The narrating self polarises behavioural patterns into "Jewish" and "unJewish"[157] and in doing so draws on stereotypes of Jews such as the preoccupation of her family with money exemplified by expressions of endearment such as "Goldchen".[158] The narrating self employs labels which suggest she internalises stereotypes about a preoccupation with money. These labels appear derogatory because they are the same labels that could be applied by anti-Semites. In narrating time it is in relation to derogatory stereotypes that she positions herself within the Jewish community. Points of self-identification which seem contradictory are arranged in a unified way, within a single racial concept of what it means to be Jewish.

[153] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.58.
[154] Ibid, p.22.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Ibid, p.13.

4.3. Conclusions

The intricate ways that self is articulated in these texts resists attempts to categorise these individuals in the ways that Pass Freidenreich puts forward. Indeed, her methodology does not capture the fact that there is no single fixed point of definition for feeling a sense of German and feeling a sense of Jewish identity. Some labelling is necessary for the practical purposes of expression, i.e. 'German', 'Jewish' but the term 'German-Jew' is not appropriate here because it conflates different levels of self-definition. The categorisations put forward by Pass Freidenreich suggest that the individuals defined themselves by their relationship to Judaism as a religious denomination whereas I have found it more fruitful to examine how being German and being Jewish is given prominence in the narration and where these identifications intersect.

The differentiation of narrative levels is particularly fruitful in analysing the narration of constructing a sense of being German and Jewish, because it reveals how the narrated selves attempt to make sense of the world around them and how they may refine their conclusions in narrating time. The notion of belonging to communities is as important in the narrating present as in the narrated past as a way of defining and refining identity. In *Hindsight* the narrating self replaces her sense of belonging to a German national community with a second position, that of the "International Jew", whose Jewishness transcends national boundaries. It is through her deconstruction of her assimilated position that she articulates her experiences of National Socialism. The narrating self differentiates between her narrated position and her narrating position with respect to Germany as Pass Freidenreich partly anticipates of the author, yet not in the ways Pass Freidenreich assumes. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the issue of defining and refining being German and Jewish is more

differentiated than in *Hindsight*. Here there are considerable fluctuations in the construction of a sense of belonging. In her narration of the Dreyfus Affair the narrating self expresses regret at not recognising the danger faced by Jews. Her narrative in this respect stands in contrast to the depiction of Passover. She constructs her sense of belonging to a social Jewish community and to a religious community, to a community of fate and to the Zionist community and she attributes to her position within these communities a sense of exclusive omniscience, that she alone recognises that one day Germany not be a safe place for Jews. In other passages she depicts the rhythm of Jewish customs which were observed alongside secular holidays and school commitments. Her narrative appears to be composed of multiple, indeed contradictory positions. Intra-textually the senses of being German and being Jewish do not correspond in her narration and this suggests fragmentation. It is significant that apparent contradictory positions are articulated within a unified model of self in the narrative. It is through this model that the narrating self frames her experiences of growing up as a Jewish girl in Germany and of negotiating multiple identities. Chapter Five now interrogates the significance of moving between home and abroad, for articulating self. The chapter shows how each of the texts emphasises the connection between the narrators' Germanness and their defined and refined sense of self. Chapter Five examines how the texts by all three authors attach to notions of Germanness in their attempts to locate their sense of self as they move between home and abroad and the significance of their negotiations of Germanness for engaging with National Socialism.

5. THE DYNAMICS OF COMMUNITY – THE NARRATION OF MOVEMENT BETWEEN COMMUNITIES AT HOME AND ABROAD AND DEFINING AND REDEFINING A SENSE OF GERMANNESS

This chapter demonstrates how the narrated selves all define their sense of self by acts of flight. The respective flights are motivated in different ways. The narrated selves all emphasise a sense of moving from a community that is known and familiar, to a different one which is defined as alien. Through these movements they employ different images of the wilderness to define and redefine their sense of self. These images concern the emotional wilderness of a desperate flight from persecution, or the spatial and cultural wilderness of flying from Germany to Africa. These images also concern the social and cultural wilderness of being excluded from one cultural community and entering a different cultural and professional community. The pilot defines leaving Germany in 1933 on her flight to the African colonies where German settlers were still living in ways that suggest she was flying from the familiar community of the Reich to a dangerous and alien backwater. In the narration she experiences the Germans living in the colonies as being isolated from the "neuen Geist"[1] at home. She associates flying with an opportunity to carry the spirit of political change to the isolated Germans abroad thus defining a professional role for herself. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the act of leaving Germany is defined by the narrating self as a flight, a desperate act motivated by fears for her own safety and that of her family. After arriving in Palestine, however, the narrating self preserves her sense of Germanness on a cultural and professional level by focusing on her sense of what she had left behind and not on her new country. The

[1] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.60.

narrating selves differ in terms of their religion and their experiences after 1933 but are connected through the importance they attach to Germanness as a means of defining their sense of identity. There are also some surprising differences in terms of how fleeing Germany in 1933 is narrated in texts by the two Jewish authors, Straus and Wolff. In factual terms the two authors both fled Germany, the country of their birth and the place where they had been educated, because they feared for their safety. In *Hindsight* the narrating self attributes moving from one artistic, intellectual community in Berlin to another one in Paris and later in London to her ability to preserve her own sense of who she was. Only later in her book are national communities given priority by the narrating self in redefining her sense of self. Thus it is only later that the narrating self defines her movement between three different countries in terms of an exile. This final chapter concludes, therefore, by showing the importance of communities, but not uniquely national communities, in defining a sense of self and possibly redefining this sense of self. The chapter also shows the scholarly merit in comparing the identification with home and belonging by Jewish and non-Jewish subjects in the same study.[2]

5.1. Narratives of Germanness in the Wilderness – the Depiction of Elly Beinhorn's Flights

5.1.1 Narrating the Pilot as a Messenger to Other Germans in the Former African Colonies through Images of a Perilous Wilderness (Beinhorn)

[2] In her study of the travel accounts of women during the early twentieth century Karolina Fell does not incorporate experiences of exile from Nazi Germany. Fell, *Kalkuliertes Abenteuer*, p.29.

This section examines how movement between Germany and the former German colonies of South West Africa is narrated in specific episodes of the two main travel accounts by Elly Beinhorn, i.e. *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt*[3] and *180 Stunden über Afrika*.[4] It compares the narration of movement between German communities at home and abroad with the depiction of landing in Rome where a meeting with Mussolini is defined by the narrating self in terms of a meeting of fellow flyers and political allies. I compare these particular experiences of movement between home and abroad with her narration of fleeing from city to city within the German Reich during the final months of World War Two in the autobiography *Alleinflug. Mein Leben.*[5] In comparing how each of these landings in the colonies, and in Rome are first constructed in the travel accounts published in 1932 and in 1933, and how these landings are absent from *Alleinflug* published in 2007, the chapter examines how the narrating self shifts in terms of how she controls her narrative space. I examine how the narrating self repositions the pilot in the respective communities in relation to National Socialism.

The narrating self constructs her journey to Africa in ways that suggest she was undertaking a perilous trek into a cultural wilderness. She does this in each of the three texts examined here. During her first long distance flight to East Africa in 1931 we are told of a crash-landing in the desert where the pilot ends up staying at the camp of a local tribe.[6] The narration of the indigenous population as 'other' in racial and cultural terms suggests that the pilot is part of a long tradition of Europeans who portrayed the indigenous African population as essentially intellectually backward and inferior to white Europeans.[7] The image she creates from her aerial perspective of beautiful African towns is soon replaced on the ground with the

[3] Beinhorn, *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt* .
[4] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika*.
[5] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug. Mein Leben*.
[6] Beinhorn, *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt,* p.15.
[7] Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire*, pp.9-10.

stark image of dirty and ramshackle huts[8] where the inhabitants are suffering from typhoid and leprosy.[9] The narrated self is shown to revise her expectation that all indigenous people would be running around naked and notes that they do indeed wear some clothing.[10] Indeed, she would have identified these images of native people from travel guides of the time, suggesting that her expectations were part of a conditioned view of the indigenous Africans. The narrating self presents the pilot as a person who is culturally superior to them. After another emergency landing near Timbuktu the narrated self identifies a black man running away in fear at the sight of her machine.[11] She eventually finds "meinen kleinen Schwarzen" hiding under a bush.[12] The narrated self then tries to communicate with the man in order to establish her location on the map. She constructs an image of herself as a white woman, first taking control of modern technology and then taking control of an unexpected situation. In contrast to the local man she does not express fear but focuses on extricating herself from this situation. She does so by ordering local indigenous people to carry her luggage from the plane to their huts and instructs one of them to take a letter to the next town.[13] Travel by foot is the only means of reaching the nearest town in this place where, we are told, there are no aeroplanes, railways or cars.[14] She also narrates superior scientific knowledge by drinking the water from the sump of her plane which is cleaner than the infected rivers used by the local people. The narrating self depicts her experiences with the African people in ways that suggest she has flown into a wilderness. There are physical threats to her safety from the lions that can be heard nearby[15] and from the infectious diseases in the settlement. However, this is

[8] Beinhorn, *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt,* p.15.
[9] Ibid*,* p.31.
[10] Ibid*,* p.15.
[11] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.56.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid*,* p.57.
[14] Beinhorn, *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt,* p.35.
[15] Ibid*,* p.28.

a state of peril which the pilot assumes control of, thus showing her technological mastery and cultural superiority over the indigenous population.

The flight across Africa is also narrated in ways that locate the pilot in a vast expanse of wilderness. We are told that the pilot travels hundreds of kilometres above the shark- and crocodile-infested Atlantic ocean[16], before reaching the West African Bissagos Islands. We have already seen in chapter three on the narration of women's negotiation of educational and professional roles how signs of death and danger on the ground are employed by the pilot as way-marks for her perilous journey. The landscape outside the machine is presented in ways that give prominence to images of wilderness over which the narrated self is flying. I would argue that these images of desolate wilderness reinforce the strong self-image she presents through her success in mastering this hostile world. As the pilot navigates her way in *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt* she presents us with the sight, just off the shore, of the wrecked ship, epitomising this as a perilous and isolated landscape.[17] This is her only landmark after hours spent flying above desolate coastline. Similarly, in *Alleinflug* the narrating self presents images of wrecked aircraft in the vast deserts below, further deadly way-marks.[18] When she eventually reaches the Bissagos islands she defines the islands as familiar outposts of Germanness in contrast to the wild expanses of nothingness. The narrating self initially defines these signs of Germanness as visual images from the air. The islands are occupied by a German company involved in the production of palm oil goods, a German steam ship is moored in the harbour, her own German plane is flying above and on the rooftops the German flag is flying in her honour. The effect of these symbols of Germany on the narrated self is, we are told, "herrlich".[19] On the ground she becomes immersed in further signs of

[16] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.51.
[17] Beinhorn, *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt,* pp.14-15.
[18] Ibid*,* p.13.
[19] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.51.

Germanness. The expatriate community below offer hospitality and kindness towards the narrated self and she is treated like a guest of honour, taken into their homes until her aeroplane is properly overhauled and refuelled and she is ready to continue her flight. One of the officials on the island is described as a "Vati" figure in view of his generous hospitality. The narrating self presents a sense of comradeship therefore amongst Germans abroad who are always ready to help each other in times of need. Her presentation of a German community in the most unexpected of places underlines just how far throughout the world German enterprise, hospitality and technology have penetrated, notwithstanding the fact that these islands were no longer German colonies. Indeed, she does not refer at all to having her passport checked which would indicate that she was no longer in Germany in a territorial sense. This island and the people living there present an image of Germany as an economic power with strong trade links all over the world, a technologically advanced country symbolized by the strength of the narrated self's Klemm aeroplane and finally the enduring sense of German national pride as demonstrated by the German flag and the kindness of the people towards her. The island is also depicted in ways that suggest it provides the pilot with a haven in the middle of the wilderness, not just a haven of other white Europeans but specifically a haven of Germanness.

I will now compare the narration of Germanness in the colonies in *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt,* published in 1931 with images of Germanness as they are narrated in *180 Stunden über Afrika* (1933). This publication depicts the pilot's second flight to Africa which she undertook from April to July 1933. It is first necessary to outline the historical context during which the flight took place.

5.1.2. Images of National Socialism in the African Colonies and the Narration of the Pilot bringing "neue Geist"[20] to German Settlers Abroad

The narrating self opens the text by stating the date her journey began and therefore locating the pilot in a specific point in time, 4th April 1933. This is the only place in the book where a specific date is given. On a temporal level, as we shall see, the narration remains featureless and it has been necessary therefore to consult additional sources in order to determine the dates and historical context of her flights. By the time Elly Beinhorn began her flight to Africa in April 1933 Adolf Hitler had been Chancellor of Germany for nearly three months. The so-called Reichstag fire in March 1933 had been swiftly followed by the mass arrest of Communists and Socialists and the Dachau concentration camp had been opened to take these prisoners.[21] In April 1933, the month she took off, the National Socialist government had appealed for a boycott of Jewish shops and had removed Jews from positions in the Civil Service.[22] Indeed, by then Charlotte Wolff had already lost her post because of this policy. By the time Beinhorn returned to Germany in July 1933 the "Enabling Act" had been passed in the Reichstag ensuring the Chancellor could pass legislation without consulting the Reichstag.[23] The National Socialist 'Gleichschaltung' was therefore complete. The narrated self is positioned above the political landscape in the sense that she was far from the Reich as this consolidation of the dictatorship was taking place. It is also clear that as she lived in Berlin it would have been difficult for her not to be aware of any of the state acts of brutality before her departure.[24] However, the narrating self confines any political comment to her

[20] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.60.
[21] Alan Bullock, *Hitler. A Study in Tyranny* (London: Hamlyn,1973), pp.262, 278.
[22] Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, pp.179-181; Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (Oxford: OUP, 1987), pp.48-59.
[23] Kershaw, *The 'Hitler Myth'*, p.56.
[24] Bullock, *Hitler. A Study in Tyranny,* pp.277-8.

impression that the German Reich she was leaving behind was a place of change and leaves it at that – she refrains from naming people, parties or the regime. The National Socialist government is referred to simply as "die neue Regierung"[25] and the one political act mentioned is the reintroduction of the "Schwarzweißrot" as the official German flag.[26] The dangers that this newness could bring are mitigated by the return of what the narrated self characterises as an established and familiar symbol, the Imperial flag.

The narrator's vagueness must, however, not be taken to be politically neutral. In fact, the narrating self presents the National Socialist government in terms which are in line with National Socialist rhetoric. She associates the new regime as a sign that "der neue Geist hatte gezündet"[27], commenting on political change in abstract terms using the language that is most familiar to her, the technical language of her machine. The image of spark plugs here suggests a sudden new momentum and is employed by the narrating self to signify the momentum of political change. Precise details are not needed because the spark, a technical term which the narrator deploys in a different context here, has a certain inevitability about it. The narrating self associates the new government with "nationale Erhebung"[28], a National Socialist term, at a time when "das gesamte deutsche Volk hatte sich im Innern zusammengeschlossen und versuchte mit ehrlicher Anstrengung, seine alte Position in Europa wiederzuerringen".[29] The image of, "das gesamte deutsche Volk" suggests togetherness and belonging which potentially transcends geographical borders. The narrating self identifies the new regime with national renewal and a return to the status quo in Europe before World War One when Germany was a European power with her own Empire. She defines the new government in nationalist terms as one which is committed to restoring the strength and status of Germany

[25] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.60.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid*,* p.62.
[29] Ibid*,* p.60.

and capable of reuniting her people. Indeed, the fact that the colonies in Africa had not belonged to Germany since World War One does not deter the narrating self from emphasising the importance of national renewal through the return of sovereignty to Germany. This discourse connects the German Empire of the past with the restoration of German Imperialism in the narrative present of publication in 1933. She makes a connection between her own professional motivation and an opportunity to promote a revision of the Treaty of Versailles which had dismantled the German Empire and effectively separated the Reich from Germans in the former colonies. In promoting such a revision the narrating self shares one of the primary goals of the colonialist associations which had been created by women who had settled in the colonies and remained there after World War One.[30] Lora Wildenthal argues that the associations provided opportunities where German women with this mindset could define roles for themselves.[31] The colonialist associations established schools and recruited German women to teach in them. They also helped in the recruitment of nurses for German hospitals there.[32] Evelyn Zegenhagen has argued that by flying in the name of national interests Beinhorn follows similar patterns of collective engagement as the conservative women's movement to which the colonialist organisations belonged. [33] With specific reference to women in the colonies, Lora Wildenthal argues that the Germans who remained there redefined their sense of who was German by founding German institutions as "cultural public enactments"[34] including renovating churches[35], or building and maintaining schools and libraries. In *180 Stunden über Afrika,* the narrating self refers to the cultural

[30] Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire,* pp.172-200.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid*,* p.175.
[33] Zegenhagen, *'Schneidige deutsche Mädel'*, pp.281-3.
[34] Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire,* p.176.
[35] Ibid. In her essay 'German *Brigadoon* ? Domesticity and Metropolitan Germans. Perceptions of *Auslandsdeutschen* in Southwest Africa and Eastern Europe' Nancy Reagin explores Germanness as a gendered construct and locates this construct in the home and domestic arrangements of German settlers in the colonies. In: Krista O'Donnell, Renate Bridenthal and Nancy Reagin (ed), *The Heimat Abroad: The Boundaries of Germanness* (Michigan: University of Michigan, 2005), pp.248-266.

institution of the German school[36] and incorporates a photograph of a school in Dar-es-Salam. She includes a chapter on and photographs of gold-mining companies in South-West Africa as an example of German enterprise.[37] The narrating self extends the period of the colonies through these associations. Similarly, photographs of libraries, German residences[38] and a picnic[39] give visual presence to the narration of Germans bringing civilisation and order to distant lands as do images of motor vehicles[40] and indeed the aeroplane[41] as symbols of the modern age that the Germans have brought to German South-West Africa and East-Africa. The narrating self employs these images in ways that support her expectation that the colonies would eventually be returned to the Reich. She then associates the willingness of the British settlers there to employ German nannies since they expect German to one day become the language of business in South-West Africa.[42] This particular example has the effect of legitimising her expectations of a revision to the Treaty of Versailles.

Either the narration of her journey from Germany to the African colonies suggests a dangerous trek into the wilderness or it is presented as an opportunity to find enduring and familiar cultural symbols of Germanness. In *180 Stunden über Afrika* I have also observed a shift where other Germans in the colonies are presented as alien in some respects because the pilot associates them with being detached from the political change which is taking place in the Reich. The narrating self identifies the expatriate community abroad as a place where she can be an authority in bringing the spirit of this change to other Germans far from home. She represents herself as an ambassador of Germanness and in doing so claims a special role for

[36] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.64.
[37] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika*, p.66.
[38] Ibid, p.63, p.64.
[39] Ibid, p.49.
[40] Ibid, p.37.
[41] Ibid, p.36, p.48.
[42] Ibid*,* p.65.

herself. By locating herself as the only occupant of this special space in the flying machine the narrating self effectively creates new professional roles for the pilot.[43]

As she lands in the former colony the narrating self attributes an important role to her flying machine. She attributes power to it as a means of propaganda[44] and constructs it and the pilot, an "alleinfliegendes Mädchen am Steuer" [45] as the single most important way of attracting the interest of so many people out in Africa.[46] Her own aerial photographs taken of the crowds which gathered, with the line „Alles was Beine hat ist zu meiner Landung in Windhuk draußen"[47]below, magnify the role of the pilot and the significance of her arrival. Beinhorn was able to take these photographs with a hand-held camera from the cockpit and also by attaching a camera to the wing of her machine. It is clear, therefore, that her interest in technology was considerable and premeditated. The narrating self includes photographs in her text of airport buildings made of corrugated iron[48] and towns where Germans live. In each of these photographs the airport, streets and buildings are all surrounded by vast expanses of desert and criss-crossed by dirt tracks which provide the only way to these remote places.[49] The photographs reinforce the idea of the German colonies as an isolated outpost on the one hand, while the image of large crowds of Germans, many of whom have travelled over a hundred kilometres to welcome her to their town, underlines the strength of feeling amongst the Germans there to see the pilot from the Reich.[50] She constructs an image of herself as a

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[43] Fell, *Kalkuliertes Abenteuer,* p.246. Chapter two has already examined how women travellers, including pilots, were able to carve careers for themselves which involved considerable travel. These professional roles included aviators and journalists who gained remuneration from the publication of their travel accounts. They also involved scientific research roles such as the ethnologist Emmy Bernatzik.
[44] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.60.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid*,* p.37.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid*,* pp.36, 54, 73.
[50] Ibid*,* p.61.

symbol of their "Heimat"[51] and all that that represents. The narrating self identifies the aeroplane as a means of uniting fellow Germans far from home in these outposts and extending to them a sense of the new spirit in the Reich.[52] She is bringing a message to them of the changes taking place at home which she identifies in positive ways. Indeed, the narrating self identifies the colonies as a wilderness for herself and a wilderness for the other Germans living there who are far from the Reich. In fact, the colonies are an exile from "true" Germanness, for the pilot this is the Germanness promoted by National Socialism. She points out that newspapers reporting on the economic recovery taking place in Germany rarely made it to the colonies.[53] The narrating self positions German expatriates in a backwater isolated from news about the rest of the world and certainly from news of Germany. She constructs an image of these expatriates as being in exile and depicts the pilot in turn taking news to them. In this respect, she is the purveyor of German authenticty. The narrating self observes how the people living in the colonies did not have access to foreign newspapers. She brings the message to the colonies that foreign newspapers were commenting positively on this "recovery".[54] This has the effect of legitimising what was taking place in Germany, as she reports how readers in the colonies were given "einen weiteren Horizont und politischen Blick, waren sich immer darüber klar, daß erst basierend auf einer Reinigung und Zusammenfassung des Volkes im Reich selbst ein Wiedererstarken nach außen möglich sein würde".[55] The terms and images she utilises here would be familiar to readers from Germany through National Socialist rhetoric. These terms may not necessarily be familiar to the expatriate community thus reinforcing the image of the pilot as a messenger of the spirit of the Reich.

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[51] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.61.
[52] Ibid*,* p.60.
[53] Ibid*,* p.62.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.

The narrating self identifies a role for herself as a female pilot bringing together expatriate Germans. However, she does so by positioning herself above the masses of Germans who come to see her, she too is a German but she is not one of them. Instead the narrating self positions the pilot in a separate space and this suggests the construction of authority, control and superiority. The narration suggests that it is the pilot who is able to inspire in the German settlers a sense of the new spirit of the Reich and to foster that as part of a community spirit in distant lands.

The narrating self represents her landing in the colonies as a happy moment where she encounters the resourcefulness of the young Germans living there.[56] She also praises their "Kameradschaftsgeist" as they sing together around the camp fire.[57] She narrates these outposts of Germanness with reference to symbols of Imperial Germany. The narrating self observes how the German *Pfadfinder* in the colonies carry "die alte Reichsmarineflagge", familiar from Imperial Germany. The scouts also sing the *Deutschlandlied.*[58] The narrating self has the pilot read aloud messages which she has brought from President Hindenburg to the German communities in the colonies, a symbol of authority familiar from the Imperial period.[59] All these images suggest a cultural community, historical continuity - a broad sense of Germanness as an ethnic identity.[60] The narration of the colonies is interspersed with signs of the Nazi government that she finds there. She notes the gramophone record of the Horst-Wessel Lied and the ability of every young person to remember the words by heart.[61] This figure, venerated by National Socialists, suggests how the influence of that movement has reached these German outposts. The narrating self juxtaposes this image of what she finds

[56] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.62.
[57] Ibid*,* p.83.
[58] Ibid*,* p.75.
[59] Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth*, p.55.
[60] O'Donnell et.al, *The Heimat Abroad*, p.253.
[61] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.62.

amongst German expatriate communities in Africa with an image of the pilot carrying the message of "nationale Erhebung" to the colonies. The pilot is therefore constructed as the messenger of what she assumes to be the great things taking place in the Reich to Germans far from home.

5.1.3. "Bei Mussolini"[62] – Narrating Landing in Rome as a Home from Home

The narration of the African colonies and the meeting with Mussolini in Rome en route back to Berlin[63] both involve encounters with people of other countries. However, the landing in Rome is defined in ways that suggest familiarity. Familiarity is associated by the pilot with the homage which she observes being given to General Balbo, a fellow pilot who had just set off on a long –distance flight across the Atlantic as she arrived in Rome. Familiarity is also associated by the pilot through her relationship with the Duce himself and with the political ideology he represents in Italy.

On her journey through the streets to the Palazzo Venezia the narrating self observes images in every shop window of General Balbo who at that time was flying across the Atlantic with a fleet of twenty four hydrofoil planes. She also observes how, "das gesamte italienische Volk ging auf in der Sorge um seine Helden der Luft, die gerade dabei waren, eine fliegerische Großtat zu vollenden, wie sie die Welt noch nicht gesehen hatte".[64] This endeavour is presented as a unique event which unifies the Italian nation. The narrating self defines her impressions of the city of Rome in terms of associations she makes with flying. She represents pilots as heroic figures and identifies the Balbo flight as the main concern of all Italians. The narration of this street scene suggests just how self-centred the narrated self is

[62] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.123.
[63] Ibid, pp.123-4.
[64] Ibid, p.123.

as she presents aviation to be the centre of everyone's world around her. The pilot is presented as a God-like figure who, in her narration, fully deserves the devotion of his compatriots.

Whilst the Balbo flight is defined by the narrating self in collective terms, the narrating self presents her meeting with Mussolini in different terms. Himself a pilot, he is introduced as someone with whom she can discuss, "alle Einzelheiten über Maschine, Motor und Strecke, die für mich vier Monate lang soviel bedeutet hatten".[65] Indeed, the chapter title „Bei Mussolini", sets the scene for their meeting as a private encounter as opposed to a meeting with a Head of State. One may surmise that it cannot have escaped her attention that Mussolini was a political ally of Germany and she was bringing with her a message of support between countries who shared the same political ideology. The narrating self initially depicts their encounter as an intimate meeting of minds, each understanding the other and in this respect it is very much a communion of fellow pilots. The narrating self often presents examples in the texts of pilots helping each other when they get into difficulties in remote places.[66] Mussolini is the only other pilot in any of the texts whom the narrated self presents in terms which suggest empathy, whilst the narration of her relationship with other pilots is usually characterised by a sense of competition as well as comradeship.[67] The pilot seems only able to function within hierarchies where she is equal to or higher than everyone else. The narrating self presents the meeting with Mussolini in terms which suggest an exclusive communion of equal partners rather than struggle. Indeed, the pilot observes how no-one else present at the meeting can understand what it means to fly, "er kennt das Gefühl, allein am Steuer einer kleinen Maschine zu sitzen, und er weiß, daß Flieger aller Nationen Einzelleistungen vollbracht haben, von denen man spricht".[68] The juxtaposition of national

[65] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.124.
[66] Beinhorn, *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt,* p.48.
[67] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* pp.13, 14, 37.
[68] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.123.

veneration for the Balbo flight with the meeting with Mussolini has the effect of separating the narrated self from the masses. She observes the admiration of the masses for Balbo but she positions herself outside this shared space, instead situating herself in a separate space where she and Mussolini are by themselves. The narrating self presents flying as a solo act and her successes constitute individual as opposed to collective achievements. She imposes this oneness with the machine on the Duce and this stands in contrast to the collective nature of the Balbo flight. The narrating self reinforces her separateness from the masses by not imparting her good wishes to Mussolini for the Balbo flight, claiming recognition that words cannot encapsulate the enormity of this undertaking.[69] She positions herself in a unique place, where she alone as a fellow flyer has the insights which allow her to respond in this way. It suggests oneness between Mussolini and herself comparable only to the relationship with her machine. The narrating self identifies the meeting with Mussolini in the first place as a communion of fellow flyers and in second place she identifies it with the joy, "daß ich dadurch einem der Größten unserer heutigen Geschichte die Hand geben durfte".[70] Mussolini is defined by the narrating self first and foremost as a pilot yet he is also identified as the "Duce"[71], a political leader. This suggests that sport and politics overlapped and the pilot is positioned in this overlapping space even if she did not engage with the implications of being in that space.

The narrating self does not elaborate further on the significance for the pilot of the meeting with Mussolini or the Fascist State he represents. The meeting is in fact not included at all in *Alleinflug*. One may surmise that the narrating self must have felt that it was not appropriate in this retrospective version of the narrative. She also does not refer to her 1933 flight to the German colonies. In *Alleinflug* the narrating self suggests that everything in the

[69] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.124.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid.

narrative revolves around flying. This is a homogenised account of her life story. She revises her flight by narrating the pilot travelling above the political landscape and not touching down. Post-1945 the 'landscape' has changed but in her book this is only noticeable through omissions. Indeed, the fact that she gives such prominence to her flight to the African colonies in *180 Stunden über Afrika,* as one of her greatest feats, and then leaves this flight out of her autobiography, opens up a tension in my reading of *Alleinflug.* She omits details in two respects: she leaves out what was there before which, in the case of her 1933 Africa flight, was amongst her greatest feats. She also leaves out details where comment would have been necessary. Flying provides the co-ordinates for the pilot to navigate her life and in narrating time to represent that life through the writing.

In *Alleinflug* the only references in the text to events taking place during National Socialism are those relating to her wartime experiences. They are (a) the outbreak of World War Two which forces her to abandon her round the world flight and return to Germany before giving up flying for the duration of the war, (b) the destruction of her apartment in Berlin in an air raid in February 1944 which she represents as the loss of her "Heimat"[72] and (c) her relocation in August 1944 from East Prussia to Freiburg as the Soviet troops advanced from the East. The narrating self represents world events in terms of their personal significance to her, and specifically their impact on her flying career. At the start of *Alleinflug* there is a map showing the route of Elly Beinhorn's long distance flights and when these took place. Three of her five long distance flights took place during the National Socialist period. In 1933 she undertook her second flight around Africa, in 1934/5 she flew from Germany to Central and North America and in 1939 she undertook her second round the world flight but had to interrupt her journey in India and return to Germany as she anticipated the outbreak of

[72] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.292.

war. In the text the narrating self recounts adventures during the flights and on the ground abroad. She does not provide specific information such as dates and she does not refer to any events which were taking place back in Germany. Instead the narrating self presents her long distance flights in terms which suggest she had a series of adventures which were completely detached from anything readers today would associate with 1939. Chapter titles such as "Über dem Reich der Inkas", "Im Leichtflugzeug allein über die Anden" and "Sturm über der Pampa" provide geographical and meteorological co-ordinates for her flights but give no indication as to the historical and political context of what was taking place either in Germany or in the countries she travelled to. The map on the inside cover provides the only means of pinpointing when each flight took place. It is difficult, therefore, for those reading the text to distinguish between flights undertaken before 1933 and during the Third Reich. The narrating self does not represent 1933 as a turning point in any sense, suggesting the fusion of the narrated and narrating self. The flights are narrated in ways that evoke one long adventure story. The pilot was in communion with her plane to the exclusion of everything and everyone else; there was no space for what was taking place in her own country. The narrating self presents the machine as her own special place, where she is in control, because of her ability to interpret and respond to weather conditions outside the machine and also to respond to the demands made by the technical challenges of her flights. Furthermore, the apparent refusal to discuss her separateness suggests a level of arrogance. She remains in this special position which could be regarded as a form of self-imposed isolation and serves as protection from dealing with the National Socialist past. Other scholars have further located her in this position, separate from collaboration with National Socialism, by focusing on her autobiography more than on her travel account *180 Stunden über Afrika*.[73] In contrast to many

[73] Evelyn Zegenhagen makes no reference to the narration of the pilot's meeting with Mussolini in Rome.

critics, Fell examines *180 Stunden über Afrika* and argues that National Socialism represented a political era for Beinhorn in which she had found her place.[74] It could be claimed that National Socialism is not discussed in *Alleinflug* because this political system gave her opportunities that she was not willing to acknowledge later. Zegenhagen identifies Beinhorn's refusal to discuss National Socialism as an example of how the immediate post-war German society did not engage critically with their roles during National Socialism.[75] In this respect, Beinhorn is representative of many others. It is an unrealistic expectation, therefore, that she should deconstruct her previous position. Indeed, the only repositioning that is narrated post-1945 is when the pilot climbs back into her flying machine, first in her glider in Switzerland and later in her aeroplane.[76]

The narration of wartime bombing in Berlin in *Alleinflug* seems to stand for the pilot's experience as she omits earlier changes, advantageous for her, which came about after 1933. She emphasises her experiences of losing her home and of fleeing the advancing Soviet army. The narrating self represents her experiences using images which evoke a sense that she and her children were fleeing from East to South West Germany because of fears for their safety as wartime conditions deteriorated. The special place in the machine is replaced with her own unique situation on the ground where she and her children are the only people who seem to exist there. It is a separate place where only she suffers. Indeed, when her Berlin apartment is destroyed in an air raid, there is no reference to the destruction of homes all over Germany.[77] One could surmise that at the time the autobiography was first published in 1980 many German readers would have personal experience of the destruction of the bombing raids. The narrating self labels herself as someone who flees from town to town within her "Heimat".

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[74] Fell, *Kalkuliertes Abenteuer,* p.223.
[75] Zegenhagen, *'Schneidige deutsche Mädel',* p.249.
[76] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.305.
[77] Ibid*,* p.292.

The narrating self associates the destruction of her home with the loss of her "Heimat"[78] and in doing so opens up a tension when one considers that in this regime many German Jews and other minority groups had long ago lost their livelihood, their country and their lives – their own understanding of losing "Heimat" had completely different implications than for the narrating self, yet she does not acknowledge this. War is narrated as an event imposed on her by an unnamed source. She attributes blame neither to the German government nor is the war imposed on Germans by their enemies. She does not engage with the suffering of minorities such as Jews but rather focuses on her own suffering. The sense of community that is narrated in the texts of Straus and Wolff is completely absent from *Alleinflug*. In this context it is not surprising that she does not consider the suffering of groups that she presumably would not have considered to be German.

She harmonises her position in the Third Reich through a narrative strategy of obfuscation and displacement. In narrating time she does not engage with the complex nature of "Heimat", she only uses it to define herself and does not consider its significance to other Germans. Her experience of National Socialism is initially narrated in positive terms and then in negative terms because of the war. The narration of the Third Reich is limited to wartime suffering and loss in *Alleinflug. Mein Leben.* The narrating self presents her temporary home in East Prussia as "unser ostpreußisches Paradies"[79] thus claiming possession of a place where associations with Germanness were contested. She defines East Prussia as an "Idyll"[80] and in this respect she defines it as a haven far from the destruction which was being wreaked on Berlin. The haven is disturbed, however, by the distant sound of bombing on the Eastern front in August 1944.[81] It is her second husband Karl who tells her to go to Southern Germany

[78] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug*, p.292.
[79] Ibid, p.294.
[80] Ibid, p.291.
[81] Ibid, p.292.

immediately to escape the Soviet advance.[82] She does not initiate the move herself and does not, therefore, recognise the dangers of moving further East from Berlin in the first place. The narrating self asserts that, "von Politik hatte ich noch nie viel verstanden" to explain her disbelief that the Soviets could ever enter German territory.[83] In the aeroplane she has to interpret and respond to conditions outside the machine, yet seems unable to make sense of and respond to the dangers she faces back on the ground. She makes claims to political ignorance or naivety here which she could also be using to explain the position the narrating self constructs towards dealing with the National Socialist past. The narrating self still seems to be above the political landscape and is unable to navigate the ground. Indeed, strategies on the ground were what was needed to ensure the family's survival and these strategies were a matter of life or death. Nonetheless, even though narrating such strategies is omitted, her abilities should not be underestimated when one considers that the pilot did indeed manage to keep her two young children safe and ensure that they survived the war. Indeed, estimates of those killed in bombing raids on German cities stand between 500,000 and 600,000 and one fifth of these were children.[84] During the conditions depicted by the narrating self, such as bombing raids on the railway lines, nights spent sleeping in ditches and treks through the Black Forest where food was scarce it seems incredible that all three of them were able to survive. We have already identified how the narration of control in the machine suggests the wholeness of her abilities technically and psychologically. That wholeness is presented as endangered by war when the pilot is no longer supported by her machine and presents herself as being unable to make the necessary choices on the ground, leaving others (her husband) to

[82] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.292. Beinhorn travelled first from Berlin in 1943eastwards to East Prussia and in 1944 she moved again, this time to the south-west region of the Black Forest, at approximately 900km this was a considerable distance to travel at this stage in the war and particularly with two small children of seven and three years old.
[83] Ibid*,* p.293.
[84] Mary Nolan, 'Germans as Victims during the Second World War: Air Wars, Memory Wars', in *Central European History,* 38 (1), (2005), pp.7-40: 8.

make them for her. The narration opens up a separate space where the pilot is isolated from the outside world in a way which absolves her of agency.

In wartime, travel is quite unlike the adventure she sought for herself during her earlier solo flights. Travel takes on a different form in wartime as the narrating self observes, "was für mich als junges Mädchen allein ein immer neues Wunder gewesen war, erwies sich mit zwei Kindern als weniger erfreulich".[85] Instead of flying solo above deserts and oceans the pilot must join the masses by travelling by train as far as possible and then trekking on foot as well as lying in ditches during air raids.[86] Beinhorn spent the final months of the war in Freiburg and settled there for the next ten years. The narrating self makes no reference, however, to the final days of the war or to the presence of the occupying forces. She simply moves straight to 1948 when she is permitted to start flying again in Germany albeit in a glider, not an aeroplane.[87] The narrated self resumes her flight above the political landscape and in doing so perpetuates the homogenous image she creates of herself on a continuous "Alleinflug", undisturbed by what is taking place below.

Flying to the African colonies is narrated in terms of a perilous journey into the wilderness, and in that sense evoking images of flights into the unknown on different levels. Encounters with German settlers are defined as a welcome haven in the outposts of Africa. During National Socialism the narrator reinforces the sense that the German settlers are isolated from the spirit of change that is taking place in the Reich. She defines a role for herself that is based on bringing this spirit to Germans abroad and establishing a connection between her gender, her machine and Germans at home and abroad. In contrast to the collective efforts of the women's colonialist associations, the pilot defines her role serving Germany as an individual from her own special place in the flying machine. Whilst

[85] Beinhorn, *Alleinflug,* p.295.
[86] Ibid*,* pp.296-7.
[87] Ibid*,* p.300.

Wildenthal has focused on the role of women in the colonies as what she refers to as missionaries and identified them as examples of "geistige Mütterlichkeit"[88], the narrating self in all of the texts examined here defines a new role for herself as that of a technical missionary. This is a non-gendered identity with no sense of a maternal vocation. The image she constructs of Germans at home and abroad is not that of the homogeneous community but through her professional skills as an aviator she is able to make her contribution to creating homogeneity. The narrating self associates the meeting with Mussolini, a non-German, with a meeting between fellow flyers and political allies. The pilot flies into a familiar community of flyers and a community which shares the same political ideology. These two communities are given prominence above national communities, yet community in a political sense is defined in very narrow terms by the pilot who positions herself with Mussolini, the Head of State, and not with the Italian masses. In *Alleinflug,* where National Socialism is touched upon, it is synonymous with war and with the suffering of civilians through air-raids on German cities. The Third Reich is depoliticised and she has nothing to do with that political system. She is also never a victim of that system. Instead the narrating self depicts the pilot as a victim of the circumstances of war and she defines these circumstances in abstract terms. This time the pilot is no longer located in her special separate position in the air, but back on the ground fleeing with the masses. Flight is, finally, narrated in terms which suggest she is a victim of war, along with many others yet no sense of a shared history of suffering is communicated, with other Germans.

[88] Irene Stoehr, 'Organisierte Mütterlichkeit', in *Frauen suchen ihre Geschichte,* ed. by Karin Hausen (Munich: Beck, 1987), p.225-253 cited in, Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire,* p.5.

5.2. Narratives of Preserving Germanness in Palestine in *Wir lebten in Deutschland*

5.2.1. Conflicting Images in the Narration of the Rise of National Socialism in *Wir lebten in Deutschland*

In the texts by both Rahel Straus and Elly Beinhorn the narrating selves invoke the term "der neue Geist"[89] to refer to the new National Socialist regime in Germany. However, they associate the term with very different implications for Germany. This section examines how flight from Germany to Palestine in 1933 is narrated in *Wir lebten in Deutschland.*[90] The narrating self identifies National Socialist Germany as an increasingly dangerous place for Jews from which she must escape. The journey to Palestine is depicted by her as a desperate flight from a country where she and her family are no longer safe. In her narration of her journey to Palestine the narrating self reveals the significance of maintaining a sense of Germanness as a means of preserving her own identity. The focus of this section is to examine how, contrary to reader expectation, she defines this preserved sense of Germanness in exile and how she depicts the new country she is travelling to as an alien and unfamiliar place. I will conclude by showing that although movement between Germany and abroad is motivated by very different reasons, the narrating selves in the texts by Straus and Beinhorn associate similar cultural images of Germanness as a means of locating their sense of self in strange and unfamiliar places far from Germany.

The sections that follow will focus on the final five chapters of *Wir lebten in Deutschland* where the narrating self depicts her experiences of National Socialism in

[89] Beinhorn, *180 Stunden über Afrika,* p.60; Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland*, p.266.
[90] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland*, pp.292-300.

Germany and her flight. These chapters are "Hitlerbewegung und Antisemitismus", "Mutters Tod", "Nach der 'Machtergreifung' " , "Elis letzte Krankheit" and "Die Flucht". The last three chapters focus specifically on her experiences between January and November in 1933.

I will first examine how the narrating self depicts National Socialism in the period before Hitler was proclaimed Chancellor. She introduces National Socialism in abstract terms as "der neue Geist"[91] without providing a specific context, referring to National Socialism not as a specific political party but rather as a political mood, yet she is very specific in her reference to anti-Semitism, which she identifies as central to the movement. The initial absence of dates and her focus on "Geist", an abstract term, suggests a level of timelessness within her narration which is similar to the way the pilot refers to National Socialism. It is clear, however that the narrating self in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* associates the promise of something new and different to come with quite different implications for Germany than in the texts by Beinhorn. It is also clear that in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narrating self attributes the new spirit in Germany as a force which she and friends and family had been living within their daily life, since approximately 1930 and which does not suddenly present itself in 1933 when Hitler was proclaimed Chancellor.

Throughout the narration of the years 1930-33, the narrating self juxtaposes happy times spent with the family with episodes which illustrate the family's growing sense of unease as Jews living in Germany. I will first focus on one example of this juxtaposition in order to show how travel within Germany is associated by the narrating self with preserving her sense of Germanness as a legacy which can be passed on to her children. This particular travel episode concerns what was to be the Straus family's last family holiday some time

[91] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.266.

between 1930 and 1931, a journey "durch das schöne alte Deutschland".[92] All members of the family went along and although it was the father who took charge of transportation by driving the family, the narration suggests that it was the narrated self who seemed most active in determining their itinerary and guiding the family through the different towns and places of interest.[93] Furthermore, it is through her narration that we are given glimpses of how the towns and landscape appeared at that time. It is the narrated self, the mother, who guides her children on their journey and imparts local cultural and historical information to them from guide books. Indeed, her narration suggests that this journey is very much in the German tradition of the 'Bildungsreise'. Their trip through Southern Germany is narrated as a time when the narrating self had never seen the region looking more beautiful.[94] The Straus family begin their trip at Augsburg with visits to "den herrlichen Dom"[95] and opportunities to see the places in Bavaria that the children had studied in their history lessons, for example, where Luther once spoke.[96] She also depicts a visit to Donauwörth where they saw beautifully painted houses, an image of the skill of German craftsmen during the Middle Ages. She identifies each of the towns they visit as places which had scarcely changed since the Middle Ages.[97] They appear to be from a bygone age, far "von der neuen Zeit und vom Jahrhundert der Technik".[98] The town halls, town walls, merchants' houses and the famous historical figures who once resided there such as General Tilly are all connected to a distant period of German history which she identifies with "das schöne alte Deutschland".[99] The narrating self does not, however, associate this distant period of German history with the persecution of the Jews who had been confined to ghettoes during the Middle Ages and had also been attacked

[92] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* pp.251-253: 253.
[93] Ibid*,* p.251.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid*,* p.253.

in pogroms.[100] The narrating self focuses only on happy associations with the places she visited, instead moving forward in history by introducing her children to Heidelberg and all the familiar places of her student days. These places are the castle, the places where Goethe wrote and the countryside around the town. She associates these places as examples of German culture; architecture, literature and the beautiful German landscape. Their final excursion is to her home town of Karlsruhe. Travel within Germany is therefore defined through points of reference which extend from the distant past of Medieval Germany to significant places in her own lifetime. The narrating self constructs a sense of Germany as a country steeped in culture and history. She depicts the towns she visited as places where German cultural superiority could be seen all around and positions herself and her family within that sense of Germany as a place where they are rooted culturally. Marion Kaplan has argued that German-Jewish women had a special role to fulfil within the family which involved transmitting German culture to their children[101] and this culture is exemplified by a love of the classics and the German landscape.[102] Kaplan observes that in their role as "cultural mediator"[103] German-Jewish women promoted the infusion of a cultural sense of Germanness alongside Jewishness and in doing so contributed to the acculturation process within their social networks and the professional networks of their husbands. Indeed, the narrating self plots their journey with reference to places that attest to German tradition and culture and to her own educational and professional growth. In this respect it certainly seems to be the narrated self, rather than her husband, who fulfils the role suggested by Kaplan of establishing and strengthening a sense of Germanness through her children.

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[100] Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany*, p.89.
[101] Kaplan, *The Making of the Jewish Middle Class*, p.233.
[102] Ibid, pp.57-8.
[103] Ibid, p.120.

The journey through Germany is depicted in ways that juxtapose happy moments of togetherness with references to technological and political change in the narrated past, both of which seem to disturb the narrated self. Indeed, she disassociates herself from the technological changes of the early twentieth century and effectively separates culture and science in ways that seem surprising for a doctor whose role is to advance scientific knowledge albeit of the human body. Furthermore, the visit to the beautifully ornate Synagogue[104] in Dinkelsbühl, for example, is interspersed with the concerns expressed by the Jewish people she meets there about, "das Eindringen des Hitler-Geistes"[105] in their town. To illustrate this image of penetration the narrating self refers to the memorials placed at the town gates in honour of a member of the Freikorps who had been commemorated as a martyr by the Nazis.[106] Through the term "Eindringen"[107] the narrating self constructs a conflict in the text between images of a cultured Germany, a place of literature, architecture, art and history, a place where Jews were able to build and beautify their synagogues and then on the other hand, rumours of the threat of National Socialism and visible symbols of National Socialism located in the prominent entrance to the medieval town. The contrast opens up tensions for the narrated self and she expresses her fears through this juxtaposition of the narrated past as a happy time of which she has fond memories, and the narrated past as an increasingly sinister time.

In closing her description of their tour through Southern Germany she depicts Germany in narrating time as a place now completely lost to her[108] but observes how at least she has been able to show her children Germany as it used to be[109] and the Germanness she

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[104] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.252.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid, p.253.
[109] Ibid.

wanted to remember and be remembered by her children. She wanted to impress the image of Germany on her children. The narration of a cultural journey through Germany in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* suggests the infusion of the German cultural interests of the Straus family with their religious identity, against the backdrop of a political landscape which is becoming increasingly menacing for Jews. Her narration also suggests that she, as the mother, is preserving a cultural legacy of Germanness at a time when the family are no longer living in Germany but rather in a country, which by comparison to Germany seems alien in so many ways. The narrating self sets Germany and Palestine in cultural opposition to each other through her daughter. Hannah, a keen artist, is sent by her mother to study in Paris in 1933 instead of joining the rest of her family on their journey to Palestine. The narrating self depicts her daughter's journey to Paris as a decision which was taken for granted because there was nothing for an artist to learn in Palestine.[110] Education and professional training takes precedence over having her travel with the rest of the family, hence she sends her daughter to Paris. The narrating self identifies her role with preserving images of Germany as a place of culture, history and tradition and her family were able to partake in some of those traditions during their tour. She also seems to identify her role as a mother with a duty to preserve these memories for her children and in doing so she reinforces their rootedness in Germany as their cultural homeland, even if it is lost to them as a place where they can live.[111] There are similarities therefore between the way the colonialist women's organisations preserved Germanness in the colonies through "cultural enactments"[112] and the way the narrating self associates her maternal role with preserving a legacy of Germanness in the collective memory of her family when she, too, is far away. After the loss of her citizenship and the death of her husband shortly before emigration in 1933 the narrating self maintains

[110] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.299.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire,* p.176.

the role of guardian of her family's cultural legacy and that legacy remains rooted in Germany. The role of cultural guardian that she had constructed in Southern Germany is not revised by the narrating self in Palestine.

5.2.2. "Ausschließung und Diffamiering"[113]: The Narration of Persecution - the Jewish Community in Munich during National Socialism

This section focuses on the narration of daily life in Germany from January to November 1933, just before the family emigrated. Indeed, the narrating self initially defines exile as a process of dissimulation which had commenced within her own town of Munich, where she had lived since her marriage thirty years earlier. In her narration of specific policies towards Jews the narrating self reveals how Germany was becoming a strange and alien place on a legislative level. In one of her concluding chapters "Nach der 'Machtergreifung'"[114] the narrating self outlines how daily life for German-Jews became politicised and their movements within Germany increasingly restricted after January 1933. She refers to a policy which decreed that among Jewish lawyers only those who had qualified before World War One could represent clients in court. This followed the introduction of the "Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums"[115] on 7th April 1933 which stipulated the dismissal of all Jews from posts in the civil service, universities and public institutions[116]. On a professional and civil level the narrated self is repositioned by the new regime to the margins of society. As professionals Straus and her husband were also required to provide

[113] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.281.
[114] Ibid*,* pp.275-283.
[115] Marion Kaplan, *Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany* (New York/Oxford: OUP, 1998), p.24.
[116] Bullock, *Hitler. A Study in Tyranny,* p.279.

detailed information about their ancestry.[117] Straus was forbidden from treating patients under the State health insurance scheme and the private patients whom she was still able to treat faced intimidation outside her surgery when they came to consult her.[118]

The narrating self identifies Germany as a place where, in their day to day life, she and her family no longer felt safe and she notes how signs of this unease were all around. She depicts Munich as a place where, "die Gewalttätigkeiten häuften sich"[119] and these acts of violence were directed towards anyone who expressed disagreement with the new government and particularly towards Jews. She also refers to the nightly raids on Jewish homes and the arrest and subsequent murder of the detainees in Dachau which was near Munich.[120] Indeed, the narrating self reflects on the impossibility that the inhabitants of Munich could not be aware of what was happening to the Jews in their city, thus imposing some level of awareness on other Germans.[121] The representation of growing violence on the streets reinforces the conspicuous absence in the texts by Beinhorn of references towards the threat which should have been visible to anyone on the streets of German cities, or which may have been easier to ignore for those who were not the immediate targets of such threats.[122] As the violence intensifies outside, the family are increasingly positioned within the home. Her son is kept at home because he is no longer safe from intimidation from members of the Hitler Youth and instead he is taught in the home of a Jewish professor who had been dismissed from his own post through the new laws introduced against Jews in April 1933.[123] In the last five chapters we glimpse the narrating self almost exclusively within her own home, caring for her husband up to his death in early 1933, and then making preparations for her flight from the country.

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[117] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.280.
[118] Ibid, p.281.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid, p.282; Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany*, p.347.
[123] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* pp.278-9.

Indeed, the only time we see her leave the house is to travel to the bank as she attempts to withdraw as much money as possible to fund her emigration and yet not arouse the suspicion of the authorities.

The narrating self presents the city of Munich as a place where the atmosphere was becoming increasingly suffocating[124] and oppressive and she recreates this atmosphere by narrating a sense of the void in which the narrated self lived and where everything became unfamiliar to her. The narrating self refers to, "die Leere um sich, die sich nie wieder füllt, die große Einsamkeit"[125]; indeed Munich, the place where she had made a home for her family and built up a successful medical career, had become a place where she drifts, "fast nachtwandlerisch" [126] and where she has lost her sense of direction. The sleepwalking state is constructed as the only authentic state in which the narrated self can live in these conditions, a state which is not the norm. The careful process of cultural orientation that we saw in her narration of the grand tour of Germany stands in contrast to the narration of her daily life in Munich as a place where she has lost her routine, spending less and less time in her surgery and more and more time at home.[127]

In her narration of her relationships with other people the narrating self focuses on the gap which has opened up between the narrated self as a Jew who sees the dangers all around, and other Jews in Munich who attempt to carry on their lives despite political change and its implications. She accuses other Jews of stubbornly remaining in their illusory world, still believing they lived, "in einem geordneten Staat, in dem es Recht, Gesetz, Polizei und Sicherheit gab".[128] In effect, she criticises them for their lack of re-positioning. She criticises a world that they have created which seems, in effect, distorted from what was actually taking

[124] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.293.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid, p.292.
[127] Ibid, p.281.
[128] Ibid.

place. Certainly, Kaplan has noted the conviction shared by many Jews and non-Jews that the National Socialist regime would be short-lived and a more familiar political system re-established in its place[129], which is what the reference to 'order' in the above quotation seems to suggest. Many Jews struggled with the decision of whether to try to emigrate, concerned about the difficulties of securing a visa, establishing a livelihood and above all disassociating themselves from Germany which they saw as their homeland.[130] In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narrating self depicts her Jewish friends gathered around a radio listening to one of Hitler's speeches yet not hearing and not understanding the implications for their own position in Germany.[131] She attributes a much greater knowledge to the narrated self than to other Jews. She locates herself in a separate position to these other Jews who hold illusions and in effect this is a special position not dissimilar from that taken up by the pilot. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narrating self locates herself above the other Jews in a position of knowing. She claims to see the dangers which lie ahead and she predicts that things will get much worse for Jews in Germany.[132] She contrasts the Jewish people around her with her non-Jewish friends who do indeed recognise the dangers for Jews but who continue to help her despite the legal and civil ostracism which the government is attempting to foster through its anti-Semitic policies and propaganda. National Socialism was certainly successful in ensuring her professional marginalisation through placing restrictions on the patients she could treat. It was not, however, completely successful since she was able to maintain close friendships with non-Jews. She presents her friendship with non-Jews as steadfast and constant, suggesting that these friends offer a bulwark between her home and what is happening outside it. Friendship is narrated as a sign of happier times when her daily life

[129] Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany,* p.347.
[130] Ibid*,* p.355.
[131] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.276.
[132] Ibid*,* p.299.

involved the interaction of her Germanness with her Jewishness. We are told how these friends offer emotional support to the narrating self but also practical assistance as she prepares to flee Germany in November 1933. They help her pack her belongings[133], they provide advice on liquidating her assets to finance her flight from Germany[134] and they continue to write to her once she has settled in Palestine and until direct post to the country is stopped in 1938.[135] Friendships with non-Jews offer the narrating self a connection with Germany when she is far away. She identifies these friendships with memories of old Germany, familiar from the nostalgic images evoked through her narration of the family holiday in Germany. The disturbing newness of the "neuen Geist" stands in contrast in the text to images of an authentic Germany, Germany as it used to be. This Germany, although far away, is not completely lost. The narrating self differentiates between Germans who have helped her family and the Nazis. She also presents a partly homogenised account in terms of how she defines Germany during her travels by what she deems its' enchanting culture, history and landscape.

5.2.3. "Ich fuhr ganz allein in die Fremde"[136]: The Narration of Emigration to Palestine as a Perilous Flight into Exile

The flight from Germany is depicted as a terrifying and isolating experience by the narrating self who made the journey to the Swiss border alone – all members of the family travelled separately to avoid causing suspicion. Similarly to the texts by Beinhorn where travel by aeroplane is narrated as a perilous adventure into the unknown and where the threats come

[133] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.293.
[134] Ibid, p.295.
[135] Ibid, pp.295-6.
[136] Ibid, p.297.

from the natural world, in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* travel by rail is also depicted as a dangerous act. This time it is the people who pose the greatest danger. The other passengers are, she fears, potential members of the SS following her and waiting to arrest her.[137] Inside the train compartment a deathly silence[138] prevails which heightens the tension and the absolute terror of the narrating self. In contrast to the pilot who locates herself in a position of control over her machine, the emigrant in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* is depicted as completely powerless. The narrating self locates her in a void where all she can do is to wait. She identifies this journey as, "Übergangszeit – Zeit zwischen zwei Welten: der vergangenen, die untergegangen war, der kommenden, die noch kein Gesicht für mich hatte".[139] The narrating self defines Germany as a place which is now lost to her and her new country seems hidden from her as she does not associate Palestine with the prospects of something new and promising. She fixates rather on what she is leaving behind and on Germany as a lost world. The narrated self made it safely to the Bodensee and across the Swiss border where together with her children they embarked on their onward journey by ship from Trieste to Palestine. The sea journey is depicted as a grand adventure for the children, who saw the sea for the first time and for whom the experience was a big adventure.[140] The children are therefore depicted as naive as she shields them from the dangers they have all left in Germany. The narrating self, however, positions her younger self alone at the end of the ship, "das sich langsam in Bewegung setzte, das uns für immer von Europa fortführte. Da brach ich in tiefstem Schmerz zusammen. Mein Leben schien mir zu Ende".[141] Although they travel as a family they do not feel as a family because they do not all share her pain. Her narration suggests that emigration marks the loss of close family togetherness where they had previously shared their

[137] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.297.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid, p.298.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid, p.299.

experiences. In concealing the dangers and difficulties from her children the narrated self appears alone and without a community and this seems significant for a woman who previously operated within a number of different communities. To emphasise this point the narrating self describes her journey from Germany as a journey where she never reaches her destination, i.e. she never depicts herself as joining some new community or meeting members of an old one. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* travel is depicted as a solo journey "in die Fremde".[142] She begins to focus only on what she is leaving behind, her sense of Germanness and of being a European.

We have already seen in chapter four how the narrating self attributes an important role to Zionism in informing her sense of self. It is surprising, therefore, that in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the text stops short of narrating Israel. This suggests that although Zionism is constructed in ways that gave her knowledge of dangers and eventually gave her a destination in her plans to leave Germany, Palestine is by no means described as a paradise finally gained or even a desirable medium term solution. In fact it is not described at all. Certainly, the narrating self credits her Zionism with potentially saving her from falling into the hands of the Nazis at some later point in time.[143] If it had not been for her belief in Zionism we are told how the narrating self would have stayed in, "einem paradiesisch schönen Erdenwinkel"[144] and she cites Merano in Italy as a possible place of refuge. Indeed, rather than Palestine, it is Merano which is associated with paradise. Merano is in Europe and is German-speaking, having historically been an area of conflict between the Austrians and Italians. In professional and linguistic terms the narrating self identifies the place with the possibility of rebuilding her medical practice and thus of establishing a sense of continuity. She then reprises her position of knowing by asserting how the Nazis would soon find her or alternatively she would go to

[142] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p297.
[143] Ibid, p.298.
[144] Ibid.

Palestine having lost all she owned and arriving "als armer Flüchtling".[145] At this stage in her narrative it is clear that she identifies herself as an emigrant, with some degree of control over her journey.. We are reminded here of her earlier identification with Zionism as providing a possible safe haven in Palestine specifically for "unsere östlichen Brüder in Rußland, Polen, Rumänien"[146], the other Jews who were suffering persecution. Palestine is initially identified by the narrating self as a possible haven for other Jews where they could live in peace.[147] It is only during National Socialism that she identifies this place as a safe haven for herself as a Western Jew, whilst continuing to distance herself, through the terminology she uses, from any 'poor' Jews who arrive there later as refugees. In her narration, therefore, she identifies with Zionism on a general level and far less on a cultural level until a sense of peril within Germany motivates her to flee.

The narrating self gives prominence not to the life in exile but rather to what she is leaving behind and to her German and European sense of self, a sense of self which she seeks to preserve in the writing. She only narrates Palestine in the context of her journey from Europe to Palestine where she gives prominence to the loss of her "Heimat" to which there can be no return[148] as opposed to the promise of something new and hopeful. This is reinforced by the narrative structure which begins and ends with her life in Germany and indeed by the fact that the text is written in German. Whilst she constructs this as time for courage and self-restraint and a time for looking forwards to life in Erez Israel,[149] her words seem to be just rhetoric, employed by a person attempting to put a brave face on a situation for the sake of her children. Life in Palestine is not narrated as a viable alternative for life in Western Europe and specifically in Germany. Many Jewish immigrants struggled to integrate

[145] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* pp.298-9.
[146] Ibid, p.157.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid, p.299.
[149] Ibid, p.300.

into society there and indeed found it difficult to adapt to a landscape, climate and language which were different from where they had come.[150] It is only from other sources that we learn that after her emigration Rahel Straus remained in Palestine and established a small medical practice there, she also worked with disabled children and was therefore able to become professionally active in the new country.[151] Nonetheless, life in Palestine also meant a decline in material terms of their standard of living[152], certainly for those who arrived in the country during the early years of National Socialism. Jewishness by no means represented common ground either for the immigrants or for those who were already settled there.

The narrating self locates her journey to Palestine as an exile, which she associates with dislocation and loss as opposed to the promise of finding a new homeland. Instead the narrating self focuses on preserving a legacy of Germanness in a faraway place and this is the Germanness of happier times spent with her family, of entering university and professional life. It is to the differentiated narration of this legacy that we will now turn.

5.2.4. Images of Legacy and the Narration of Preserving a Cultural "Heimat" Far From Germany

On the most fundamental level the narrating self tells us it was the narrated self who was responsible for getting her children safely out of Germany relatively soon after the National Socialists came to power. It is the mother who decided on and implemented their emigration, thus ensuring the survival of the family. In 1933, 37,000 Jews emigrated from Germany. This

[150] Guy Miron,'From Bourgeois Germany to Palestine. Memoirs of German-Jewish Women in Israel', *Nashim* 2009, pp.116-140: 118.
[151] 'Rahel Straus' by Christiane Schmelzkopf, in *Juden in Karlsruhe: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte bis zur nationalsozialistischen Machtergreifung* ed. by Heinz Schmitt (Karlsruhe: Badenia, 1988), pp.471-480: 479.
[152] Miron,'From Bourgeois Germany to Palestine', p.118.

number declined in subsequent years and then increased sharply in 1938 after Kristallnacht when 40,000 Jews left. It then peaked at 78,000 in 1939 which was the last point at which Jews were able to leave.[153] Marion Kaplan has claimed that it was often women who insisted on emigration since it was they who had greater contact with state institutions such as schools and post offices as well as other public places such as shops and department stores where Jews faced restrictions and growing anti-Semitism in daily life.[154] Koonz has also argued that women were motivated for gender-specific reasons by a concern to protect their family[155] and identified emigration as a means to ensure their survival. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the mother is certainly the catalysing force of emigration, never expressing hope that things will improve and instead determined to leave as soon as the practicalities have been dealt with. A widow at this stage, she has to cope with life in Nazi Germany alone, as a professional and breadwinner she was also affected by the restrictions placed on her livelihood. For these reasons her experiences in Nazi Germany are not gendered as suggested by Kaplan and Koonz. Indeed, she does not narrate personal experiences of doorstep anti-Semitism, although she certainly did experience the professional restrictions imposed by the National Socialists as her patient list shrank. She finds herself positioned outside the professional community after 1933, yet she is not formally thrown out of the Bund Deutscher Frauenverein because this organisation disbanded itself rather than submit to the process of "Gleichschaltung".[156] Nonetheless her narration of growing hostility towards Jewish members in the BDF and her university alumni association, as examined in chapter three, suggests that she had found herself positioned towards the margins of these organisations since 1930.[157] There is little sense in her narration that as she was positioned outside these communities she attached more

[153] Kaplan, *Jewish Daily Life in Germany,* p.355.
[154] Ibid*,* p.357.
[155] Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland* (NY: St Martin's Press, 1987), p.369.
[156] Kaplan, *Between Dignity and Despair,* p.47.
[157] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* pp.265-6.

closely to Jewish organisations or indeed to other Jews. She certainly does not narrate her involvement with the activities of the *Jüdischer Frauenbund* (JFB) although she had been an active member of that organisation, regularly giving talks at branch meetings. After January 1933 the JFB took on new roles in addition to promoting and preserving Jewish culture and traditions. It was now helping Jews who were suffering the privations of National Socialism and providing practical help with emigration.[158] Through her narrating of Jewish friends, who do not connect the speeches they hear on the radio with their own safety, the narrating self in fact demonstrates her disassociation with the Jewish community. In her depiction of daily life after January 1933 she narrates her retreat into her own family community. She is preoccupied with motherly concerns for her son who is beaten by members of the Hitler-Youth at school. Concerns for her son's welfare are identified as gendered concerns by Kaplan and Koonz. It is the maternal figure who takes on the role of protecting the family and preserving their sense of identity after they have left Germany.

In her narration of emigration from Germany the narrating self locates the younger self and her family as survivors rather than as victims. This is reinforced by the surprising lack of condemnation of Germany. In order to examine the significant absence of condemnation in more depth I will now analyse the foreword to the text. It is dated Palestine 1940, i.e. seven years after her arrival.[159] Here the narrating self associates the act of writing with preserving a sense of her Germanness after emigration. The narration suggests images of legacy in her efforts to accomplish this. Guy Miron has argued in his analysis of the memoirs of German-Jews who emigrated to Palestine that in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narration is structured as a tale of decline and of loss. This sense of loss not only concerns the more obvious loss of citizenship and possession but also interaction between Germanness and Jewishness. I have

[158] Kaplan, *Between Dignity and Despair,* p.47.
[159] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.7.

already analysed in chapter four several narrative points at which Germanness is questioned by the narrating self in relation to her dual sense of self, thus this duality is not assumed throughout. Furthermore, I now conclude that the emphasis which is placed in her narration on the preservation of Germanness is as significant in terms of how the narrating self locates her position in exile and her sense of who she is, as the importance she certainly does attach to what she has left behind. She narrates the family legacy to the exclusion of the family's life in Palestine. The act of positioning features as a prominent motivation for the narrating self who, in her foreword, opens the memoirs with an address to her children and closes them by urging them to remember their descendants and insisting, "Ihr sollt Euch verbunden fühlen mit denen, die vor Euch waren, und mit denen, die nach Euch kommen werden, und so wissen, wo Ihr steht".[160] She invokes legacy here in the form of collective memory, of passing on the stories she is about to tell in her writing to those who come after, giving prominence to the survival of family legacy. She locates this necessity of survival against a backdrop of the chaos and dislocation which the family, as German-Jews, and other German-Jews were then experiencing. The narrating self identifies German-Jewry as a community that is, "zusammengebrochen, in alle Welt zerstoben".[161] She defines Germany therefore, as a broken community but we have also seen how in January 1933 the Jewish community was already fractured since not all members recognised the dangers ahead. Indeed the Jewish community had always been fractured in her account, first by religious differences and then by Zionism. Memories of happier times in Germany are identified by the narrating self as the means of reconstructing this sense of collective identity and thus preserving their sense of identity. She undertakes these attempts at preservation within the small German-Jewish community of her family and she does so by preserving the story of her own ancestors going back to her

[160] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.7.
[161] Ibid.

grandparents in Germany and indeed her own story. She locates this during what she refers to as, "die Glanzzeit"[162] without elaborating on what she understands by this term. It seems likely that her term relates to the period after unification when Jewish Emancipation was enshrined in the constitution of the German Reich.

Through her narration of this period the narrating self reconstructs "das Gesamtbild des deutschen Judentums, seines Aufstiegs, seines Wollens und Strebens, seines geistigen Schaffen innerhalb des Judentums und innerhalb der deutschen Welt".[163] She attaches importance to preserving knowledge of the achievements of German-Jews, thus preserving a sense of their interaction with the national community. She attaches significance also to producing a complete picture of this contribution in ways that counteract the subsequent destruction of German-Jewish life. She preserves memories of a time when Jews had room for self-affirmation but did so within a Germany where they had constructed communities of belonging. We have already seen how the narrating self disassociates the self from Germany, through her flight from a geographical homeland where she has rights as a citizen. The geographical distance from Germany, however, seems to have reinforced her sense of Germany as a cultural homeland. Family holidays to cultural sites of interest, an interest in German literature, a love of the German countryside and not least the educational and professional opportunities from which she benefited are all identified as significant elements in her construction of what it meant to be a German-Jew on the way to Palestine. In her narrating position in Palestine she associates with the legacy of the Jewish mother to pass on culture and traditions to her children. In contrast to the pilot who is depicted by the narrating self as a *technical* missionary to Germans in faraway lands, in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narrating self gives prominence to the *maternal* image of woman as a bearer of German

[162] Straus, *Wir lebten in Deutschland,* p.7.
[163] Ibid.

culture in strange and distant lands. It is the mother who assumes the role of preserving the German heritage of the family. This image of the mother as a bearer of Germanness far away suggests parallels with Lora Wildenthal's identification of women's roles in the German colonies with preserving Germanness.[164] The maternal image in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* does, however, stand in contrast to the pilot who flies as a girl, an immature and non-sexualised role, rather than as a mother or indeed potential mother. Analysis of *Wir lebten in Deutschland* suggests that their efforts were not restricted to women in the colonies but applied to Jewish women travelling within Germany, as we saw with the tour of Southern Germany, and to Jewish women who had fled Nazi persecution.

The narration of travel in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* is differentiated. Her depiction of emigration is identified as an emotionally difficult and politically dangerous journey. Above all it is through this act of travel that she redefines her sense of national belonging, thus the geographical place that she had always considered her "Heimat" is now associated with loss and dislocation. Comparison with her narration of an earlier family journey within Germany reveals the thematic significance of legacy in the text. In both narrations the narrating self identifies Germany as her cultural "Heimat" and in both acts of travel it is associated with the means of defining her sense of who she is. In invoking ideas of the German cultural homeland she is able to preserve the Germanness that resides within and to pass this on to her children. She locates the narrated self as the maternal bearer of that culture. After emigration it is through the act of writing that the maternal figure takes on the role of preserving the German heritage of her family and their contribution to a country which, although in civil terms is no longer home, in cultural terms their Germanness never disappears. The position from which she undertakes this preservation is a lonely one and a marginal one. She is positioned out of

[164] Wildenthal, *German Women for Empire,* p.6.

the German and Jewish communities at home and does not reposition herself within any communities. The German community she attaches to is not Munich which she associates with anti-Semitism but rather Karlsruhe and Heidelberg, romanticised places where anti-Semitism in any form is absent from the narration. It is clear that categories which separate Orthodox from assimilated Jews do not work in this text as the narrating self, an Orthodox Jew with a highly assimilated position in society, criticises those Jews who did not see the dangers and praises non-Jewish friends who supported her. Nonetheless, cultural belonging is associated with Germany and that sense of attachment prevails even after their citizenship of the country is denied them. The narrating self defines Germanness in ways that define it as a way-mark guiding her through the loss and disorientation which she associates with emigration, firstly from her children on the ship and secondly in her writing about life in Germany.

5.3. Narratives of Germanness during Emigration to France in *Hindsight*

5.3.1. "Swimming in the Twilight of Past Horror and New Hope"[165]: Narrating the Rise of National Socialism and Emigration to France in *Hindsight* (Wolff)

The quotation above encapsulates Wolff's experiences of fleeing from Germany in 1933, a time when the world was closing in around her but also as a time which brought new opportunities for her. In the texts by Straus and Wolff the narrating selves invoke images of a perilous and distressing flight into unknown dangers in their depiction of emigration from

[165] Wolff, *Hindsight*, p.112.

Germany. This section examines how emigration from Germany to France is narrated in *Hindsight* by Charlotte Wolff. In contrast to *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the destination is depicted as an idyllic place. The narrating self associates emigration with opportunities to develop new friendships and pursue new professional interests. Chapter three of this thesis has already shown how the narrating self positions the narrated self at the centre of a community of lesbians and a community of artists through her visits to the nightclubs, cabarets and cafés of Berlin during the Weimar period. In her narration of the small French town of Sanary, where she spent several months in 1933, the narrated self is repositioned in a community of artists and intellectuals abroad. Some of the members are also lesbians as well as members of her community of artists in Berlin. Indeed, many of them had also fled Germany. This community is depicted therefore as a familiar one in terms of its membership and its exclusivity. It is credited by the narrating self with opportunities to make new professional contacts and provide a source of potential clients as she pursues a new research interest in chirology. She returned to Paris later in 1933 to pursue this new professional interest and to undertake research studies in this field. It is in Paris in 1936 that she narrates anti-Semitism within her community of German artists and intellectuals and it is only then for the first time that she questions what being German means to her. The narrating self was thus repositioned outside her cultural and social community in France. She negotiates this repositioning by dismantling her sense of Germanness and identifying herself not as a German but as a Jew. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* we have already seen how the narrating self deals with the trauma of persecution and exile through preserving her cultural sense of Germanness abroad. In contrast, in *Hindsight* the narrating self negotiates the past through dismantling her sense of Germanness. As the world closes around each of the two women they negotiate the experience of emigration in quite different ways. These negotiations are the

focus of this section and to undertake this analysis I will first examine the period from 1931, which the narrating self identifies with the rise of National Socialism, until May 1933 when she left Berlin. I will then examine the period spent in France from 1933 to 1936. These periods are narrated in chapter three, "A Physician in Berlin"[166] and chapter four, "In Paris"[167] respectively.

From 1931 onwards the narrating self identifies National Socialism as a highly visible and violent force on the streets of Berlin. From then she perceives young men in Nazi uniform fighting running street battles with the Communists[168] and carrying banners proclaiming 'Death to the Jews'.[169] She identifies Communists and Jews as the two groups most immediately at risk from National Socialist violence and thus perceives herself to be a potential target on two fronts. National Socialism is therefore associated by the narrating self not only with the existence of political violence but with highly public episodes of violence on the streets of Berlin. She also associates the rise of National Socialism with the demise of her relationship with Katherine, her long term partner who is not Jewish and whose father dissuades her from sharing a home with a Jewish woman. The narrating self depicts her last months before leaving Germany in May 1933 as a lonely and frightening time for the narrated self, a time when she "felt numb and walked about like a robot".[170] She presents this as a time of personal dislocation as she finds it increasingly difficult to function in her daily life and it is this image of numbness which has similarities with the image of the sleepwalker in *Wir lebten in Deutschland.*

[166] Wolff, *Hindsight* , pp.108-111.
[167] Ibid, pp.112-152.
[168] Ibid, p.108.
[169] Ibid, pp.108-9.
[170] Ibid, p.109.

The narrating self does not refer at all to the proclamation of Hitler as Chancellor which reinforces the sense that National Socialism had been a dominant force in Berlin for some time. She frames her depiction of the official 'Machtergreifung' in terms of the legislation which the National Socialists introduced, relating to her professional role as a doctor and refers specifically to the "Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums". This was relevant to her as it stipulated that as of 7th April 1933 Jews would be dismissed from all posts within the public health insurance system. In fact, she was asked to leave immediately although we are not told by whom, and went the next day to say goodbye to her colleagues. She is thus officially repositioned outside the professional community by the State. On this same day the narrated self also finds herself on the verge of losing her liberty as she is arrested by the Gestapo at a station for being "a spy and a woman dressed as a man".[171] The narrating self depicts her spirited protestations as she laughs in the face of the officer and protests that one of her ancestors swam through the Katzbach for Frederick the Great. The narrated self invokes an image of a significant historical figure in Prussian and indeed Germany history in ways that are intended to demonstrate her sense of national allegiance. This sense of allegiance is attributed by her to her own family history. Frederick the Great modernised the Prussian army, led successful military campaigns which secured territorial gains in West Prussia and ensured that Prussia became a significant European power.[172] Wolff grew up in West Prussia, thus it is likely that she would have been particularly familiar with tales of Frederick the Great and her ancestor's role in his success. On this occasion it is not her protestations of allegiance that her from detention but rather the intervention of non-Jewish friends who defend and protect her.

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[171] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.110.
[172] Fulbrook, *A Concise History of Germany,* pp.81-2.

The narrating self constructs a small sub-community of non-Jewish Berliners who offer protection and concern for her welfare and she contrasts this community with the Gestapo, the only representatives of the National Socialist government that we glimpse in the text. During her arrest at the station one of the station guards turns out to be the husband of one of her patients. The respect and professional credibility she inspires in this man is also associated by the narrating self with saving her from longer detention and the Gestapo officer releases her at once. Several days later her flat is searched for bombs because she had been denounced as a "dangerous Communist".[173] The image that she has been betrayed, possibly by an acquaintance, stands in contrast to the image of her brave and loyal maid who had suspected a raid following an earlier visit to the house, and, together with a patient, hid any books which could be deemed dangerous by the Gestapo. Her former superior at the hospital, on hearing her news, expresses shame for being German[174], seeking to express solidarity with her. In her narration of the Nazi takeover courageous and loyal German friends outnumber those in power who threaten her safety. However, in contrast to Straus's loyal non-Jewish friends the friends in this text inadvertently threaten her safety by trying to persuade her not to leave Germany, fearing the difficulties she would face as a refugee.[175] The narrated self, however, is depicted as resolute in her decision to flee, going to collect her passport from the police station the following day. In a further expression of solidarity the narrating self includes an episode where the sergeant, an official figure, shakes hands with the narrated self and expresses sympathy that she is leaving since Jewish doctors, according to him, are always

[173] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.110.
[174] Ibid.
[175] Ibid.

the best practitioners.[176] The narrating self again associates her profession with a sense of the respect and status she is able to command amongst other Germans.

It is clear in her narration of the final weeks in Berlin that the narrated self has been identified as a threat on a number of different levels by the new regime. To consider these levels chronologically as they appear in the text: she is dismissed from her post because she is Jewish. Secondly, she is arrested because of the way she dresses and implicitly because of her sexuality. She is also arrested and her flat searched because she is suspected of being a spy and a Communist. Thirdly, as she collects her passport from the police station she is reminded of the dangers she faces because of her Jewishness by the sergeant. Finally, as we glimpse the narrated self on the train to Paris leaving Berlin the narrating self depicts the journey as "an exodus from an evil regime determined to destroy the Jews".[177] She frames her final weeks in National Socialist Germany through reference to her suffering as a Jew.

The narrating self portrays the journey by train from Berlin to Paris as a terrifying experience where danger and potential arrest seemed to be all around. She chooses a seat next to the door of the compartment, fearing arrest as long as she is on German soil. Indeed, we are told how "the back of my head seemed to hear and see if the Gestapo was coming".[178] Her sense of danger plays out in the mind in ways that are not dissimilar to the depiction of the long flight of the pilot who listens to her engine, certain that she hears it make a strange noise which could signify engine failure. The journey is depicted by the narrating self in *Hindsight* as a "prelude to life or death"[179], a 50:50 chance of escape. This fear is intensified at border control in Aachen as the Gestapo officer, whose steely eyes are picked out in the narration,

[176] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.110.
[177] Ibid, pp.110-1.
[178] Ibid, p.111.
[179] Ibid.

checks her luggage. The image she constructs of his eyes suggests that she finds herself transfixed there. It seems significant that although the luggage is checked, the passport is not. The only reference to a passport we have been made aware of in her narration is at the police station in Berlin. The narrated self seems, therefore, to move across national borders and to enter a different country without showing her passport. The inspection complete, she is free to go and it is as if the danger in her mind has lifted. We are then told in a single sentence that the narrated self arrived in Paris a few hours later. During her flight from Berlin the narrating self positions her younger self all alone, whereas she had previously always been located in communities. She appears to be the only person in the compartment, the only company, conspicuous by their absence, are the Gestapo officials whose appearance she dreads. The act of fleeing Germany is thus depicted as an intensely lonely experience, the pain of which she cannot express in any other terms.

The narration of fleeing Germany is similar in both *Wir lebten in Deutschland* and *Hindsight*, notably the fear of being searched and arrested during the journey which is intensified by the imagination of the narrated selves. In contrast to *Wir lebten in Deutschland*, however, the narrated self in *Hindsight* certainly does narrate reaching her destination of Paris. Wolff lived with Helen Hessel in the city from 1933 to 1937, then left France and travelled to London where she spent the rest of her life. Helen Hessel was an old friend from Berlin, at that time married to the Jewish author Franz Hessel although the couple lived separate lives, often in different countries. We are told that Helen is not Jewish which only becomes significant later in the text. She works in Paris as a fashion journalist. She invites the narrated self to stay with her and eventually the arrangement becomes permanent. Other

sources have indicated that Hessel was bisexual[180], yet any sexual relationship between the two women is not explicitly referred to in *Hindsight*.

The narration of her arrival in Paris suggests that it is not the place which inspires her sense of relief at escaping Germany but rather it is meeting with her friend Helen. After a brief isolated period in her own company on the train the narrated self is repositioned in a small community of three with Helen and her young son Paul. The narrating self compares Helen's voice to, "a caress and her urgency to see me a spring of hope"[181] and in this respect their friendship is narrated through sensual images and with it a new start and hope for the future. The narrating self identifies her emotions as being, "out of gear and shifting "from elation to despair"[182] in the months following her flight from Berlin. The friendship with Helen is depicted by her as "the rock to which I clung".[183] Helen is associated by the narrating self with stability and familiarity and with a sense of human warmth.[184] Through her friendship with this woman, not described in detail, the narrated self is able to preserve her own sense of identity. Although the narrating self associates her flight from Germany with emotional turmoil, fear and uncertainty, she does not associate it with a sense of loss as in *Wir lebten in Deutschland.* As we shall see, the narrating self negotiates her experience of exile through moving from her isolated position on the train, to a new small community of three with Helen and Paul, to a new yet familiar community of artists and intellectuals at Sanary, of which Helen is also a member. In moving to this community she constructs anew a sense of who she is away from Germany. To explore this further I shall now examine the narration of her time spent in

[180] Ute Scheub, *Verrückt nach Leben. Berliner Szenen in den zwanziger Jahren* (Hamburg:Rowohlt, 2000), pp.130-152.
[181] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.112.
[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Ibid.

Sanary where she spent several months in the summer of 1933. This period of her life is described in the fourth chapter of *Hindsight*, entitled 'In Paris'.[185]

5.3.2. Travelling From Paris to Sanary: Narrating the Grand Tour of France and Reconstructing a Sense of Self Abroad

In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* and *Hindsight* the narrating selves both associate cultural images and picturesque landscapes as a means of negotiating their sense of self in unfamiliar places far from Germany. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narrating self preserves her sense of who she is in Palestine through reconstructing memories of family holidays visiting German towns and travelling through the beautiful German countryside. In contrast, in *Hindsight* after fleeing Berlin the narrating self does not relate the two communities to each other. Instead she embraces everything that France has to offer and it is through this that she reconstructs her sense of who she is. In further contrast to *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the choice of France as her destination after fleeing Berlin is constructed as a "favoured choice".[186] She suggests that France was an obvious destination for her and attributes this choice to a visit she had made to Normandy with Helen and her son earlier in 1927. They had rented a cottage there and the party also included Helen's two lovers as well as her son. In narrating time she identifies this holiday as "a landmark in my life".[187] The village is romanticised as an idyllic place with beautiful rose-coloured houses and courteous and

[185] Wolff, *Hindsight,* pp.112-152.
[186] Ibid, p.108.
[187] Ibid.

vivacious inhabitants.[188] She also identifies this as a place where an "'alternative' society" can live and where, within the cottage, men and women walked about naked.[189] The narrating self thus associates the cottage as a symbol of "civilized relationships"[190] where jealousy and possessiveness have no place and where couples of any description are free in all respects. She does, however, separate herself from the "triangle" within the cottage by sharing a room with eight year old Paul and by stating that the narrated self did not share their habit of walking about naked. Her narration suggests that the relationship between Paul and the narrated self is similar to that of a mother caring for a child and not that of a doctor caring for her patient. In narrating time she interprets her relationship with the child as a substitute for the loss of warmth she had experienced through losing her community in Germany. Through her openness towards alternative relationships it is unsurprising that the narrated self associates France with opportunities for personal and sexual liberation.

After her emigration, in the summer of 1933, the narrated self and Helen leave Paris and undertake a motor tour through France with Helen at the wheel, making their way "through riveting landscapes and arresting towns".[191] The narrating self sets the French countryside, the country of Van Gogh and Cézanne[192], in contrast to anything she had seen before and the effect is intoxicating.[193] There appear to be one-dimensional descriptions of places which evoke the strong images and striking colours of the Surrealist artists. The bold images of this movement, in an artistic sense, resonate with the striking interests of the narrated self and with her acceptance of open relationships. The narrating self invokes images of a distant Greek and Roman past in her depiction of the beauty of the Provençal town of

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[188] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.108.
[189] Ibid, p.107.
[190] Ibid.
[191] Ibid, p.114.
[192] Ibid.
[193] Ibid.

Orange as she refers to its ancient Greek archway, luscious plants and the amphitheatre, "redolent of ancient Greece or Rome".[194] Her narration suggests that she sees herself belonging to a larger community through these buildings. Indeed, her narration of her university days, as examined in chapter three, has already shown the importance attached by the narrating self to the beauty of the Black Forest with its mountains and pine forests[195] and also to a sense of belonging within the "lovely city"[196] of Freiburg at the foot of the Black Forest. The narrating self negotiates her sense of self in her new country through attaching to the quite different landscape and history of that country and in doing so reconstructs her sense of who she is.

In both *Wir lebten in Deutschland* and *Hindsight* the narrating selves identify with the past and indeed with the relics of that past which can be viewed all around in the places they visit. Significantly, in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* these places are in Germany and in *Hindsight* they are in France. It could be surmised that relics of the past, whether ancient or medieval, offer a sense of continuity and of life going on through nature and through the beautiful buildings that man has created over the centuries. Such signs of continuity may offer hope for women who are far from home in foreign countries. In *Hindsight* the narrating self may attach to images of a French landscape yet it is still a European landscape with which she associates. We are told how the town of Vienne evokes images of North Africa in the appearance of its inhabitants and in architectural styles; the town is depicted as a mysterious place and stands in contrast in the narration to the "civilized elegance"[197] of Aix-en-Provence, the next stop on their tour and one that she associates with being back in Europe again[198]. She is fascinated by the juxtaposition between places and in particular by the fact that Vienne does

[194] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.114.
[195] Ibid, p.54.
[196]Ibid, p.53.
[197] Ibid, p.114.
[198] Ibid.

not feel European although it is located within Europe. She associates civilization with the café culture in Aix, a scene which would have been familiar to her from her days in Berlin, albeit on a considerably larger scale. Places beyond Europe are not defined in such alien terms as in the texts by Beinhorn, nonetheless it is clear that the works of all three authors identify Europeanness with preserving a sense of who they are in distant lands. Upon reaching Sanary, the final destination on their tour, the narrating self repositions herself in a community of artists and intellectuals. I will now examine how through her narration of this community the narrating self reconstructs her sense of self.

5.3.3. Images of the "Cultural Colony"[199]: Narrating Emigration within Intellectual Circles in *Hindsight*

In the narration Helen depicts Sanary as the antithesis of the "tourist hell"[200] of the Côte d'Azur. Instead it is presented as a small place, unspoilt by tourism which has a theatrical[201] quality with its numerous hotels and cafés. It is also not long before she and Helen are invited to a party which turns out to be an unforgettable gathering of the writers and artists who were residing in Sanary at the time. She names these people as Thomas Mann and his wife, Katia, and sons, Golo and Klaus, as well as Aldous and Maria Huxley. The narrating self constructs Sanary as a "cultural colony, a place where writers and artists from different countries had settled to find refuge or peace or both".[202] The narrating self constructs a cultural community and separates it from other people who live in the town, in fact other inhabitants are not

[199] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.115.
[200] Ibid, p.114.
[201] Ibid, p.115.
[202] Ibid, p.114.

mentioned at all.[203] Many of these refugees were artists and intellectuals who identified Sanary as a haven from politics and a place where they could maintain their creative interests. The growing volume of work on this period in the history of the town has examined Sanary from the perspective of the nationality of those who fled there, notably German artists[204]. In *Hindsight* the narrating self defines this community as an international avant-garde community and not a community of German *émigrés* where the narrated self is able to feel secure and this sense of safety is reinforced by the image of a colony that suggests separateness from the mainstream of society. The cultural community that the narrating self constructs is not defined with regard to the nationality of its members or the precise reason for them seeking a refuge. She refers to these people as "an international circle of friends"[205] where geographical boundaries are immaterial to friendships, giving them a cosmopolitan character. Her reference to specific individuals indicates that these members are not actually international but, in fact, European, coming from Germany and Britain. In this respect, the community of artists and intellectuals is defined by the narrating self as a cultural community rather than a community of different nationalities. The narrating self connects the members of her circle through their creative interests and not by any sense that they are exiles for political reasons. At the centre of this community of artists and intellectuals she positions her close friend Sybille Bedford and her mother who hosted "unforgettable gatherings" at their house in Sanary.[206] The narration of a sense of loss associated with emigration is conspicuously absent in the depiction of moving between cultural communities in *Hindsight.* Instead, her narration

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[203] Martin Mauthner, *German Writers in French Exile 1933-1940,* p.10.
Over four hundred refugees emigrated to the department of the Var, where Sanary is located, between 1933 and 1942 when the Germans took control of the Vichy zone.
[204] Mauthner, *German Writers in French Exile,* pp.1-20. In 2004 a plaque commemorating the thirty six German and Austrian writers who made Sanary their home after 1933 was unveiled in the town by the governments of Germany and Austria.
[205] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.113.
[206] Ibid, p.115. Sybille Bedford was a German-Jew who married a British aristocrat and later managed to escape from France through Italy at the start of the war.

suggests that any sense of loss was reconstructed by her as a source of creativity, as suggested by the theatrical scene conjured by the café atmosphere, and a source of new literary discussions and indeed the formation of new friendships.

The narrating self also identifies the town as a place where she found a source of new research methodologies and a means of reconstructing her professional identity after emigration. German medical qualifications were not recognised in France thus, in order to earn her living, she had to find ways of diversifying her professional training and she did so through her interest in chirology and the analysis of hands in order to diagnose psychological and physical conditions. She had been introduced to this new area of medical research in Germany through the work of Julius Spier during the late Weimar period whose lectures she had attended in Berlin. Sanary was the place, however, where she was able to make the acquaintance of people who would pay for her expertise and who would also introduce her to experts in chirology such as Henri Wallon, who was then engaged in research in this field. When she returned to Paris in the autumn of 1933 Wallon invited her to undertake a study of mentally disabled children in a Paris hospital and introduced her to colleagues in the field, who in turn invited her to undertake further studies at their clinics.[207] Emigration is therefore identified in terms of professional reorientation, new research contacts and research space. Research opportunities are located not only in the hospitals and clinics of Paris but also in the cafés and private homes of Sanary. The narrating self juxtaposes traditional places of scientific research and the arts because this is where her client base came from. In her narration of emigration the narrating self juxtaposes traditional sites of scientific research alongside sites where ideas of an intellectual and abstract nature are normally explored by challenging alternative methods. She can marry her unconventional sociability with her

[207] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.117.

scientific interests and do so, all in one place and without being marginalised professionally or socially. She derives her inspiration from the community of artists, yet she worries that they may see her scientific approach to chirology as an art form or may take her approach to be mere palmistry, allowing her to make "sensationalist revelations".[208] Her narration reveals a tension, therefore, between "her professional values and etiquette"[209] and "the mysterious and superstitious".[210] The narrating self depicts her new professional interests with her entry into "different worlds which did not easily mix or did not mix at all", through which she sought, "an underlying structure in a chaotic picture of strident colours".[211] She sets up a contrast, therefore, between the artists who sought her divinatory expertise and the support she received from Wallon and the established medical profession. The recognition of her research by Wallon is identified by the narrating self as an "antidote to self doubt" and a "certificate of legitimacy" as a medical practitioner.[212] It is through her self-identification as a scientist, therefore, that she is able to preserve a sense of who she is and this seems to be the single area of her life which she associates with continuity between her professional life in Berlin and abroad. Through her narration of her new research interests the narrating self positions the younger self on the "borderline" [213] of the medical profession, yet she does not construct this as a marginalised position. Socially she positions the narrated self at the centre of a community of artists and intellectuals. Furthermore she constructs this community as one whose members are

[208] Wolff, *Hindsight,* pp.118-9.
[209] Ibid, p.118.
[210] Ibid, p.117.
[211] Ibid, p.133.
[212] Ibid, p.122.
[213] Ibid, p.118.

"aristocrats and magnates in fashion and industry"[214] who reside in grand houses. All are connected through their interest in the arts and literature. The narrating self identifies her new professional interests with providing her with financial independence yet she relied heavily on her friends, not only for professional contacts but also to negotiate her emigration on an emotional level. She constructs a world that is idyllic and happy, yet it is one which she reveals as precarious. It is through her friendship with Helen that she positions herself within a new cultural community. It is also through Helen that she questions and then reconstructs her sense of self, as we shall examine in the next section.

5.3.4. Images of the "Volcanic Ground"[215] of Relations with Other Germans: Dismantling Germanness and Redefining the Sense of Self

The narrating self identifies a single incident as a watershed moment in 1936 in terms of how she defined her sense of self as a German-Jew, with which she had not seemed to engage for three years. This moment is identified as the shock of an "unmistakeably anti-Semitic remark" which Helen Hessel addressed to the narrated self. It is significant that the narrating self does not state what the remark is. The narrated self apparently left the apartment that same day. This departure brings to a sudden end her sense of permanence and belonging in Paris. After her separation from Helen we are told how other mutual German friends, "bade her adieu"[216] and no longer invited her to their homes. This, too, remains unexplained. At the same time a close German-Jewish friend was left by her non-Jewish German partner who returned to Frankfurt and never contacted her again.[217] The cosmopolitan community of artists is

[214] Wolff, *Hindsight,* pp.118-9.
[215] Ibid, p.134.
[216] Ibid, p.135.
[217] Ibid, pp.135-6.

dismantled by the narrating self as nationality and - importantly - Jewishness gain significance in determining who belongs to that community and who should be excluded from it. It is clear that the narrating self had a fluid sense of her belonging within different communities of artists and intellectuals in Berlin, Sanary and Paris until her break with Helen. The end of their relationship is thus narrated as a series of stages. The narrating self depicts this as the end of a friendship with the first person to befriend her in exile. She also implies that it is jealousy of narrated self's attachment to a mutual female acquaintance that prompts the break. The break up is narrated as the end of her sense of permanence as the narrated self moves from their shared apartment to a hotel.

We are then told by the narrating self that it is her exclusion from this small community of three and subsequently the community of artists and intellectuals that prompts the narrated self to look at her recent past and to question her identification with Germany in ways that she had not done since fleeing Germany. In effect, the narrating self dismantles the community of artists and intellectuals and identifies this as a "halfway house".[218] Within this community, she had not reflected upon the significance of her experiences during National Socialism in Germany nor, indeed, had she reflected on her sense of who she is since fleeing. She associates her exclusion from this community with a new recognition of what it meant to be Jewish, although Jewishness was not a part of her sense of self with which she had previously identified other than her childhood observance of Sabbath and visits to the Synagogue at Jewish New Year. These observances ceased during her adolescent years. She constructs a hierarchy and prioritises Jewishness as a racial identity above German nationality. She retreats, therefore, into thinking of herself in terms of race as she associates the thirties with her realisation that, "the Jews are a race"[219] who can be recognised through

[218] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.136.
[219] Ibid*,* p.21.

their "posture and expressions".[220] She delineates relationships in a way that she hadn't done before and the falling out with Helen leads her to recognise that the races are further apart than she had thought. After fleeing Berlin the narrating self becomes part of different cultural, artistic and professional communities. The single point at which her passport stating her nationality is given relevance by the narrating self is in gaining entry to France, and even then it is apparently not wanted. Within the cultural communities of Sanary and Paris, her passport is not referred to, nor indeed the nationality of her friends. However, as she reconstructs her sense of self following the separation from Helen the narrating self returns to the issue of her passport as she identifies herself as an "international Jew".[221] In 1936, shortly after the incident with Helen we are told how the narrated self was invited to publish her research on hand analysis with a British publishing house.[222] Through preparing her manuscript in Paris, which was written in English, it is clear that expounding her research findings is part of her new identity. She identifies France as just a safe refuge. Whilst she was completing the manuscript the narrating self attributes fears to the narrated self that Germany would declare war in the near future and that if France were to be invaded, "I saw the concentration camp coming closer and closer to where I was now".[223] The narrating self redefines her sense of self and introduces fear of physical incarceration for the second time in *Hindsight.* She reminds the reader to make connections with her erstwhile near arrest in Berlin. Indeed, it is fear of incarceration which motivates her flight from Germany in 1933. After briefly visiting London in 1936 she begins to make plans to emigrate there and that same year she left Paris and moved to London, travelling again with her German passport, which she describes as making

[220] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.22.
[221] Ibid, p.137.
[222] Charlotte Wolff, *The Human Hand* (London, 1942).
[223] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.151.

her feel like an "imposter travelling under false colours".[224] She identifies her sense of Germanness as "a false identity".[225] Indeed, she dismantles her sense of who she is in relation to her second border crossing when she left Helen and later France. After arriving in London her German passport expired but instead of applying for a new German passport, which the narrating self tells us, had been offered to her, the narrated self resigns her German citizenship and accepts a Nansen passport. The passport gave her permanent residence as a refugee in Britain and "relieved me of the fear of being chased away from its shores".[226] In this respect, the narrating self redefines her sense of who she is by resigning all association with national identities and instead opts for the impermanent status of a stateless person. She refutes all sense of belonging to a particular national community.

The narrating self further dismantles her sense of Germanness through choosing to write in English as opposed to German. Indeed, she criticises the "brutalization of words through neologism"[227] by the National Socialists and associates this as a "rape"[228] of the German language. In this respect, language is sexualized and given the persona of a woman subjected to a violent attack. She does, however, identify the works of Goethe, Wieland, Hölderlin, Novalis and Brentano with an authentic sense of the German language and she contrasts these authors of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to the state of the language during National Socialism. The period of German Classicism is thus romanticised as a time when all was right in the world and in this respect she preserves a sense of Germanness from a distant time in similar ways to the narrating self in *Wir lebten in Deutschland.* The narrating self acknowledges Isaac Bashevis Singer who won the Nobel prize for literature in1978

[224] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.118.
[225] Ibid, p.136.
[226] Ibid, p.167.
[227] Ibid, p.137.
[228] Ibid.

through his writing in Yiddish. He was a Holocaust survivor and reconstructed his sense of self through his sense of Jewishness and gave expression to this sense of who he was through the Yiddish language. Despite expressing admiration for his efforts, the author in *Hindsight* turns to two European languages, English and French, in order to give expression to her own reconstruction of her sense of self.

The narrating self structures her narration of emigration in terms of a world that on the one hand is closing in around her and on the other, around a world where new opportunities for friendship and cultural and professional fulfilment are opening to her. She moves between cultural communities in Berlin, Sanary and Paris and in doing so does not negotiate the emotional issues of fleeing Germany. In the end, it is not the legal stripping of her status in Germany that motivates her to redefine her sense of who she is, but rather it is a broken friendship that prompts this response. It is through dismantling her sense of Germanness on a cultural and social level that she redefines her sense of self. It is through broken friendships that she narrates her expulsion from her community of intellectuals and how she narrates the subsequent loss of a community with which she felt at one. Within her cultural background she rejects the concept that as a Jew she can achieve acceptance through shared artistic and cultural interests. She reaches an understanding of her sense of self that is racial and remains secular.

5.4. Conclusion

Through examining how positionings within communities are constructed in the texts, I have shown how the narrated selves differentiate their sense of belonging, sometimes in surprisingly similar ways. In *Wir lebten in Deutschland* the narrating self preserves a sense of

rootedness in Germany as the family's cultural homeland, even when it is lost to them as a place where they can live. Her attachment to Germany is surprising given her support for Zionism, yet Palestine is narrated only as a place that she never reaches nor even catches a glimpse of from the ship. As the world closes in all around she negotiates this through preserving a cultural sense of self that is familiar to her. In *Hindsight* the narrating self associates her flight from Germany with affording her new professional opportunities and friendships. She also emphasises this as an experience that forces her to recognise her "true" self which is as an "international Jew", a term applied by her as a label to indicate the rupture with her sense of Germanness. The label reinforces her sense that national boundaries no longer have significance for her. National boundaries may no longer apply in her narration but in Sanary and London the narrated self preserves her borderline position in the professional context of her research into chirology. Her work gave her knowledge of diagnosing physical conditions through different methodologies. The narrated self gives further prominence to the artists and intellectuals whom she met through her work and who also became friends. She narrates a further border position of being both their practitioner and their peer. The narrated self prioritises the continuity of her border position and in doing so her narration reveals the importance of a position that is familiar to her in preserving her sense of who she is. She gives prominence to rupture but in doing so she does not associate rupture with complete disorientation, but rather with reorientation in the kinds of communities that she knows. In separating her new communities from the mainstream the narrating self preserves her exclusive narrative position.

National boundaries also assume a level of insignificance in the pilot's travel account because in the midst of the alien wilderness of Africa the narrated self is able to find symbols of Germanness through the flag she spots from her machine and from the German settlers she finds when she lands. The narrated self gives prominence to carrying the spirit of political change and economic recovery from the Reich which reveals that the new political spirit also

crosses national boundaries. Her prioritisation of meeting Mussolini reinforces how Fascism is an international force and how it can be carried ostensibly through the guise of friendship and of a mutual love of flying. Flight during wartime is emphasised in narrating time in ways that apparently characterised her experience of National Socialism. This is managed through the significant omissions of episodes narrated in her earlier accounts. Through attributing her survival and the survival of her children to fate she reprises her exclusive position, it is a narrative position that is familiar to her from controlling her machine.

Through differentiating between narrative levels and indeed through examining the specific contexts in which flight is narrated, particularly in relation to National Socialism, I have developed a way of bringing together texts without imposing labels of 'victim' and 'perpetrator' on them. The juxtaposition of texts by women from a variety of backgrounds contributes to more differentiated readings of self-identity in relation to National Socialism and that different texts can be examined together without imposing judgments upon them.

6. CONCLUSIONS: NARRATING SELF

The stories that are told in each of the texts examined in this thesis may be fascinating for the feats they portray, but their real interest lies in the way the stories are constructed. The expectation, particularly of feminist scholars, that women would define their experiences through prioritising gender and gender struggle and associating with other women is unfulfilled because the label 'women' turns out to be inappropriate to the intricate ways these individuals articulate their senses of self.

The narrated selves define their sense of self through the communities in which they position themselves. They may reposition themselves within these communities and they may find new communities. It is through the prominence given in both narrated time and in narrating time to the different acts of positioning and repositioning that proved of interest here in exploring self-perceptions. Shifts of position often resist classification and can confound expectations. The language developed here facilitates a reading of the texts as intricate narratives where individuals speak from multiple positions. I have applied a close textual analysis to texts which traditionally have been examined only as biographical illustrations of women in professional fields. I have developed a language that allows me to take apart narrative levels. Through my analyses I have shown that this way of reading offers a more differentiated interpretation of texts by women with a variety of experiences, texts that do not, at first glance, seem to belong together. Indeed, I have demonstrated the validity of examining texts from different sides of the racial divide in National Socialist Germany in order to show these texts can be examined together without imposing categories of 'victim' and 'perpetrator'.

In particular, a methodology that keeps the narrated self distinct from the narrating self has enabled me to explore insights into the differentiations and similarities between the texts which have not previously been detected. Through examining the texts on different narrative levels I have examined the specific contexts in which self is articulated in relation to gender. The most prominent example of this is in Wolff's *Hindsight* when the narrating self tentatively questions her assumptions that the campaigns of the women's movement were relevant only to women of the lower and middle classes. In narrating time she also tentatively questions her earlier association of emancipation with lucidity about one's ambitions in life and her assumptions about the absence of gender hierarchies. Through examining the subtle differentiations which the narrating self applies in her narration, I have taken care to minimise the possibility that gender is imposed by me as a necessary category on which the self should reflect. These differentiations force the reader to consider their own reading stance at all times in order not to impose labels on the text.

The methodology of examining differentiated narrative levels enables me to detect what is absent in the text and to explore the significance of these absences. Gender is only one example of instances where absence becomes significant. A revealing example relates to the narration of fleeing Germany by ship for Palestine in Straus's *Wir lebten in Deutschland*. The prominence which the narrated self gives to her support for Zionism renders it surprising that in the narration she remains on the ship, never reaching Palestine nor even seeing its' coastline. Instead in narrating time she is careful to preserve a sense of rootedness in Germany as the family's cultural homeland, even if it is lost to them as a place where they can live. In Beinhorn's *Alleinflug* the absence of the narrated self's meeting with Mussolini in 1933, which she had depicted in her travel account, is notable because it signifies the constructed homogeneity of her narration. She situates the pilot above the political landscape

and not touching down. Post-1945 the 'landscape' has changed but in her book this is only noticeable through omissions.

It is true that the terms 'narrated self' and 'narrating self' can sound stilted and can disrupt the flow of argumentation. The interchangeable use of 'she' where the narrated self or the narrating self are established as the 'voice' in question, is also problematic. Whilst 'she' can ease reading, it does inscribe gender on the 'voice' and this is problematic in those examples where my argument lies in exploring the disappearance and absence of gender. There is a danger here of the reader gendering the self and also of reintroducing the author as a narrative presence. Notwithstanding the limitations, keeping the narrated self separate from the narrating self is a fruitful means of revealing how gender is given prominence within the text at different times. The language of position in community has enabled me to take the differentiation between narrated and narrating self a step further.

A revealing instance concerns the construction of the 'Studentinnenverein' in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* where gender initially seems to be given priority by the narrated self and indeed this is what we may expect of a single sex group. The narrated self then emphasises the internationalism of this community and in doing so her narration acts as a foil for the growing anti-Semitism and xenophobia which threatens to permeate the that small community. National boundaries and indeed religious differences become significant in her narration as the narrated self takes back some of the communality she had associated with the group. A further prominent example of shifts within community relates to the narration of the ante-natal clinic in *Hindsight.* In her insistence upon the clinic as a beehive community where the exclusively female team worked together, the narrated self emphasises the homogeneity of this particular community. Each of the practitioners at the clinic contributes their respective professional expertise to the new approaches in healthcare which were being pioneered. In narrating time she dismantles this community after discovering that one of the

practitioners had supported National Socialism since the Weimar period, a woman whom she depicts as the traitor within.

Gender becomes relevant and a concern when others attempt to define the narrated self in exclusively in gendered terms. In her determination to prove her doubters wrong and make it to her destination the narrated self in *Ein Mädchen fliegt um die Welt* takes substantial risks by flying on despite a faulty oil gauge. She gives prominence in her narration to making decisions which are informed by what she perceives to be the gendered expectations of others back home. The narrating self highlights moments of struggle as times when the narrated self must defend her separate space in the machine as soon as it becomes contested. When a flyer attempts to usurp her machine it becomes a site of conflict between the sexes: the narrated self emphasises her ability to fly safely and refuses to relinquish control of her own machine. She gives priority to retaining control of the machine and her emphasis suggests this is as much about controlling her narrative position as it is about preserving her own place in the machine. The sense that there is only 'space' for herself as the pilot in charge of the flying machine must not be confused with the physical fact that only one person can sit at the controls. Her narration and the prominence she attaches to being in control underlines the importance to her of being unique. The preservation of exclusivity is reinforced in narrating time by her refusal to send words of support to the women who write to her expressing a wish to fly. She attributes her career to her own strengths which she implies are pre-ordained and emphasises her exclusive position as one of the few who has these resources.

A further revealing example of where the differentiation of narrative levels yields rewards is where the narrated self in *Hindsight* associates working at the ante-natal clinic with removing the veil from her eyes and forcing her to pay heed to what was taking place in Germany. The narrated self gives prominence here to seeing the world for the first time and

in this respect she imbues sight with the significance of a watershed. The methodology of narrative levels is particularly useful in revealing the subtleties of reflecting on the world again and again in order to make sense of it. In this context I also show the connection in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* between claims to have foresight when still young and the recognition that the dangers that lie in being German and Jewish. The prominence given by the narrated self to that visionary capability reinforces her uniqueness. In the text the ten year-old narrated self identifies the dangers ahead for Jews in Germany at the time of Passover. She appears to have this foresight precisely because she is Jewish and because she is an Orthodox Jew with knowledge of the Scriptures who takes the message within the Scriptures seriously. She sets her claims to foresight in contrast to other Jews, usually described as assimilated, who do not see such dangers. In relation to the Dreyfus Affair, however, the narrated self is criticised by the narrating self precisely because she did not recognise the dangers early enough. There is a significant absence here because she makes no reference to the apparent contradictions between these two stances. The uniqueness of the narrated self is absent as she assumes the stance of other Jews, who emphasised Germany as their home and did not identify the country only as a place of temporary stability. Indeed, through differentiating between narrative stances it is possible to explore these apparently different stances, noting the lack of a bridge between them, and still doing so in non-judgmental terms. The narrating self in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* appears to see being German differently and at different narrative times but nowhere does she attempt to portray a fractured self and this is surprising. Indeed, In her bold claims to being fully cognisant of the dangers for Jews in Germany when still a child her narrative stance is one of omniscience, of being capable of a level of critical reflection that others are not. In narrating time she brings together her Jewish and German worlds, worlds that she constructs as different, within a harmonious whole within which she claims a sense of belonging and of feeling accepted. The model of the ‘unified self’, of

mastery of these different aspects of self is the key to understanding how the narrating self makes sense of her world. In her narrative she gives prominence to preserving a cultural legacy of her Germanness for her children after the family had fled to Palestine. Her absence from Germany seems to reinforce her connectedness to the country, on a cultural level.

The narrated self in *Wir lebten in Deutschland* is more complex in her repositioning within the narration than in *Hindsight.* Whilst the narrated self in *Hindsight* had experienced her childhood as stable, the narrating self reveals that any stability was only temporary. The narrating self gives prominence to the opportunities she found to pursue new professional directions and enjoy new friendships once she had escaped the dangers that faced her in Germany. She emphasises the borderline position of her research into chirology which gave her knowledge of diagnosing physical conditions through different methodologies, as well as access to the artists and intellectuals whom she met through her work and who also became friends. She also narrates her border position of being both their practitioner and their peer. The narrating self associates fleeing Germany with building a new borderline community through her work, and also with joining a new community of artists which was similar to the one she had left in Berlin and found first in Sanary and later in London. In separating her new communities from the mainstream the narrating self preserves her exclusive narrative position. In claiming that she no longer saw herself as German, the narrating self assumes the new identity of "international Jew"[1], a label that she associates with the "true" position of Jews.[2] It is a label that she imposes and one that suggests national boundaries no longer had any importance for her, indeed they could prove dangerous. Truth is a step further in her reflections and occurs after her repositioning, in contrast to *Wir lebten in Deutschland* where the narrated self had apparently known the true dangers for Jews for many years. In a different context, however, the narrated self in *Hindsight* makes claims to recognising truth since she was a toddler and she relates these claims to standing in her cot at three and touching her body. It was at that moment that she became aware of her Self. She makes claims to her exclusive position, being aware of the

[1] Wolff, *Hindsight,* p.137.
[2] Ibid.

world around her and reflecting on that world. She does so without narrating a bridge between her exclusive way of viewing the world and her subsequent insistence that there had been a veil blurring her view.

The prominence that is given to exclusivity by the narrated self in all of the texts examined in the thesis, and which I have detected through my methodology, supports the inclusion of *Alleinflug* in the thesis, a text which does not at first glance seem to belong with the other two texts. A revealing example from *Alleinflug* concerns the exclusive position adopted by the narrated self in several different contexts. In narrating time she emphasises instances of wartime suffering, of losing her home in a bombing raid on Berlin and her flight from East Prussia with her small children to Freiburg. She intersperses her narration with brief references to the other Germans who fled with her yet by the time she sets off on foot from the bombed tracks, the last stage in her journey to Freiburg, the narrated self is alone with just her children. During wartime the narrating self defines her own survival and that of her children as a miracle and as an act of fate. Her roles in her wartime narrative remain contradictory because of the significant absences in *Alleinflug*. Each of the individuals examined here constructs National Socialism as a time when the world closed in around them, at different points and in different ways. Through examining the contexts in which National Socialism is narrated I have developed a way of bringing together texts without imposing labels of 'victim' and 'perpetrator' on them.

The methodology I have developed here shows that unlikely pairings of texts can be brought together and examined in ways that contribute to our understanding of how senses of self are articulated and refined in autobiographical writing. Further work in this field could examine equally unlikely pairings between, for example, the texts here and the travel

accounts of women journalists who travelled outside Europe.[3] Explorations by Mary Fulbrook of generational difference within the specific historical contexts of 1918, 1945 and 1989 also merits particular attention in relation to the texts examined in this thesis[4]. The significance of language to German-Jewish émigrés in articulating their experiences is an area that merits further attention, particularly with respect to Charlotte Wolff who wrote her account in English as opposed to her native German.[5] The choice of language is constructed as important in Wolff's articulation of self in narrating time and this could be further explored with respect to other Jewish émigrés' identification with their native language as a means of expression.

The methodology developed in this thesis has shown how harmonisations and contradictions can be detected without classifying them in judgmental terms as failures or omissions. The methodology also goes a step further from feminist readings of texts which have prioritised gender and gender struggle as points of reference. Indeed, the methodology developed here contributes to more carefully differentiated readings of autobiographical texts.

[3] Texts could include the travel account of Maria Leitner, *Eine Frau reist durch die Welt* published in 1932.
[4] Mary Fulbrook, 'Generations and the ruptures of 1918, 1945, and 1989 in Germany' paper presented at The University of Birmingham conference entitled 'Aftermath: Legacies and Memories of War in Europe, 1918–1945–1989' on Friday 24th September 2010.
[5] Work in this area has been undertaken by Anne Betten and Miryam Du-nour in their study, *Wir sind die Letzten. Fragt uns aus. Gespräche mit den Emigranten der dreißiger Jahre in Israel* (Gerlingen: Bleicher, 1995). Their study is based on interviews with German-Jews who emigrated to Israel and includes a section on the importance of the German language following emigration.

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