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T H E S E A L E D R O O M

LOU ANDREAS-SALOMÉ AND ANAIS NIN : A STUDY
IN THE GENESIS OF FICTION

B Y

G I S E L A F U N K

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S U M M A R Y

This study explores the relationship between female identity formation within patriarchal society and women's literary discourse.

The 'Introduction' serves to highlight Lou Andreas-Salomé's and Anaïs Nin's acute awareness of the traditional conflict between the role of artist and the role of woman. With both writers, their efforts to come to terms with their own creative powers involve tentative questions about the function of writing itself, which they both experience as a vital need.

Part One of the study, therefore, addresses itself to reflecting the role of language as a basic means of socialization, which produces genderized subjects. This is related to the power of language to enable the construction of identity. Patriarchal culture produces woman as man's complementary Other. Questions of female identity and desire thus gain particular importance for the writer who strives to constitute her identity as autonomous subject.

The first two chapters of Part Two focus on the problems that confront the women who, within the process of writing assume creative powers that are traditionally conceived as male prerogatives. The internalized image of woman as mother operates as a powerful impediment to creative self-assertion. An equally fundamental obstacle in the writer's quest for literary authority are the problematic links each writer establishes between a masculinized creator God, paternal authority and cultural discourse. Transcending their culturally induced duality between woman and creator Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anaïs Nin develop opposed literary strategies. Yet both resort to non-threatening female stereotypes that are able to accommodate their anxiety of authorship. Chapters III and IV revolve around the experience of writing itself in terms of a re-construction of inherited meanings and the woman's problem of creating her own meanings.

Chapter V concentrates on the gaps that structure either writer's discourse and contribute to making it impossible to establish the woman as subject of desire.

Chapter VI explores the ways in which internalized concepts of femininity work to limit the freedom of the imagination, reduce the field of vision and result in projecting transgressive female desires in disguised or displaced form.

The 'Conclusion' stresses the inadequacy of existing controversial attitudes to both writers and highlights significant differences between the fiction of Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anaïs Nin.

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This work is dedicated to my mother and to my sister with her daughters.

P R E F A C E

This study has been prompted by recent work in feminist theory. Its purpose is to explore the relationship between female subject formation within patriarchal society and women's literary discourse.

Divided into two sections, the first part comprises theoretical reflections, linking literature and gender in two ways. On the one hand, it focuses on the connection between creativity and gender identity; a link that may also be considered in terms of the relationship between subjectivity and the subject. On the other hand, it reflects the connection between sexuality and textuality. This concerns the role of language in relation to the formation of genderized subjects.

Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anaïs Nin both attribute paramount importance not to producing literature but to the act of writing itself. This reveals a double-faced problem. It revolves simultaneously around the difficulties of assuming authorship and around the woman writer's opposition to conforming to a male literary canon. Establishing a relationship between literature and gender identity has thus also to take into account the relation between literature and woman's oppression.

Men and women alike write within a patriarchal society that defines them according to prevailing notions of masculinity and femininity. Within this collective frame any woman writes from a cultural position of inferiority. The nature and extent to which a woman has internalized the cultural concept of femininity varies. Hence, there are a variety of responses to her social position that are reflected in her writing. Assuming that a woman writes either in agreement with accepted notions of femininity or in opposition towards them would

therefore create a false dichotomy. Women who assume the power to write and publish always write in opposition to their culturally assigned position of inferiority and silence.

The connection between life and writing cannot be ignored either in the case of Lou Andreas-Salomé or in that of Anaïs Nin. With the latter the lifelong concern with creating her self-portrait as woman and writer is well documented in her diaries. It is of crucial value to her in the sense of enabling her to build up a female literary authority. Similarly, Lou Andreas-Salomé uses her autobiography to project a self-image that explains why she thinks herself special and articulate. They also both share a particular concern for explaining their imaginative disposition, professing an ambivalent attitude towards it and defending themselves against charges of abnormality.

The theoretical section, then, introduces critical material on the socializing function of language from a Lacanian position. This is related to a feminist perspective that takes account of the effects of the socializing process on women that makes

Weibliche Autorschaft . . . die paradigmatische
Situation des Schreibens 'als' andere ... (1).

The second section of the study considers various texts by Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anaïs Nin in more detail. Those texts are selected on the principle of their revealing more directly than others some of the problems addressed in the theoretical section.

INTRODUCTION

Woman and artist, - either incomplete
Both credulous of completion (1)

Eine der wichtigsten Voraussetzungen
für das Entstehen von Literatur ist aber
Sehnsucht nach Selbstverwirklichung :
daher der Zwang des Aufschreibens, als
vielleicht einzige Möglichkeit des Autors,
sich nicht zu verfehlen (2)

The Division between Woman and Creator

Invoking the image of the 'sealed room' to introduce this inquiry into the specificity of women's literary discourse serves various interconnected purposes. Its appearance as autobiographical notation and in fictionalized form draws attention to the multiform production of meaning. It also points to the continuity of life and art and hints at the relation between fiction writing and self-discovery.

Anais Nin and Lou Andreas-Salomé both define their artistic genesis with reference to a closed door. Lou Andreas-Salomé emphasizes the disjunction between her imaginative activity and reality, attributing the separation to the loss of the self-generated authority of her childhood god. Its effect on the power and freedom of her imagination is such

als sei [ihr] damit eine Tür in
alle Wirklichkeit zugeschlagen (3).

Similarly, in Anaïs Nin's largely autobiographical text The Sealed Room the woman says :

I began with a closed door (4).

Here, the father's failure to respond to the daughter's desire for recognition is made responsible for the woman's suppression and simultaneous strengthening of desire, without allowing the latter to find an outlet into reality and action. Authorial comment equates house and being, defining the nature of internal space that has become inaccessible to the woman :

She could see clearly all the cells of her being, like the rooms of her house which had blossomed, enriched, developed and stretched far and beyond all experiences, but she could see also the cell of her being like the walled-in room of her house in which was lodged violence as having been shut and condemned within her out of fear of disaster (5).

The equation of self-assertion with aggression and its suppression due to her experience of its painfully destructive impact on her own being is also Anaïs Nin's personal problem, complicating her quest for personal and artistic identity. The image already appears in the opening section of the first volume of her diaries, which situates the female subject in space and time. Long before it operates as an energizing source to produce the separate text The Sealed Room, it also informs several of her preceding stories.

Male writers have, of course, also linked their imaginative activity to their sense of lurking outside a closed door that they can never pass. John T. Irvin, for example, concludes his study about the relationship between repression and narration with regard to William Faulkner, saying :

Indeed, it is just that tension toward the dark room that he cannot enter that makes that room the source of all his imaginings - the womb of art (6).

Both, men and women, are subject to the experience of separation from a presumed natural state of wholeness. What takes place

on that other scene belongs to the pre-verbal phase of the subject. Therefore it cannot be appropriated rationally but must be imagined. Yet apprehending the lost realm of unity between self and other as dark or as sealed off from consciousness suggests a fundamental difference.

The metaphor of darkness implies that for the male, artistic creation depends on his visionary power and on the command he has over his craft to make visible the un-seen. This involves consciousness of his own power as creator and of his belonging to a tradition that has provided forms telling him how to organize his vision (7). It is this certainty of possessing the power of vision and creation that informs Henry James' use of spectral imagery. Reflecting on the nature of fiction and the creative process, he writes :

The house of fiction has in short not one window, but a million - a number of possible windows not to be reckoned, rather; every one of which has been pierced, or is still pierceable, in its vast front, by the need of the individual vision and by the pressure of the individual will (8).

The fact that the woman apprehends a part of herself as being sealed off, evokes the presence of an official stamp, a mark of authority forbidding entry to the reservoir of her own power. The sense of its inaccessibility suggests that it is the seal itself that operates as a fundamental impediment to her vision.

Contrary to Anaïs Nin's reference to the father, Lou Andreas-Salomé is not able to personalize the agent effecting this fateful self-alienation. To her it remains an anonymous force, qualified as

ein mir feindliches, böses
unheimliches Gegenüber (9).

Their different familial conditions foster different ways of identifying with the father, a bond that lends although a

problematic yet helpful narcissistic basis to the developing artist. (10) Even despite Anaïs Nin's unhappy childhood, this link contributes positively to her vocation as artist.

Lou Andreas-Salomé points out that her loving relationship with her father as well as the affectionate and caring attitude of her five brothers towards her as the youngest of the family had a lasting effect on her positive image of man. She learned early to feel at home in the spiritual company of men and came to envisage men primarily as brother, active, helpful, warm-hearted, this image blending favourably with that of her beloved father. (11)

Anaïs Nin, on the other hand, developed a maternally protective attitude towards her younger brother, seeing him as suffering from the same failing father as herself. Her diary entry shows that she was aware of the problem involved in her relation to man as brother. She writes :

it created a pact which has disarmed my power
to do man any harm. Man, my brother. Needing
care and devotion. (12)

However, she tends to overlook the fact that it is not man's misery but her own stance of self-sacrificial maternal nurturance that creates the real problem.

For Lou Andreas-Salomé, non-conformist attitudes reinforced by the father's support and approval increase the strain in an already tense relationship with her mother. She notes :

Enttäuschte sie diese Tochter dadurch schon,
daß sie nicht als Sohn zur Welt gekommen war,
so hätte sie doch zumindest einem Tochterideal
der Mutter zustreben sollen - und tat so sehr
das Gegenteil (13).

Identification with the father and simultaneous alienation from the mother inscribes itself into her fiction in terms of a persistent emphasis on male role activities and rationality

in contrast to either the absence of the mother, her inefficiency or unsupportive attitude towards the daughter. However, dependence on the love and support of the father or his substitutes also reinforces her veneration for existing cultural values. Those operate as obstacles to perception, preventing her from identifying them as hostile forces that have deprived her of her original sense of power. Her resulting division of the female subject into woman and writer imposes restrictions on self-expression. Those involve in particular the traditional feminine taboos on the expression of anger and sexuality.

Anais Nin, fully aware of the division between woman and creator within herself, engages in a continual struggle to relate both facets of her personality. She sees herself as representing

for other women, too, the one who wanted to create with, by, and through her femininity (14).

However, her exploration of womanhood goes with a retreat into inner space that often enacts fantasies of enclosure. Those are subject to similar inhibitions as Lou Andreas-Salomé's fictions. The act of self-exposure inherent in self-expression is charged with sexual associations and leads to a veiling of desire. Eventually she acknowledges the self-defensive character of her fictional technique. Regarding it as the direct result of her conflict between the feminine desire for being loved and the human desire for self-assertion, she explains :

as I could not reveal the truths contained in my diary, I had to find a way to tell the truth in a poetic, symbolic, surrealist fashion. The ambiguity and obliqueness of poetry suited me (15).

Establishing their respective positions as writers and building up a literary authority in the process is one of the major concerns of both Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anais Nin

throughout their writing career. Anaïs Nin's insistence on wanting to convey a woman's point of view in a specifically female language suggests a direct contrast with Lou Andreas-Salomé's outspoken conformity with patriarchal beliefs and her lack of concern for matters of language. However, this apparent contrast veils what they have in common. They both draw on the ideology of femininity which ascribes to the woman the sphere of the private and personal, endows her with special sentimental, emotional and relational qualities and hence with an outstanding capacity for psychological insight. But this adherence to what is traditionally thought of as feminine also causes particular problems.

Heightened engagement with feelings makes one all the more aware of a secret inner self that is muted in ordinary life. And with both, their will to assert this secret self is undercut by ambivalent attitudes towards their own imaginative disposition. Both link their facility to escape into illusory worlds to their artistic potential. However, they are also both reluctant to accept their imagination as a source of power. Lou Andreas-Salomé's self-deprecatory evaluation of her prolonged fantasizing as a child in terms of an infantile regression comes to bear on her disbelief in women's ability to create. It is echoed by Anaïs Nin's unwillingness to accept the adventure stories of her childhood as a means of self-assertion and her readiness to see her fiction writing as a means

to escape into creation, create an illusory world . . . dream or create an individually perfect world (16).

On the other hand, however, throughout their writing career both writers are preoccupied with retracing the crucial experience that has made them fully aware of a doubling of reality. As an enigma to be explored again and again it invades all modes of their writing - the autobiographical, the fictional and the theoretical. This continual focus

betrays a persisting attempt to justify their specialness and to explain their need for creating alternative worlds. It is also bound up with a search for beginnings, revolving around the genesis of sexual difference and castration. Identifying a beginning they both establish a relationship between the genesis of identity and the genesis of writing. Thus either pursuit reveals itself as the other facet of the same effort. Each affirms the desire to assert the self within a society that has systematically constructed woman as other, as non-self and denied her creativity. However, this desire for self-assertion also discloses a double-faced split at its very roots. Reflecting on her continual attempts to trace the course of her life back to the beginning, Anaïs Nin wonders :

Where is the beginning ? The beginning of
memory or the beginning of pain (17) ?

For both it is, in fact, the experience of pain that they consider constitutive of their identity. To Anaïs Nin's shattering experience of her father's desertion of the family corresponds Lou Andreas-Salomé's experience of the disappearance of her androgynous childhood god. They both also situate the beginning of their fictional writing after the sudden loss of their imaginary double who presents an idealized version of the self's sense of power. This experience of painful deprivation also marks the dividing line between two phases of imaginative activity. Once the sense of power informing the earlier phase has gone, fantasies are henceforth devalued in favour of a conscious appropriation of reality. With both, this internal division produces two kinds of writing practice, which they come to consider in genderized terms.

Anaïs Nin's problem of assuming authorship is intimately bound up with her initial attribution of gender to diary writing as feminine and fiction writing as masculine. The

desire to resolve this opposition generates the wish 'to write as a woman, and as a woman only' (18). The diary remains throughout the matrix of her fiction. But she will come to regard both types of discourse as 'a process of creative transformation' (19) that aims at 'the interaction of contraries' (20). Lou Andreas-Salomé acknowledges that her women characters are mostly perceived through male eyes. She feels that in writing fiction she performs a masculine activity and describes her writing experience as follows :

bei solch begrifflichen Arbeiten empfand ich mich verstärkt als bei einem weiblichen Tun, dagegen bei allem, was in Dichterisches einschlägt bei einem männlichen (21).

Their adoption of different genderized stances within the process of writing fiction generates different attitudes towards language and towards the symbolic. This has consequences for their construction of the fictional text and for their concepts of female identity. Lou Andreas-Salomé equates male and human and is convinced of the power of the male spirit to produce objective truth. It is therefore impossible for her to radically question cultural gender stereotypes. Especially in her essays, she defends the conventional feminine ideal of the domesticated woman. Thus her rational discourse shares with the initial secrecy of Anaïs Nin's diary writing a certain relation to silence. Both types of textual production conceal from public view whatever individual experience does not correspond with collective feminine role expectations.

However, the double discourse simultaneously entertained by both women apparently answers a desire for self-expression and self-affirmation, which the single discourse of intellectual work or of the diary is inadequate to articulate. Lou Andreas-Salomé praises fiction writing directly for its capacity

das rationell Unaussprechliche beredt zu machen an den Gleichnissen der Sinnenwelt (22).

Anais Nin emphasizes its stabilizing effect on the writer's psyche, specifying

Something is always born of excess. Great art was born of great horror, great loneliness, great inhibitions, instabilities and it always balances them (23).

For similar reasons Lou Andreas-Salomé foregrounds the relationship between living and writing, acknowledging that

was [sie] aufschrieb, nur oder fast nur um um des Vorgangs selber, um des Prozesses willen wichtig war und irgendwie lebensnotwendig blieb(24).

In fiction writing, it is the experience of writing-as-process that for her constitutes its vital importance. Anais Nin also values the effects of writing for its power to move, advance, progress, without however restricting it to fictional production. Writing itself becomes her means of struggle

against every trap, every entrapment of experience, every limitation, every restriction (25).

Linked to this understanding of writing as a transformative process is her view of life as an 'adventure'. She explains :

Even by beginning a diary I was already conceding that life would be more bearable if I looked at it as an 'adventure' and a tale (26).

Imagining her life as 'a tale' sustains her belief in the continuity of life invested with

a possibility of escape, of expansion, of growth, of sublimation, of transcending the obstacles which seem absolutely impossible to move (27).

Her recourse to poetic devices in constructing her fictional texts is a direct attempt to relate the concept of adventure that informs her life to her fiction. She describes the lived experience as a labyrinth :

it is sometimes dark, we can't see around the corners, we sometimes feel blind-folded But we have to continue (28).

Change, the development of a new pattern replacing the old one is apprehended as happening so

organically and imperceptibly, that you are not quite aware of it until suddenly you encounter a challenge and find out you have changed (29).

Fiction writing is experienced in a similar way. Proceeding from the dream or image has the effect that

you don't quite know where you're going, but at the end you see it does form a pattern (30).

Yet Anaïs Nin's insistence on the concept of adventure also highlights one of the central problems a woman writer encounters when transposing her experience into fiction. The goal of the human quest is a search for sense. But a woman's life has traditionally been ordered for her by an erotic plot, in which she figures as either temporary object or ultimate objective of a male quester (31). Lou Andreas-Salomé's predilection for telling stories set in the period of childhood and adolescence betrays the need to assert time scales and map out areas that allow for adventures by circumventing the male tradition of narrative. Her fictional women, on the other hand, once inserted into their conventional feminine roles may experience challenges but do not undergo changes. In relation to the female protagonist the plot usually serves to unfold a static psychological situation, with notions of development, moral growth and achievement being attributed to the secondary male character. Or, as in her first novel Im Kampf um Gott, the quest figures clearly as a male prerogative. Anaïs Nin's texts reflect above all the elusiveness of the goal, as the woman uses her creative energies also in concealing her desires and perfecting herself as the man's objective. If the adventurous quest is rewarded in the end, its reward is a negative one. It consists of the woman's realization that it was impossible for her to achieve fulfillment of the dream.

Contrary to Anaïs Nin, Lou Andreas-Salomé consciously upholds the contrast between her fictional and non-fictional discourse. Yet practically neither mode of writing conforms to strict traditional divisions prescribed by a male discursive canon. As with Anaïs Nin, the biographical tends to invade the fictional as well as the abstract critical essay. However, it is only fictional discourse on which a host of ambivalent feelings converge and which, in the case of Lou Andreas-Salomé lead her to declare her fiction as non-art.

In L'ordre du discours Michel Foucault has pointed out that the particular historical concept of the author involves what he calls a specific function of the author which any individual writer either adopts or modifies in turn. Convention does not allow Lou Andreas-Salomé to identify with the idea of godlike creator prevalent at her time. Anaïs Nin questions this myth and tries to develop for herself a new position as author. Lou Andreas-Salomé, faced with the impossibility of relating the male self-image as author to women, believes them to be incapable of creation.

This self-denial as author imposes restrictions on a woman's imaginative freedom. Yet at the same time Lou Andreas-Salomé's reputed unwillingness to produce works of art (32) may also be seen as a form of resistance. Her lack of concern for the formal constraints of art suggests a refusal to keep the self firmly confined within conventional norms and forms. Disregarding them appears to operate as a precondition to enabling her to enter her own story.

Implicit in her opposition between artistic form and faithful portrayal of life are questions about illusion and reality. This problem constitutes a major theme throughout her own as well as Anaïs Nin's fiction. With both, it revolves around the woman's lack of self-knowledge, her life in a fantasized world and her ignorance about the ways in which society operates. But it also focuses on the father's production

of truth which is, either directly or indirectly, exposed as subjective fiction.

Connected with this theme of truth and knowledge centring on problems of the conscious I are questions about vision and visibility. They involve the power of the eye to create and control reality. Associated with difficulties in perception there appears the theme of writing as reading. It revolves around the possibility or impossibility of recognizing specific behavioural patterns as cultural inscriptions in the body.

The network of memory traces which structures the body and thus organizes the subject has its external correlative in the central metaphor of the house. With both writers, their use of this image betrays the need to explore and express a female self beyond the woman's traditional relegation to the domestic sphere. They each start out with a novel that connects the theme of knowledge with questions of gender and writing. Cast as the site where the production of discourse takes place and as a frame that confines it, the house in Anaïs Nin's House of Incest is related to the book as a container of subjectivity. Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel Im Kampf um Gott conveys the sense that reality is a mere product of the male mind. It also suggests that anything outside the father's head and house is in a state of undifferentiated chaos and frozen into non-being. Anaïs Nin's adoption of a woman's perspective focuses on the fluctuating chaos beneath the level of consciousness. Her association of house and womb revolves around female power that remains unconscious of itself. In Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel, the house is described as having once been the home of an archaic maternal figure and is thus also a reminder of lost female powers. Her last novel Das Haus charts the mother's domestic sphere of influence and presents an idealized version of the woman's social role as wife and mother.

More directly than Lou Andreas-Salomé, Anaïs Nin exposes the frailty and inadequacy of the woman's self-definition resting on the internalized cultural concept of femininity. Lou Andreas-Salomé's texts frequently state a desire for otherness and then work to suppress it. Anaïs Nin is primarily concerned with undoing the effects of repression. Yet her texts equally foreground the impossibility of the woman's quest for meaning.

For the purpose of a comparative study, the name of Lou Andreas-Salomé suggested itself due to Anaïs Nin's frequent references to her. In boundless admiration of Lou Andreas-Salomé's courage and power to create her own psychological freedom despite adverse socio-historical conditions, she singles her out as being

perhaps the most adventurous woman
in the realm of ideas, in the realm
of the inner journey (33).

A historical gap of about fifty years separates the beginning of their fictional production. Lou Andreas-Salomé writes in the tradition of German realist story telling. Anaïs Nin is profoundly influenced by the French tradition of Surrealism and by Proust. This study does not disregard those historical determinants. However, its main concern is with considering their texts in terms of the different strategies they display to transcend the conflict between feminine role conditioning and the desire for autonomous self-assertion.

Anaïs Nin turns to the body, led by the desire to re-possess it through language. Lou Andreas-Salomé is concerned rather with exploring psychological problems on the conceptual level. However, this different emphasis placed either on the capacity of language to transcribe the body or on its referential function cannot be subsumed under historical differences. Recent feminist criticism reveals similar opposed attitudes towards writing and reading. Thus, in the German context

there is an almost obsessive evocation of the mirror to explain the woman's relationship to herself in terms of her being constrained by the male gaze, which tends to focus on the conceptual. French feminists, on the other hand, are preoccupied with ways of 'writing the body'. Jane Gallop has suggested that

Perhaps any text can be read as either body (site of contradictory drives and heterogeneous matter) or Law ? (34)

She poses it as a question. Yet would it not be more appropriate to focus on the interrelationship between the body and the Law? Concentrating on the Law makes the operation of the Law explicit as well as female strategies to circumvent it. Approaching the text as body seems to be a more problematic matter. How can a text be approached as body, a body that is moreover already structured by the Law? Engaging in the process of signification involves both. Yet writers themselves have also not been very explicit on this question. Virginia Woolf's attempt at defining what happens in the course of writing to make it the expression of an existential need results, for example, in her puzzled recognition that

it is one of the obscure elements in life that has never been much discussed (35).

P A R T O N E : THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS

we are the words (1)

each time we speak,
we are also spoken (2)

I. SUBJECTIVITY AND THE SUBJECT

1. The Socializing Function of Language

It is generally assumed that there is a difference between fictional and non-fictional discourse. But does this taken-for-granted difference also influence the treatment of literary texts in significant ways? On the contrary, it is readily ignored as soon as fiction is explored with a view to providing insights into socio-economic conditions or character formation. This traditional reading practice implies a belief that fiction offers a truthful representation of reality. But has this function not rather been ascribed to non-fictional texts? In which case, where does the presumed difference come in? Analysing rhetorical devices and structural patterns supposed to enhance the meaning of a text appears to be a self-evident requirement with regard to fiction. But non-fictional texts exhibit similar features. It is a general tendency to consider fictional characters as separate entities and to extract a theme. Yet what is the reason for unifying and thus simplifying a distinctly complex form of expression?

Feminist criticism, which considers itself as an innovatory critical practice, is not altogether exempt from this attitude. It has revealed the sexist bias inherent in male literary and critical discourse. But in as much as it continues to take the text as a direct mirror of socio-economic conditions or psychological reality, it has already proved to be reiterative and ultimately unproductive. For once the text is assumed to have yielded its truths about gender role conditioning and its ideological foundation, this knowledge becomes a commodity. As such it is readily absorbed within the existing body of knowledge. In a circular movement, extracted ideological conditions are, as implicit expectations, brought to bear on other texts in view of drawing from them what has beforehand been posited as a truthful reflection of reality. This emphasis on sex-linked content analysis is, as Dorin Schumacher has observed ' a conservative critical method' (3). It is a constructive practice only in so far, as it allows the reader to extend her knowledge about formative ideological conditions that are constitutive of female subject formation. But it has a profoundly reproductive effect, as long as it does not go beyond doubling the patriarchal concept of femininity.

Incidentally, various components in this traditional approach to fiction show a marked similarity with the child's imaginary identification with its mirror image. Treating the text as product means focusing on its exteriority. The sense of power and control associated with it, derives from identifying the coherent unity of a whole and from determining a structure or defining a theme that embrace the totality of the object. Yet Lacan has pointed out that the child's experience in the mirror situation produces an illusory mental state (4). The child's perception of itself is a fiction because it coincides with a lack of command of its physical movements. This discrepancy between the perceiving and the perceived self is reminiscent of Freud's views on the dual nature of fiction. He understands it as a return of the socially undesirable and therefore the repressed clothed in socially acceptable form (5). Evidently,

the traditional focus on represented content and its formal structure mistakes the disguising costume for a true image of reality. Disregarding the body as origin of the work, however, severs it from the force that produces it, ignores the dynamic interplay between energy and form and eliminates from view what characterizes the work as process (6). Thus it also veils the subversive potential that informs the creative act of writing.

Jacques Lacan and Julia Kristeva have emphasized that that there is no subject except through language, i.e. that it is the acquisition of language which constitutes the human being as male and female subject (7). Language itself always precedes the subject, inducing collective forms of interaction and a particular vision of reality, embodied in words, images, or grammatical structures. According to Lacan the infant's identification with its mirror image provides the basis for all further identifications and coincides with its entry into language. Yet with regard to the mirror image, he also remarks:

certes cette forme est-elle plus constituante que constituée (8).

This leaves room to think the subject in terms of being subject to and subject of language. It also draws attention to the dual nature of language itself. On the one hand, it exists as the inexhaustible supply of distinctive elements and on the other, as discourse, which is already an ordered distribution of these phonetic, semantic and syntactical elements. As societal discourse language functions as the basic form of socialization and as a continual socialization process. Yet it is primarily the heterogeneous quality of language that constitutes its power to signify being.

2. Creative Writing : A Signifying Practice

Christa Wolf stresses the twofold character of writing, when she defines the aim of fiction as

wahrhaben, was ist und
wahr machen, was sein soll (9).

She establishes a significant link between using the sense of sight and using language creatively. 'Wahrhaben' unites the act of perceiving with appropriating a truth, while 'wahr - machen' refers to the construction of the truth itself. Normally, sense perceptions are organized in and through the collective symbolic system. The utopian component in formulating a perception of the real derives from the fact that it contradicts the social sign. A re-opening of the rift between the body and the symbol generates the production of fantasies and fiction. According to Julia Kristeva's conceptualization of the relationship between the semiotic and symbolic functions within the structuring process of the self (10), the creative writer may be regarded as the paradigmatic individual who realizes what happens to the human being at the moment of entering language.

Heeding the double sense of 'realize' also brings out the twofaced nature of writing. In the process of writing the acts of seeing, noticing, remarking, perceiving combine in a joint activity with making real, materializing a wish, making a project come true, actualizing a potential. It is noteworthy that reference to the same activity in English focuses on the real, while in German it centres on truth. Giving a form to the real creates truth, the truth of the subject writing, self-knowledge.

The affinity between using the sense of sight and using language rests on the fact that both activities discern and delimit differences. Also, by identification or projection we animate the world around us so that perceptions of external reality come to figure as metaphors for internal reality. Thus, in Annie Leclerc's description of the gaze, it would

be possible to replace le regard by 'language use' to obtain a comment on the power-knowledge-pleasure relationship involved in writing. She says :

Le regard est seul à me donner le monde tel qu'il se présentera au savoir, à la connaissance. Le regard m'instruit de la division, de la séparation entre moi et les choses

Par le regard se révèle à moi un lieu où je ne suis pas, un objet que je ne suis pas. La vue est ce sens cruel et puissant qui m'écarte de la jouissance, qui renonce à la confusion intime des chairs que la jouissance exige (11).

Jane Gallop defines writing similarly as

an exemplary instance of mediated communion, communication that recognizes distance (12).

In writing, the subject strives to discover a place which it has failed to inhabit and to reveal an object which escapes its grasp. Julia Kristeva emphasizes that desire expresses

l'assujettissement toujours déjà accompli du sujet au manque (13).

She defines the subject of desire as the one

qui vit aux dépens de ses pulsions, à la recherche jamais atteinte d'un objet manquant: sa praxis ne s'origine que de cette quête du manque, de la mort et du langage (14).

Naming the object presents it to consciousness. Un-named, it is also present, exerting pressure on the subject and disturbing its psychic balance. Discharging its energy potential into symbolic form does not explain the real. It articulates it, by re-presenting the real. Writing thus is at the same time an act of repetition and of transformation.

Comparing the English term 'repetition' with its German equivalent Wiederholung reveals two aspects of the same process. Wiederholung emphasizes the dialectics of backward

and forward movement, which is linked to the volitional activity of the subject to re-appropriate a lost object at an unknown place. Writing, then, testifies to the presence of desire. Similar to Julia Kristeva, Lacan has described its function, as follows :

Le désir, fonction centrale à toute l'expérience humaine, est désir de rien de nommable. Et c'est ce désir qui est en même temps à la source de toute espèce d'animation. . . . C'est en fonction de ce manque, dans l'expérience de désir, que l'être arrive à un sentiment de soi par rapport à l'être. C'est de la poursuite de cet au-delà qui n'est rien, qu'il revient au sentiment d'un être conscient de soi, qui n'est que son propre reflet dans le monde des choses (15).

The term 'repetition' (from petere:seek) foregrounds the notion of a quest and is suggestive of the question that operates at the core of writing. It also evokes the sense of a petition, a request addressed to an authority. Within the act of writing, this authority invested with the power to grant or withhold the answer, is nothing other than language itself. So Lacan also insists that the subject arrives

à nommer, à articuler, à faire passer à l'existence, ce désir qui, littéralement, est en deça de l'existence, et pour cela insiste. Si le désir n'ose pas dire son nom, c'est que ce nom, le sujet ne l'a pas encore fait surgir (16).

Moreover, the formulated request repeats a preceding demand for meaning which has escaped symbolization.

3. The Failure of Symbolization

The image of the sealed room pinpoints the gap in language as socio-symbolic discourse, when it appears at the beginning of Volume I of Anaïs Nin's diaries. Constant references to literary authorities and their fictional projections suggest that the writer is primarily a reader. The act of naming the place of the subject presents itself as an act of recognition. Memory images acquired through reading impose themselves on the observing eye, obstructing direct perception of reality. People and the space they inhabit are not perceived in relation to what meaning they have for the subject but in terms of meanings ascribed to them by others. An inhabitant of the village, for example, becomes 'one of Bazac's misers' (17). The description of the village itself evokes an image of space invaded, filled, appropriated by others, leaving no room for the subject to enter it. The text suggests that man disposes of space in terms of political and economic power, aggrandizing himself by accumulating property and thus dominating the space and life of others. Anaïs Nin's evocation of man's physical and mental space resembles what Claudine Herrmann has described as

un espace de domination et de hiérarchie,
un espace de conquête et d'étalement, un
espace 'plein' (18).

Here, women only figure as passive onlookers on the scene of life. Imprisoned within domestic space,

behind the windows of the village houses
old women sit watching people passing by (19).

Subjected to time, women are not only cut off from space but from life altogether.

Reviewing the external scene of ordinary life appears as a detached and dispassionate registering of a fixed past that imposes itself on the present, disclosing nothing new. Yet

as soon as the writer removes her attention from this external scene to focus on the physical space that houses her own being, the text shows a marked difference. Here is the description of the woman's house :

There are eleven windows showing behind the wooden trellis covered with ivy. One shutter in the middle was put there for symmetry only, but I often dream about this mysterious room which does not exist behind the closed shutters (20, my underlining).

This 'mysterious room' operates as a metaphor for desire, exposing the lack in which it is grounded. The room has no existence in reality. Only naming makes it exist, while at the same time positing its absence. Similar to a word covering the real, so the shutter functions as a sign designating the reality of a room. The writer expresses mistrust of the sign. There is no one-to-one correspondence between the sign and its referent. In fact, the image makes it explicit that there is no correspondence at all. A transformation has occurred which aligns the real in accordance with some pre-conceived idea of symmetry. The latter is an imaginary construct. Arbitrarily imposed on the real, it smoothes over contradictions and thus misrepresents the real. The sign is deceptive. It belongs to a symbolic order, which enforces its pattern on the real, notwithstanding the fact that the real escapes the pattern. Thus the sign does not construct reality but an illusion of reality, fiction.

Subjected to this illusory order of symmetry people are like sleepwalkers,

like people who go to sleep in the snow and never awaken (21).

Unquestioned dependence on established norms and forms generates a sense of security, providing a definite position within a social organization. It saves the individual from dealing with contradictions. At the same time, however, it prevents people from using their own

imaginative resources to resolve conflicts creatively.

It is this perceived contradiction between the symbol and the real which incites the woman to desire a different representation, appropriate to her own perception of reality. On the textual level, this passage displays effects of imaginative transformations which Anaïs Nin made the cornerstone of her fictional technique. Her professed aim being 'to capture the dream of the unconscious' (22), she believes it necessary 'to find the image which liberates, unleashes unconscious responses' (23). So once the note of transformation is struck in evoking the sealed room, it affects the subject so as to release other images of transformation. A memory image focusing on the woman's own work connects the life-giving function of transformation to the flow of water. But there is a flaw in this order of life, similar to the false symmetry of the windows. External and internal reality do not correspond. The woman feels like 'hibernating' (24) in a 'sheltered, delicate world' (25) which is characterized by the 'absence of pleasure' (26). Although imbued with a desire for life, her connection to the world is broken. This generates a self-defensive attitude towards the social world of acting and living. 'Ordinary life does not interest me' (27) she declares. Yet 'ordinary' (from :order) is synonymous with 'regular, normal' and refers to what is subjected to the normative rules of the order of symmetry. She is part of it, occupying that pole in the symmetrical male-female coupling which confines her to inner space, passivity and leaves her with a powerless look.

Within this domestic enclosure, the real displays its effects. It awakens creative impulses, allowing the subject to imagine a different reality, consisting of 'infinite space, infinite meaning, infinite dimension' (28). The woman asserts her desire to pursue this imaginative freedom, insisting

I seek only the high moments . . . I want to be a writer who reminds others that these moments exist (29).

Anaïs Nin's discontent with familiar patterns leads her to concentrate on the hidden self behind them. The tensions she tries to set up in her fiction are those

between potential and fulfillment, outer and inner forces of destiny, outer and inner pressures (30).

She frequently deals with this conflict by foregrounding the woman's inability to free herself of the mirror image that defines her as product of the male gaze.

A particular fascination with mirrors appears as a recurrent feature in women's writing. Julia Kristeva has pointed out that difficulties in coming to terms with the image of the self often show in obsessional attitudes to the mirror. They indicate disturbances in the mirror stage which, within human development, marks the individual's entry into the socio-symbolic order(31). A woman's problems with her social identity also relate to Simone de Beauvoir's notion of woman as Other, as mirror of male needs and desires (32).

Sheila Rowbotham, for example, expresses the need for female self-definition with reference to the discovery of an invisible self behind its cultural frame. She writes :

I had a nagging and irreconcilable notion that if I could only get through the mirror a separate self would emerge who would confirm the existence of the first self by recognizing it. Without this recognition I felt invisible inside myself although my appearance was clearly visible in the glass (33).

Virginia Woolf associates her sense of a hidden self behind its conscious objectivation with feelings of guilt, terror and shame about sexuality and desire. Archaic powers threaten the stability of the conscious self, who transgresses feminine role expectations embodied in the 'Angel of the House'. She recalls :

I dreamt that I was looking in a glass when a horrible face - the face of an animal - suddenly showed over my shoulder. I cannot be sure if this was a dream, or if it happened. Was I looking in the glass one day when something in the background moved, and seemed to me alive? I cannot be sure. But I have always remembered the other face in the glass, whether it was a dream or a fact, and that it frightened me (34).

Lou Andreas-Salomé associates her habitual fantasizing as a child with a persistent mirror obsession. For her, the mirror image represents a constraint. It generates the frustrating sense of being confined to a form that excludes a whole area of reality, which is also invested with libidinal energy. The sense of restricted self-expansion acts as a motivating force, exciting the image making faculty so as to strive for an outlet into formulation and sense making language. She refuses to accept, as she says,

daß ich nur 'das' war, was ich da sah: so abgegrenzt, eingeklaffert: so gezwungen, beim Übrigen, sogar Nächstliegenden einfach 'aufzuhören' (35).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's position as writer on the edge of the mirror recalls Freud's views on literature. In Der Dichter und das Phantasieren he relates fiction to day-dreaming and emphasizes in particular the function of the central character

der im Mittelpunkt des Interesses steht, für den der Dichter unsere Phantasie mit allen Mitteln zu gewinnen sucht, und den er wie mit einer besonderen Vorsehung zu beschützen scheint (36).

The unassailable identity of the hero, he maintains, reveals

seine Majestät das Ich, den Helden aller Tagträume wie aller Romane (37).

Freud adds that also most so-called psychological novels tend to concentrate on the inner life of the one central figure :

in ihrer Seele sitzt gleichsam der Dichter
und schaut die anderen Personen von außen
an (38).

In this way, the one self is split into partial selves. Their interaction serves to render the conflictual strivings underlying the socially fixed identity of the one who writes and also solves the problems in accordance with cultural expectations. In her book Die unbewußte Gesellschaft, Elisabeth Lenk criticizes Freud on the grounds that his preference for the day-dream suppresses heterogeneity. For, she says,

im Falle des Tagtraums, der den Formen des diskursiven Denkens näher ist und dem wiederum die Literatur der geronnenen Funktionen entspricht, bleibt die Ichperson intakt. Sie steht immer im Mittelpunkt der Träumerei, alles bewegt sich um sie, denn das genormte identische Ich sieht alles aus der Zentralperspektive. Das Ich spielt die Hauptrolle. Das Ich, das sich hier spreizt, ist die Person, die die anderen sehen. In der Tagträumerei wird die Sozialfassade nicht demontiert, sondern lediglich verschönert (39).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's experience that, in writing fiction she performs a masculine activity, presupposes identification with male views and structures. She realizes this herself, saying

Darum sind meistens die Frauengestalten von mir mit den Augen des Mannes angeschaut (40).

Yet perceiving her woman as defined by male criteria also implies that they remain enclosed within fixed identity patterns that mirror male needs. Simone de Beauvoir has demonstrated that a male-dominated culture depends on woman as Other against whom the male is able to affirm himself

as subject :

L'Autre qui le limite et le nie lui est cependant nécessaire: il ne s'atteint qu'à travers cette réalité qu'il n'est pas (41).

This explains also the woman's aborted desire for creation in Lou Andreas-Salomé's story Ein Todesfall, while she unconsciously functions as a vessel of transformation for the male artist. The fact that the plot gears her towards discovering her identity in that same image also relates to Simone de Beauvoir's definition. She writes :

Apparaissant comme l'Autre, la femme apparaît du même coup comme une plénitude d'être par opposition à cette existence dont l'homme éprouve en soi le néant; l'Autre, étant posé comme objet aux yeux du sujet, est posé comme en soi, donc comme être. Dans la femme s'incarne positivement le manque que l'existant porte en son cœur, et c'est en cherchant à se rejoindre à travers elle que l'homme espère se réaliser (42).

However, the very force that motivates the writing process testifies to a conflict between a culturally fixed identity and the desire for change. Elisabeth Lenk has emphasized that

das Soziale in zwei Aggregatzuständen existiert: einmal als Subjektivität, als unteilbare, flüssige Substanz, die in alle Rollen, in alle Zustände zu fließen vermag, und zum anderen als arbeitsteilige Produktion von geronnenen Dingen (43).

Writing, having to make use of shapes and meanings encoded in language and literary forms transforms the fluid and flexible energy reservoir into communicable form. As a result :

Die Subjektivität, die die ganze Welt auszufüllen scheint, wird zurückgetrieben. Sie, die eine unpersönliche, allgemein naturhaft-fortzeugende Kraft war, wird gezwungen, sich zu personifizieren (44).

Yet only a traditional convention of reading makes the central character the sole repository of subjectivity. It is possible, as Elisabeth Lenk has done, to see literature in analogy to the dream. In that case, the interactions

between characters may be seen in terms of their existence as

figures différentes mises en jeu
dans un même inconscient (45).

This entails not expecting the fictional text to offer a straightforward reflection of women's attitudes to gender, enacted in the relationships between male and female characters. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, for example, hold internalized social constraints and literary conventions responsible for the fact that 19th century women writers channelled their unease, rage and struggle with distorting female identity patterns into hardly perceptible corners of the overt text.

Attention to the interrelationship between characters in Anaïs Nin's The Sealed Room offers a comment on how she experiences the nature of female creativity. There is the figure of Matilda, petrified by a monstrous pain, forever deprived of human contact and outside the system of communication. Nothing and no one has ever been able to separate her from herself. Just as in Winter of Artifice the father's value system failed to open up the world for the daughter, here the woman's dependence on a male order keeps her enclosed within a passive body. She resembles Marguerite Duras' Lol V. Stein in as much as

Le fractionnement initial de l'être, ou
'Bejahung', n'a pas eu lieu (46).

Matilda is likened to the Obelisk at the Place de la Concorde in Paris, the Obelisk itself being metaphorized as a 'searchlight into the sky' (47). Reaching out towards the infinite, all notion of identity is dissolved. Matilda being reduced to her body becomes mere matter. Non-human, or non-humanized, she is that part of Djuna, the principal character that remains body, inert, inaccessible to consciousness, non-symbolized. She figures as Djuna's unconscious. Without her, there would be no possibility of pleasurable submersion in the dream, no imaginative elaborations, no creation. She is the 'sealed room' personified.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's ambivalent sense of herself as a woman writer cannot but be reflected in her writing. This has given rise to controversial attitudes, especially where it concerns her attitude towards art. Thus Julius Bab emphasizes Rilke's influence, maintaining that discussions of artistic problems

nicht dem eigenen primären Erleben von Lou Andreas-Salomé entspringen sondern dem Miterleben an einem anderen (48).

Implicitly asserting conventional beliefs about the primacy of male consciousness and its corresponding assumption that women cannot write he even concludes :

Nicht aus ihrem eigenen Werk nur aus dem Rilkes ist zu verstehen, was sie über die Kunst sagt (49).

His dismissal of the woman writer's own material resembles the self-inflicted blindness of Lou Andreas-Salomé's fictional women, who dare not confront the materiality of their body and the force of their own fears and desires. This reaction is, however, portrayed as an effect of the women's positioning within the socio-symbolic order and not as an innate deficiency. Bab's position only confirms these effects. Ironically their impossible quest for meaning thus becomes his own. Yet disregarding and discarding the female writer's own experience as irrelevant also betrays an impulse to belittle the woman writer's achievement. For central to Lou Andreas-Salomé's understanding of self-other relations, manifest in religious, erotic and artistic involvement is her experience :

Wir werden in der Liebe, Hingabe, ja uns selber geschenkt, wir werden uns in ihr präsenter, umfänglicher mit uns selbst vermählter als zuvor (50).

This observation would allow to assume that her intimate relationship with Rilke and close knowledge of his problems sharpens her awareness about her own self. Yet Leonie Müller-Loreck, although she refutes Bab's views, only offers a variant of his. She emphasizes Lou Andreas-Salomé's

dependency on contemporary theories concerning the relationship between art and life and on conventional representations of the male artist. Implicitly equating male art with human art she fails to recognize Lou Andreas-Salomé's persisting concern with distinguishing problems of the female artist from those of the male artist in her fiction. The doubling of Ein Todesfall with Eine Ausschweifung leads, for example, to joining the opposed aspects of both female protagonists in the figure of the creative daughter in her novel Das Haus. Continual confrontation with Rilke's problems concerning the conflict between body and mind may very well have incited her to interrogate the artist's relationship to reality. But the writing of Das Haus can hardly be taken as a kind of therapeutic effort on Lou Andreas-Salomé's part, directed at finding

einen Ausweg sowohl für den Künstler
als auch für den Menschen Rilke (51).

Heeding her increasing emphasis on the unity of a work of art which does not lose sight of the

Einheit der Gestalten über
ihren Vereinzlungen (52)

raises rather a different problem. Namely, which material of her own experience does personal censorship not allow her to express directly but only by way of projection onto the male artist? Her belief that individual visions of reality amount to self-confessional expressions of the entire speaking self already informs her book on Nietzsche and her first novel Im Kampf um Gott, whose protagonist bears a close resemblance to Nietzsche himself. In this respect she agrees with Nietzsche, who writes in Genealogie der Moral :

Es gibt 'nur' ein perspektivisches Sehen, 'nur'
ein perspektivisches 'Erkennen'; und je 'mehr'
Affekte wir über eine Sache zu Worte kommen
lassen, je 'mehr' Augen, verschiedene Augen

wir uns für dieselbe Sache einzusetzen wissen, um so vollständiger wird unser 'Begriff' dieser Sache, unsere 'Objectivität' sein (53).

Given Lou Andreas-Salome's traditional beliefs in women's innate cultural inferiority, it is significant that she experiences fiction writing as a vital need. It may be assumed that creative writing provides her with ways of circumscribing her resistance to collective norms and offers her a means of identifying with what is socially undesirable. In her fiction, problems with contemporary normative morality are frequently worked through by exposing the dishonesty inherent in paternal authority together with its painful effects on the child and by emphasizing the father's failure to answer the daughter's questions. Contrary to Anaïs Nin's assumption that Lou Andreas-Salome felt 'absolutely guiltless' (54) in creating her psychological independence, her fiction also reveals that it offers her a way of dealing with the sense of guilt at breaking social taboos.

4. The Process of Signification

Etymologically the German verb schreiben develops from the Latin verb scribere. In English, it generates the form 'shrive', meaning 'to confess'. The survival of the Germanic root in 'write', on the other hand, corresponds to the original meaning of scribere. It refers to the carving of conventionalized symbolic forms into a material surface, usually consisting of bark or twigs. The German noun Buchstabe, meaning 'letter' bears witness to this derivation. Originally, it designates the matter destined for transformation. However, a displacement of meaning has it that the awareness of the material undergoing a change is relegated into the background, in favour of the represented form traced on that same matter. This shift

of meaning from matter to form in Buchstabe has a significant effect. It hides the fact that the act of writing effects a transformation. Yet what is transformed ? What is carried across a gap from one place to another so as to change shape in the course of the journey ?

Commenting on her own writing experience, Virginia Woolf feels that the force that motivates the writing process derives from an emotional shock that surpasses the subject's understanding. The need for expression springs from the desire to get control of the upsetting experience instead of being submerged by its shattering impact on the psyche. She says :

I feel that I have had a blow; but it is not, as I thought as a child, simply a blow from an enemy hidden behind the cotton wool of daily life; it is or will become a revelation of some order; it is a token of some real thing behind appearances; and I make it real by putting it into words (55).

Similarly, for Anaïs Nin writing becomes the way out, a moving

away from the painful, paralyzed spot in our lives (56).

Etymologically 'metaphor' and 'translation' both mean the same: to carry across (57). In this perspective, writing means to transfer the emotions and impulses of the body to another plane, onto paper and into language. Producing a representation of one form of subjectivity makes it pass into a different form. A disturbing emotional experience violates the integrity of the self. The old definition of the self fails to encompass the new experience and to make sense of it. Writing, the subject transports itself beyond the old self to create a new sense of self. The writer may thus be seen as entering the condition of metaphor. Suspended between the past and the future, writing articulates a

desire for change. Anaïs Nin's emphasis on her 'stubborn sense of adventure' (58), which she refers simultaneously to life and creative writing, points in the same direction.

Anaïs Nin's quest for self-expansion may take the form of actual travelling and immersion in a different culture. Thus she deals with the relation between adventure and journeying in a passage which concerns women's desire to escape genderized role constrictions towards larger forms of life. Within the women's lives she picks out, the sense of adventure operates as a desire for the exotic, the unfamiliar. As she refers in almost the same terms to her own creative ambition as a search 'for the marvellous' (59) and to Djuna's creative efforts in The Sealed Room, it appears useful to give the concept of adventure a closer look,

The sense of adventure which accompanies the pursuit of a dream is akin to the fascination of the sealed room, which holds her spell-bound and incites her imagination to dispel its meaning. In both cases unknown physical space exerts its fascinating impact on the subject so as to provoke an active dissolution of boundaries that define the position of the subject within circumscribed space. At the same time it is, however, the vital energy at work in the subject which animates the object. Yielding to the attraction of the object would mean to accept the presence of the drive and will it. Yet this reverses again the relation between subject and object, because willing the drive amounts to allow the self to be driven.

This confusion between inside and outside, as well as the fusion between activity and passivity is also at the core of the adventure happening. It is impossible to decide whether the subject has come to meet the object or the object has come to confront the subject.

Anais Nin herself believes that 'the writer, the artist, is driven in a way' (60). Relying on Otto Rank's definition of the artist's creative will, she stresses primarily the self-justifying act of publication, saying :

the artist is the one who feels compelled to make his dreams public (61).

However, language itself is a public matter. So it is already before publication that the writer yields to the urge of making 'his dreams public' by putting them into language. When in Eine Ausschweifung Lou Andreas-Salomé makes a writer the centre of her story, she explicitly dwells on the woman's motivation, exposing writing as a compulsive act. Adine is simultaneously the active subject who writes and the passive object of a backward gaze into her past that makes her write.

It is in this sense that French writers like Hélène Cixous place emphasis on the body as origin of the work. She points out that the creative act of symbol formation requires a passive yielding to being worked through by the forces of life. Far from producing an undifferentiated mental state, she is convinced that

plus tu te laisses rêver, plus tu te laisses
être travaillé... plus la femme s'affirme,
se découvre, s'invente (62).

This focus on interiority, on the body with its pulsions, fantasies and symbols involves an attitude of active passivity, which she claims is specific of women writers :

Cette passivité-là est notre manière - en vérité active -
de connaître les choses en nous laissant connaître par
elles (63).

Subjected to varying energy charges, it is assumed that the writer becomes the subject matter of the work. At the same time the writer translates what life, as history undergone, has left inscribed on the body. In this way writing appears

as a transcription of previous inscriptions on the body.

This understanding of fiction as a specific signifying practice is, however, of equal relevance for male and female fiction. Julia Kristeva, for instance, consistently stresses the fact that, man and woman both come into existence as speaking subjects because of the loss of their imaginary identity with the world and the mother. In her view, the imaginary corresponds to the pre-Oedipal phase which is characterized by a continuous and endless flow of pulsions gathered up in the chora. She describes the advent of language, which constitutes the subject's insertion into the socio-symbolic order and thus also gives significance to the universe, comme meurtre du soma, altération du corps, captation de la pulsion (64). Once the subject has entered the symbolic, the chora

can be perceived only as pulsional 'pressure' on symbolic language: as contradictions, meaninglessness, disruption, silences and absences in the symbolic language (65).

Julia Kristeva also points out that

l'homme dispose dès l'origine d'une intégralité de signifiant dont il est fort embarrassé pour faire l'allocation à un signifié, donné comme tel sans être pour autant connu (66).

As a result there is an abundance of signs in relation to what is signified. The process of signification thus consists in identifying relations between

certain aspects du signifiant et
certains aspects du signifié (67).

She underlines that within the production of discourse the subject takes a certain position. The option to either identify with the mother, which strengthens pre-Oedipal components in the psyche or with the father, which reinforces the hold of the symbolic, is open to man and woman alike. In this view, then, it would not be possible to see Anaïs Nin's

emphasis on unconscious modes of textual production, on fluidity, sound and rhythm as a specific woman's language but as the result of a particular option.

However, Anaïs Nin's attempt to discard the referential function of language as inadequate to translate her woman's experience of being in the world reveals a certain problem. She only insufficiently accounts for the fact that the production of discourse takes place after the subject's entry into the socio-symbolic order. This order, however, inscribes power relations into its form of discourse. In so doing, it elaborates the feminine into the patriarchal concept of femininity in opposition to masculinity and writes it out as

lack, negativity, absence of meaning,
irrationality, chaos, darkness - in
short, as non-Being (68).

The effects of Anaïs Nin's lack of attention to discourse as structured language are discernible in both her fictional and non-fictional discourse. Against her pronounced will to free women from reductive female images, the fictional plot shows a tendency towards closure and a striving for certainties and fixed definitions. In addition, her emphasis on asserting woman as subject of desire is, in significant instances, counteracted by making woman the grammatical object of the sentence structure.

In contrast to Anaïs Nin, Lou Andreas-Salomé's position as writer rests on her identification with the father and her acceptance of the socio-symbolic order as universally human. Yet with her, too, fictional and non-fictional discourse exhibits the same tensions as that of Anaïs Nin, only with a different emphasis. Her fiction works overtly to keep the woman framed within the same patriarchal concepts of

femininity that she celebrates in her theoretical discourse. Yet her fictional plots tend to insist on defying closure and asserting a desire for otherness. Inversely, the affirmation of definite certainties in her theoretical discourse is undercut by ambiguous qualifications of directly unequivocal statements.

This disturbance on the discursive level betrays the activity of two opposed desires. It reveals writing as a dialogical practice. Between two forces embodied in two forms of language that contradict each other, the writer negotiates a space that allows her writing to take place.

II. SEXUALITY AND TEXTUALITY

The common etymological root of schreiben and 'shrive' indicates a close link between writing and confessional practice. As a single signifier 'shrive' covers the complex interrelationship between penitent and priest. It refers simultaneously to the penitent's act of submitting himself or herself to confession, to the priest's act of hearing and inciting the confession and to his assigning penance or absolution. This branching off from the Latin scribere into designating two different socio-cultural practices points to a division of labour which has largely come to conceal their identical function.

Michel Foucault has pointed out that in Christian societies it has essentially been the discursive form of confession which, due to making sex its privileged subject matter, has served to forge a link between pleasure and truth. It extracts and produces 'la vérité du sexe' (69). What is more, subject formation has become organized around the notion of sexual identity. Foucault says :

C'est par le sexe en effet . . . que chacun doit passer pour avoir accès à son propre intelligibilité (puisqu'il est l'élément caché et le principe producteur du sens); à la totalité de son corps (puisqu'il est une partie réelle et menacée et qu'il en constitue symboliquement le tout) à son identité (puisqu'il joint à la force d'une pulsion la singularité d'une histoire (70).

When in the 18th century the novel emerges as a new discursive form it reproduces in publicly more accessible form the power-knowledge-pleasure relationship formerly played out within the secluded space of confessional practice. The preference for fictionalized forms of more personal expression betrays a marked tendency to approximate the novel to the authenticity of confession and a need of

blurring the boundaries between art and life. The dominant focus of the novel on erotic plots and sexual desire also betrays the interrelationship between both types of discourse. Its effects dominate the economy of the novel so as to produce sexuality as a discursive truth which engages the character's self-definition. Narrative logic determining its sequential realization involves a variety of male-female encounters, which ultimately serve to link the production of sexuality with genderized role definitions. Thus the novel absorbs and transforms the functions which before had been circumscribed by the discursive form of confession and confined to the secrecy of the confessional. It also expresses and constructs the traditional concept of domesticated femininity that informs Christian myth (71).

Considering the link between confessional and literary practice makes various things explicit. First of all, it draws attention to writing as a dialogical practice. Who then are the two interlocutors whose activity sustains the process of writing ? What then would it mean that, prefacing her first novel, Anaïs Nin finds it important to declare that the book was written ' without witness' (72)? On the other hand, Lou Andreas-Salomé makes the writing woman construct an imaginary male confessor at the beginning of her narrative, which describes her development as woman and artist.

Freud's views on literature reveal a particular affinity with the characteristics of confessional practice. A similar duality as the one between expression of repressed content and its articulation in socially acceptable form structures the very act of confession. Here, an acknowledgement of sins is combined with a profession of faith in religious dogma. Offering the individual relief from suppressed feelings of guilt at transgressing especially sex-related taboos, confessional practice reintegrates the individual into the social continuum of the ideology to which it submits through

the very act of confessing. Thus, as social practice, confession fulfills a wholly conservative function.

This analogy between confessional and literary practice brings out that Freud's views on literature focus on the role of the priest as representative of the basic socio-symbolic discourse that expresses and organizes patriarchal reality. In doing so he diverts attention from the element of protest against the dominant ideology, which underlies the sense of sin and its production of guilt feelings. This does not allow one to think of the text as the effect of two mutually contradictory forms of discourse. Marthe Robert, in contrast, emphasizes the subversive element in fiction. She insists on the desire for change that informs the creative act, maintaining :

Qui 'fait' un roman exprime par là même un désir de changement qui tente de s'accomplir dans deux directions, car ou bien il raconte des histoires, et il change 'ce qui est'; ou bien . . . il change 'ce qu'il est', de toute façon il refuse la réalité empirique au nom d'un rêve personnel qu'il croit possible de réaliser à force de mensonge et de séduction (73).

Yet this view neglects the pressures of reality against which the desire for change articulates itself.

Writing, the subject assumes both roles simultaneously, the role of the penitent as well as that of the priest. Thus the subject itself becomes the site, where the interplay of conflicting forces takes place, which strive for breaking through the constraints of ideological conditioning and holding the subject in its place. The absence of the priest, as the actual caretaker of a fixed socio-symbolic order, who guarantees the subject's re-insertion into a collectively meaningful system allows the writer a certain degree of freedom. Repressed unacceptable impulses, which are excluded from representation in and by the dominant ideology, are thus liable to affect the construction of discourse itself. However, internalized collective representations embodying

preconceived ideological beliefs also impose limits on the free expression of subjectivity. In so far as writing involves the subject's desire to make sense of subjective impulses, which the prevailing order fails to accommodate, it becomes a process constituted by a dynamic interplay between energy and predetermined form.

In Lou Andreas-Salomé's autobiographical writing, and even more so in her fiction, there are recurrent scenes, which expose this clash. They focus on the girl's powerless affirmation of her subjectivity under the pressure of paternal command. Her helpless yielding to male authority results invariably in a self-inflicted wound. Significantly, Eine Ausschweifung, the only story that revolves around a performing woman artist traces the woman's suppression of creativity in relation to her suppression of sexuality. Her initial suppression of creative impulses is the direct result of her self-imposed compliance with the patriarchal concept of femininity. Creation is presented as an act of resistance against feminine selflessness. Yet as the ideal of femininity is coupled with a masochistic form of sexuality, creation appears only possible by also suppressing libidinal energies bound up with sexual impulses. The ambiguous result of this suppression of sexual difference consists in her acceptance as artist by a male-dominated society. The woman herself, however, regards her creation as a deficient form of art. What makes this story particularly interesting, if read as a comment on Lou Andreas-Salomé's attitudes towards her own creative writing, is the veiling of the conflict between the woman's assertion of creative impulses and the castrating force of collective symbolism. Both mutually contradictory forces are projected on the same male agent. Identification with his desires results in her submissive self-surrender. Yet identification with his will to expel her from the family equally leads her to creative self-affirmation. The woman is not shown to assume responsibility for her own creative impulses. She is forced into self-assertion through inter-

ference of a male agent. This projection of transgressive impulses onto the male may be read as a specifically female way of inscribing the role of penitent into the text who, as woman, is engaged in making sense of her guilt-ridden transgression of the male law .

Describing her own experience of writing fiction Lou Andreas-Salomé observes that

alles was die Phantasie in Bewegung setzte,
seinem Verbot unterlag und nur in männlich
gerichteter Trotzeinstellung sich dem Ge-
horsam entziehen konnte (74).

An internalized male-imposed taboo rests on the woman's imaginative production so that writing is experienced as a prohibited activity. The neutral and anonymous 'alles, was' veils the fact that it is the pressure of the body which strives for an outlet into sense-making language. Articulating the body feels like an act of defiance of male prohibitions. The word 'Trotz' evokes a situation which characterizes the daughter's powerlessness in relation to paternal authority and power. The term 'courage' would refer to individual emotional power fuelling the will of the subject to spur it on to accomplish difficult tasks. 'Trotz', however, connotes irrational ways of resisting the orders of a powerful authority.

The writer's means of escaping the socializing process into subservient feminine obedience with its denial of the body is to identify with the censor's position. Thus the woman adopts an 'Einstellung', places herself in a position, where she acts as the one who is 'männlich gerichtet'. The ambivalent term 'gerichtet' connects a spatial with a moral dimension. It suggests that intentionally directed activity proceeds from assuming the only worthwhile position represented by the male law, while defying that same position. At the same time, however, the semantic content of 'gerichtet' betrays a sense of being judged, or even condemned in that position.

Acknowledging the unconscious dimension of the text thus reveals that the woman's adoption of a male-identified stance does not mean an elimination of internalized prohibitions concerning the expression of female subjectivity. They continue to operate in the background, affecting the woman's self-assertion with feelings of guilt and self-loathing. But if female self-affirmation as subject involves a condemnation of her very activity, writing appears like a self-imposed death sentence. This cannot but have repercussions on the form of writing itself. Lou Andreas-Salomé is conscious of a certain distortion of her creative impulses, as she recognizes that she perceives her women characters mostly through fictionalized male eyes. The break that becomes evident here is between the driving force that arouses the imagination and the channelling of this energy into pre-conceived male forms.

The reward for this behaviour is similar to the one obtained through confessional practice. It relieves the subject of suppressed guilt feelings. But the consequence is that the woman fails to recognize her own immersion in patriarchal beliefs which include her male-defined self-denial and self-hate, of which she remains equally unaware.

Anaïs Nin's declared effort to escape an alienating male position by writing 'without witness' (75) appears to point in the opposite direction. She is acutely aware of language as a socializing instrument. So she acknowledges that her primary knowledge of life through reading literature has led her to living out scenes of novels instead of acting out her own self (76). Her diaries also contain recurrent accounts of various psychical and physiological breakdowns due to living out internalized role images of self-sacrificial femininity. In rejecting the conventions of the realist text and forging for herself a language appropriate to articulate her being as woman, she tries to counteract these alienating

influences. Yet her assertion that the writing of House of Incest was achieved 'without witness' appears more like wishful thinking than a reference to actual fact. For considering the word more closely reveals an unconscious dimension which escapes her notice. The normal, one-dimensional definition of the word only draws attention to the woman's denial or rejection of the controlling eye or mirror during the creative act. This is connected with her innovatory intent concerning fictional language. However the word itself simultaneously reveals and veils the fact that the constraints of the other's gaze are embodied in the structure of language itself. Creating, the woman may be 'out' of the system, traversing and surpassing it. Yet as a socialized subject, the writing woman is also 'with' the system, included in it, occupying the place allocated to her by the symbolic order. Hélène Cixous has demonstrated that this order operates on the basis of binary oppositions and that traditionally

on traite la question de la différence sexuelle
en l'accouplant à l'opposition : activité/passivité (77).

This relational structure has a fundamental effect on the discursive representation of woman. For

Où la femme est passive; où elle n'existe pas.
Ce qui en reste est impensable, impensé. C'est-
à-dire bien sûr qu'elle n'est pas pensée, qu'elle
n'entre pas dans les oppositions, elle ne fait pas
couple avec le père (qui fait couple avec le fils) (78).

Following Kristeva and Lacan, Toril Moi emphasizes that

We have to accept our position as already inserted
into an order that precedes us and from which there
is no escape. There is no 'other space' from which
we can speak: if we are able to speak at all, it
will have to be within the framework of symbolic
language (79).

Mere rejection of this ordering system which shapes the human consciousness of self and world is therefore liable to entrap the writer inadvertently in the same subordinate position she hopes to leave behind.

An example taken from Anaïs Nin's lectures shows most strikingly the effects of an unreflected use of language and its treatment as sexually neutral material. In this passage she sets out to prove that women need not be afraid of affirming their freedom for fear of losing male approval. She thus overtly communicates her demand that women make themselves independent of male approval. But this very dependence on male recognition keeps asserting itself through the grammatical structure she uses. Referring to the correspondence between Lou Andreas-Salomé and Freud, she says :

Because he had an enormous respect for Lou Andreas-Salomé. Their correspondence shows a great sense of equality, shows him listening to her ideas, their exchange of opinions about his work, and his faith in her. It was in one of these letters that he says that woman is closer to the unconscious and remains closer to the unconscious than man, has fewer interferences, has a less over-developed sense of rationalization (80).

The grammatical construction of the theme 'equality' maintains the woman's achievement defined in relation to male recognition. Freud is made the grammatical subject of almost each sentence, and where it not happens to be so, it is the superior significance of his work that is foregrounded. Correspondingly the woman is ascribed the status of grammatical object and as such made dependent on 'his enormous respect' and 'his faith in her'. In her fiction, the reproduction of conventional patterns of male dominance and female submission is frequently discernible in the narrator's rational assertions. They either block an articulate desire for freedom as in Stella. Or they contribute to keeping women enclosed in reduced identities as a result of looking at them through male eyes, thus reiterating the fragmentation of woman according to male desires.

With Lou Andreas-Salomé, interferences are of a different order. Comparison between her non-fictional and fictional texts reveals fissures within the traditional discourse

of reason and representation. Closer attention to the materiality of the text even reveals a certain degree of unacknowledged mistrust centring on the known and signified. The opposition between her fictional and non-fictional discourse is, in fact, never as sharp as Rudolf Binion's comparison of purely referential content indicates, when he notes with reference to her essay Der Mensch als Weib :

Lou's nonfictional female of the species was the very antithesis of her stock fictional heroine of the preceding years, who, just because she is emancipated (whether militantly or thoroughly) is torn between her human need, for self-development, which makes her into the man's rival, and her feminine erotic need, which would make her into the man's slave: 'Der Mensch als Weib' denounced both well-nigh vituperatively as false needs and morbid signs of the times (81).

The difference rather consists in a different distribution of presence and absence, suggesting that either way of speaking has to accommodate the same tensions.

Her essay exhibits a specific stylistic feature that undermines her seemingly solid position on woman's natural undifferentiatedness and innate cultural inferiority. The logical chain of cause and effect is broken at a significant point and gives way to much less unequivocal statements. They concern her attempt to reinforce the conventional idea of women's incapacity for transcendence. The sudden introduction of indeterminate expressions like 'im Weibe scheint', 'es ist als', 'vielleicht ist in dem Weibe' (82) reveals a degree of uncertainty that belies her claim to state universal truths. Besides this semantic ambiguity inscriptions of uncertainty recur also on a structural level. Her belief in woman's enclosure in the immanence of being is alternately stated as a pure assertion of fact and in the form of a hypothetical assumption. The latter, then, provides the basis for deducing a truth. So the evasive metaphorization

Vielleicht ist dem Weibe nach uralten Gesetzen
das Loos geworden, einem Baum zu gleichen (83)

results in the formulation of a law :

als Lebensgesamtheit verbraucht das Weib
ihre ganze Kraft und ihren Saft innerhalb
ihres eigenen Wesensmarks (84).

However, making a groundless supposition the starting point for reasoning inevitably calls into question the veracity of the deduced truth and undermines the validity of her unequivocal links between biology and mental activity. This fissure in her reasoning suggests a problematic relationship between the speaking, perceiving I and its vision of and relation to reality. At the same time it implies the impossibility of any definite interpretation of the real. Latent possibilities excluded from the dominant subject position become a matter of fantasy and fiction. Evolving from such fissures and contradictions within rational discourse, fiction reverses the former's relation between presence and absence. Proposing to fill the gaps it makes the quest for other meanings than the culturally known its subject matter. Her concern with problems of the I and with tracing and interpreting its relation to the not-I results in re-writing the conditions that underlie the production of male discourse. But in doing so she also illuminates the woman's place and function within the cultural construction of meaning.

Both writers ignore the presence of the 'other' that operates within their discourse. Their failure to engage in a dialogue with that part of the self that undermines their conscious assertions betrays a certain ignorance about the role of language in the creation of meaning. Anaïs Nin's focus on the portrayal of inner reality veils the fact that, like Lou Andreas-Salomé, she views literature

as a representational art whose function
is to 'picture' experience (85).

In their fiction descriptions of paintings frequently serve to epitomize a character's sense of self. This emphasis on the sense of sight in conveying and interpreting experience confronts the woman writer with a specific problem. For, as

Luce Irigaray has pointed out,

Dans cette logique, la prévalence du regard et de la discrimination de la forme, de l'individualisation de la forme, est particulièrement étrangère à l'érotisme féminin. La femme jouit plus du toucher que du regard, et son entrée dans une économie scopique dominante signifie, encore, une assignation pour elle à la passivité: elle sera le bel objet à regarder. Si son corps se trouve ainsi érotisé, et sollicité à un double mouvement d'exhibition et de retrait pudique pour exciter les pulsions du "sujet", son sexe représente 'l'horreur du rien à voir' (86, author's italics).

Freud has demonstrated that the gaze plays a crucial role in recognizing sexual difference. However, he speaks from a male point of view which equates the invisibility of the female genitalia with worthlessness. On this basis he develops a theory of the subject, which is unable to account for any different sexuality that is not male. Hence, the male fiction of symmetry, in which woman figures only as man's complementary other, that is, as lack. It is within this context that Anaïs Nin's evocation of the sealed room gains particular importance.

Her use of the image in the diary foregrounds the failure of the sign to represent the real. In fiction she refers to the actual presence of the room as inaccessible space , because

during some transformation of the house it had been walled up (87).

Like the female artist in Lou Andreas-Salomé's story Eine Ausschweifung, Anaïs Nin's fictional woman also experiences herself as barred from inhabiting a vital part of herself. This allusion to the non-being of woman recalls her reflection on the aim that informs her fictional production. In House of Incest the writer-narrator insists :

I am constantly reconstructing a pattern of something forever lost and which I cannot forget (88).

There is a passion for life, a diffuse mass of energy that surpasses its being channelled into preconceived forms. New forms are tested by

dividing (that was one of the great secrets against shattering shadows), allotting and rearranging under the heading of one word a constantly fluid, mobile and protean universe whose multiple aspects were like quicksands (89).

Yet in The Sealed Room Djuna's creativity is diverted from constructing her identity as an autonomous person. It is used to create a self-image that aims at winning the love and approval of the one, whose recognition would provide her with a sense of identity. She finds no form of her own to realize her being. The old pattern of symmetry operates so as to organize reality by exclusion of contradictions. For the woman, this involves a choice between the desire for love and the desire for creation. She rejects this dichotomized choice. But failure to integrate the opposites produces a compromise, which again reveals her dependence on the feminine stereotype.

Similarly, Anaïs Nin's writing serves to arrest the continual flow of energy by containing it in words and thus structuring the confusion of self- contradictory drives. Yet qualities traditionally assigned to the feminine role like the concern with one 's private inner life, the interest in love and human relationships operate as restrictions on her creative activity. Creation is confined to conventionally circumscribed space. Making herself attractive in this way in order to be loved, she constitutes herself as a passive being.

At the same time, exercising her creativity sets her apart, creates distance between herself and others. This sense of isolation runs counter to the feminine desire to be loved. It therefore exerts further pressure on the forms her creativity

takes, keeping her all the more firmly confined within the private sphere. Thus, concerning the woman's interior space there is a whole range of experience that remains unformulated. Thematically, Anaïs Nin focuses on the psychology of relational problems. Technically, she concentrates on translating unconscious mental processes and the life of the body. She reclaims this societally imposed and devalued otherness of woman as a positive value. However, her self-imposed boundaries may also be considered as typically female strategies to circumvent internalized censorship, which allow her to come to terms with her own deeply ingrained sense of guilt at female self-affirmation. These strategies relate the sealed room to a particular silence, which has been poignantly described by Tillie Olsen :

In her 'Diaries' (along with the narcissistic), the public, the social; power of characterization, penetrating observation, hard intellect, range of experience and relationship; different beauties. Qualities and complexities not present in her fiction - to its impoverishment (90).

On the one hand, the image of the sealed room thus associates questions about the mask and the veil with limitations of female creations and deformations of female creativity. But, on the other hand, it also connotes darkness, the inability to see and signals a negative relation between seeing and writing. This appears to confirm Luce Irigaray's suspicion that concentrating on the sense of sight confronts the woman with the problem that there is nothing to see. Compensating for her sexual invisibility she again creates herself as an object to be seen and to attract the male gaze.

That this kind of self-created passivity is equivalent to the woman's death is most directly revealed in an early poem written by Lou Andreas-Salomé. Anaïs Nin's sealed room appears here in the form of an 'alien coffin'. Similar to Anaïs Nin's various physical and mental breakdowns, Lou Andreas-Salomé's life also shows that the woman suffers the inculcation of self-alienating

images in her body by assimilating cultural constructs contained in written texts. It is significant that her utter submission to the male teacher's commands and instructions in her youth endangered her physical health. When she immersed herself in reading theology, philosophy and history of art at the university of Zürich, she even became seriously ill with bleeding lungs. Yet appropriating the cultural heritage was also experienced as the only means to allow her a hold on external and internal reality and thus also to free her from a prolonged entanglement in silent fantasizing. Thus captivated by male texts, she became a captive within the network of male-structured consciousness. As a result she lost the capacity to read the signs inscribed in the matter closest to herself. Denied the acting out of sexual drives either in reality or through fantasy, she was deprived of any possibility to articulate her body. It responded by falling ill. The fact that awareness of her damaged health reached her only 'wie eine fremde Sorge' (91) betrays the extent of alienation from her body.

The poem 'Todesbitte' was written at such a time of illness. In retrospect, Lou Andreas-Salomé herself attempted to explain her death fantasy in terms of the traditional theme of the 'Liebestod'. Yet the entire poem may also be read as a metaphor for the relationship between a male teacher and his female student, or for the female socialization process.

Just as in the Greek myth Athene springs from Zeus' head, so the poem imagines the woman to be born of man and surrender her whole being to him. Evidently, it is only the man who enjoys the fruit of his labours which, as the only survivor in the process, he is also in a position to appropriate. At the cost of the woman's death, his creation is restored to him. Physically dead, her whole self lives on in the man's consciousness, as suggested by the lines

im fremden Sarg
Steck ich ja nur zum Schein
Weil sich in dir mein Leben barg!
Und ganz bin ich nun dein (92, author's italics).

A masochistic strain pervades the poem. The speaking I rates her own death irrelevant and celebrates her submergence in the man's mind. Devaluing her own source of energy as a diminutive spark, she only offers the material surface of her body. Implicit in the woman's abnegation of her own self and creative energy is the Faustian myth of the male quest for selfhood which comprises the sacrifice of Gretchen's life together with the destruction of her own pregnant spark of life.

The only trace of self-interest which the woman displays in this poem is her yearning for tokens of the man's love. However, the precondition for this love is the woman's absolute self-surrender which is sealed by her physical death. This image of confinement within an alien coffin recalls Snow White's entrapment in the glass coffin of selfless feminine passivity as 'patriarchy's ideal woman' (93).

Yet the woman's absolute divorce from ordinary physical life bars also the man's access to the core of her vital being. Thus his total possession of her turns out to be an illusion. But it is the woman herself who re-establishes his spiritual hold over her by relegating her survival to the working of his mind.

Lou Andreas-Salomé inserts this poem into her first novel Im Kampf um Gott, transforming it in order to make it suit the expression of the father's love for his daughter. The differences between these two versions of the same poem are significant. From the father's perspective the text presents a straightforward death fantasy. It betrays no trace of any confusion of identity, nor does it include a wish for self-surrender or any desire for fusion with the loved object. The father's fantasy is entirely self-centred. What is more, the woman writer imagines man as creator, in possession of the only generative power on earth and thus, by implication equal to God the Father himself. The autobiographical context confirms that Lou Andreas-Salomé's own relation to her teacher,

the priest Hendrik Gillot, bears

die geheimen Reste der Identität von
Gottesverhältnis und Liebesverhalten (94).

She experienced his omnipotent creativity (Allenthaltenheit) and absolute authority (Allüberlegenheit) as godlike. The poem posits this experience as an assertion of truth.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's self-image of the woman as dead, unconscious of her own source of energy, created by man and engulfed in his consciousness cannot but have repercussions on the woman who dares to usurp the father's creative powers. It shows most directly in this first novel Im Kampf um Gott with its threefold disguise of the woman as author by means of a male pseudonym, a male narrator and male protagonist, who is also a writer. However, with regard to the death fantasy of her youth, she also notes in Lebensrückblick that, in contradiction to the seriousness of its overt content,

beim Ansingen des Krankseins sich ein
fast verschmitzter Unterton vorfindet (95).

The element of mockery is hardly allowed to surface in the poem. But the writer's awareness of it betrays her consciousness of the double-bind that characterizes her situation as a woman writer. As Claudine Herrmann has pointed out:

Elle a appris dans les livres à voir les femmes
avec les yeux des hommes et dans la vie à voir
les hommes avec les yeux des femmes. Elle sait
toute la marge qui existe entre le vécu et
l'exprimé (96).

With Anaïs Nin, this acute awareness of muted perceptions and meanings in traditional forms of expression operates as a strong motivation in her quest for a language able to render her experience of life.

P A R T T W O : T E X T S

La vie fait texte à partir de mon
corps. Je suis déjà texte (1)

The obligation to reproduce - the
daughter's obligation to reproduce
the mother, the mother's story -
is a more difficult obstacle than
even the Father's Law (2)

I. THE WOMAN AS TEXT

1. The Fallacious Equation of Creativity with Maternity

Eine Ausschweifung is the second of three stories written within two years (1897-98). It is preceded by Ein Todesfall and followed by Zurück ans All. All three are told from a female perspective and ultimately produce the same female identity pattern. The latter bears a close relation to Lou Andreas-Salomé's own theoretical position on woman's nature, as she exposes it a year later in her essay Der Mensch als Weib.

She develops her views on the innate differences between male and female capacities on the basis of biological evidence. The behavioural activity of sperm-cells and egg-cells serves as a prototypical image of creativity. Sperm-cells are

assumed to mirror the male capacity for rational differentiation, the pursuit of the desired object outside the self and the drive towards producing a differentiated objectivation of internal reality. Egg-cells are presumed to reflect complementary female capacities like the passive assimilation of external objects, the power to effect unconscious transformations and to make them function in the direct service of life. Thus dichotomized qualities are divided according to the traditional sex-role model. Woman is seen as the embodiment of organic life. Man is made synonymous with the formative principle and cultural achievement. She declares :

er lebt in einer fortschreitenden Sonderung aller Kräfte, die zu vielen Einzelleistungen und Einzelbethätigungen auseinanderstreben, und er hat seinen Wert in dem, was er so leistet und entwickelt. Das weibliche Wesen, an sich einheitlicher geblieben, rastet und ruht in dem, was es einmal in sich erzeugt, mit sich identifiziert hat; es vollendet sein Schaffen nicht in solchen isolierten und speziellen Bethätigungen auf ein Außenziel hin, - es verwächst organisch mit dem, was es schafft, es vollendet sich in dem, was man kaum noch ein Tun nennen kann, weil es nur darin besteht, daß es aus seinem einheitlichen lebendigen Leben wiederum einheitliches lebendiges Leben ausströmt (3).

Positing the woman as, by nature, the less differentiated human being in comparison with man is reinforced by her use of language. She individualizes man by means of the personal pronoun 'er' but evokes woman only as an undifferentiated feminine substance.

However, this biological analogy reaches an impasse, when it comes to defining the bi-sexual nature of the artist. Imagined as the only one to encompass the full range of human potential, a man's creative disposition is assumed to comprise female capacities. Pregnancy here serves as a metaphor to explain creative gestation in terms of a

spiritual

Schwangerschaft, die tief in sich selber hineinlebt, und das Geschaffene tief aus ihrem Gesamt-leben austrägt (4).

One might expect to find a similar metaphorical operation that would allow Lou Andreas-Salomé to think of female creativity in terms of linking the woman's reproductive capacity to male powers. Instead she identifies her with her pro-creative powers.

In later essays she seeks to heighten the woman's maternal potential by making it correspond to masculine properties. Thus she ventures the proposition :

Mir scheint die Mutter durchaus als dasjenige, was mitten im Weiblichen einem Männlichen entspricht: einem Zeugen, Herrschen, Leiten, Verantworten, Beschützen (5).

Yet her use of language betrays that she does not consider the actual potency of maternity but the social function of motherhood and its related annihilation of the woman's sexuality. The mother is referred to as dasjenige, not Mutterschaft which would be linguistically appropriate. Thus the woman-as-mother is transfigured into a neutral thing, devoid of sexuality. But imprisoned in the neutral matter of her body, she is also at the same time alienated from it. Although Lou Andreas-Salomé continues to point out that passive maternity is transformed into äußerste Schaffenskraft (6), this emphasis on female creative power is cut short by reducing it to its social function. The woman's creative capacity remains confined to the domestic and practical spheres of life as the only appropriate ways of directing energies outside into the world. Women's capacities are invariably seen to function only as

eine Seite ihrer Art praktisch zu sein, - ihrer Art zu leben, nicht aber eine besondere Geistesbefähigung von diesem Leben Werke abzulösen (7).

With the male artist, however, the same productive force is assumed to become spiritually creative and to survive in his work

aber herausgehoben in eigene Form
und Klarheit (8).

Thus transcending his being, his works lay the foundation of culture and inaugurate cultural development.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's focus on reproductive processes avoids references to human sexuality as much as it disregards the relevance of socio-historic conditions on human development. Instead, she harks back to one-celled organisms, their multiple forms of production and subsequent differentiation according to gender. Ann Oakley has demonstrated in Housewife that, evoking such a myth of origin usually serves to ensure that assertions gain in persuasive power. The aim, here, is to prove that the division of labour by sex is universal among living organisms, that it is a natural fact grounded in their biological make-up and necessary for the survival of mankind (9). The evidence, or rather pseudo-evidence, Lou Andreas-Salomé presents is meant to document the existence of two independent and equally valid ways of human self-realization. Thus she reaches the conclusion

daß das gesamte Geistesleben selbst schließlich
auch nur eine verwandelte, ins Feinste geformte
Blüte aus der großen geschlechtlichen Wurzel
alles Daseins ist, - sublimierte Geschlecht-
lichkeit sozusagen(10).

Yet her confusion of reproductive specialization with gender differentiation causes her to avert her gaze from the actual life of the woman's body and to overlook significant physical processes.

Published in 1911, Charlotte Perkins Gilman's examination of androcentric culture in The Man-Made World, for example,

also refers to biological determinants concerning the basic distinction between the sexes. Contrary to Lou Andreas-Salomé, however, she emphasizes creativity as an inherently human potential and creation as an essentially social practice. Body and mind are related in terms of different forms of production . She considers woman's facility to assimilate external material as well as her capacity to select significant particles from an inchoate mass and subject them to a process of transformation as her specific powers. She writes :

In the very nature of the sperm-cell and the germ-cell we find this difference: the one attracts, gathers, draws in; the other repels, scatters, pushes out. That projective impulse is seen in the male nature everywhere . . . This spirit, like all things masculine, is perfectly right and admirable in its place.

It is the duty of the male, as a male, to vary; bursting forth in a thousand changing modifications - the female, selecting, may so incorporate beneficial changes into the race (11).

Her emphasis on the principle of selection at work in the active fusion of subject and object implicitly refutes its cultural version of woman's passive receptivity. Anaïs Nin's search for autonomous forms of female self-expression similarly leads her to recognize the need for significant selection within the interrelated processes of assimilation and transformation as the basic principle of her mode of production. Also some of Lou Andreas-Salomé's texts directly revolve around a significant thematic image, thus suggesting the presence of a selective principle operating within the psyche. Yet unable to see her writing as an aspect of her female experience, she also does not care to interrogate its relationship to such recurrent structuring patterns.

On the contrary, her chain of reasoning makes clear that, what she is actually engaged in is glorifying the conventional feminine stereotype and confirming women's secondariness within the socio-symbolic order. Making

specific powers the exclusive property of one sex alone and assigning each sex its proper social functions accordingly, generates taboos of impropriety. Her androcentric bias is in full evidence, as these are only related to women's activity.

On the one hand, she insists that women should apply their intelligence to comprehending themselves

in ihrer Verschiedenheit vom Mann und zunächst ganz ausschließlich in dieser (12).

But at the same time, the aim which increased self-knowledge is destined to serve is defined in clearly restrictive terms. Its sole purpose is considered to consist in

der schöpferischen Wiederholung von sich selbst (13)

within the confines of her socially circumscribed place. A woman's ambition to venture out into public life and her wish to prove herself man's equal with regard to intellectual and professional competence is denounced as ein wahres Teufelswerk (14).

This social restriction on the scope of woman's activity is coupled with an equally rigorous effort to domesticate her creative energies. Lou Andreas-Salomé assumes that a woman's creation is but a natural extension of her body that escapes her conscious control. This assumption serves her to prove the inferior status of woman's art. In her view, it is

doch nur Fallobst, mühelos abgeworfen, und soll nicht mehr als das bedeuten sollen (15).

Yet she proceeds to limit this supposedly natural growth as severely as she attempts to control the exercise of woman's rational faculties. Neither in her life nor in her art is she allowed to tamper with male-conceived images of femininity. For Lou Andreas-Salomé believes that the

male artist has forever provided the most truthful representations of woman's inherent nature.

She does acknowledge that

die Kunst des Mannes in der That das Weib auch in hohen Kunstwerken bald stark traditionell gefaßt, bald einseitig mit gewissen ihm geläufigen Vorurteilen angeschaut hat (16).

But this recognition of the male bias in art neither affects her belief in the superior quality of his artistic creation. Nor does it incite her to reflect on the possible distortions of reality thus produced.

With regard to female creation, however, traces of personal involvement with reality are considered flaws in art. She refuses in particular to admit female anger as an energizing source of creation, prohibiting

die Abwehr der männlichen Meinungen und Zeichnungen (17).

Far from confronting female hostility and suggesting ways of dealing with it, she advocates its repression. Artistic self-expression is only permitted on the condition that it is subordinated to the 'proper' feminine task :

Sie sollen ihre literarische Thätigkeit als das Accessorische, nicht als das Wesentliche an ihrer weiblichen Auslegung betrachten (18).

Her image of the advancing snail

die vergnüglich ihres Weges kriecht, während sie ihr Häuschen auf dem Rücken trägt (19)

epitomizes this conventional ideal of feminine selflessness. In the course of her life, the woman is assumed to absorb and assimilate everything that furthers her growth in order to be of better service to others. Associations of inferiority, smallness, closeness to the earth, and affinity with nature and unconscious animal life combine in this image of involuntary female creativity. They make a woman's ambition

that her work may be of cultural relevance look utterly ludicrous.

Anaïs Nin uses the same metaphor of smallness to symbolize the woman's sense of self. Refusing to follow Henry Miller's advice to abandon diary writing for the greater imaginative freedom of artistic creation, she explains

I would feel like a snail
without a shell (20).

The image is prompted by a context that focuses on dichotomized male-female stereotypes. Echoing Lou Andreas-Salomé's polarized views, the association of masculinity with abstract knowledge and impersonal thought is opposed to the relation between woman's restricted intelligence and her concern for the personal world. A confusion of disparate feelings, ranging from despair about her mental limitations to indifference, fear and admiration of man's efficacy, leads Anaïs Nin to conclude

how small my guiding lantern,
how vast man's universe (21)

Similar to Lou Andreas-Salomé, she refrains from examining her actual feelings and arrives at making the human personal life her proper feminine domain.

If with both writers the image of the snail connotes female inferiority Anaïs Nin, however, tends to attribute its causes rather to social limitations than to innate characteristics. Lou Andreas-Salomé emphasizes the natural bond between the snail and its shell, evoking the ideal of self-contained wholeness and female self-sufficiency. The shell contains the generic blueprint of the traditional feminine ideal in its unconscious state, representing the woman's

Heim ihres Wesens, in dem Andere
ihre Ruhe finden sollen (22).

With Anaïs Nin, the image indicates the disjunction between the social self and what she calls her real self. She acknowledges the psychic strain resulting from her effort to live up to an ideal of feminine goodness. In this situation the secrecy of diary writing functions as a protective shell, where she can allow herself to

be depressed, angry, despairing,
discouraged (23).

The maternal image of woman comprises the suppression of sexuality. This in turn leads to a displacement of desire, which impedes personal development. Anaïs Nin is concerned with formulating the obstacles that obstruct psychological growth and prevent the maturation of individual potential, and with discovering the original desire behind its distortions. Lou Andreas-Salomé presents the realization of displaced desires as viable attitudes. However, in her essay Der Mensch als Weib she posits the woman's incapacity of transcendence and her ensuing failure to create art as innate biological characteristics. Her fictions contradict this assumption. They reveal, on the contrary, that the notion of woman's natural deficiency is determined by social reality. Exceeding a fixed position, they formulate the ways in which internalized patriarchal values and attitudes operate to constitute a definite position.

Its sequential realization in the above mentioned stories foregrounds three dominant drives, before the essay arrests their varying interplay in the form of a rational assertion. Ein Todesfall tells of a woman's desire to create a self-determined life. Her impossible attempt to realize this desire results in displacing it into the traditional image of femininity that makes her the embodiment of organic natural life. Eine Ausschweifung represents a woman's desire for fusion of self and other as a desire for self-destruction and relates it to the form of her artistic creation. The story

Zurück ans All articulates a woman's desire for independent self-affirmation, making its realization dependent on the suppression of sexuality and its concomitant displacement of desire into the idealization of unconscious animal and vegetable life.

Eine Ausschweifung and Zurück ans All illustrate how independence and individual differentiation can be achieved on the human level but forfeited on the level of sexual differentiation. So the 'new' woman, who consciously creates her independence and gains control of her own life has surprisingly much in common with the 'old' woman, whose identity rests on her equation with nature and motherhood. The return of suppressed traditional identifications shows most directly in the resemblance between Esther's acceptance of her social function as wife and mother in Ein Todesfall and Irene's independence from that role image in Zurück ans All. The latter's abhorrence of human sexuality and human procreativity, together with her exclusive concern for pre-conscious animal life and her attitude of maternal nurturance towards it, reveals its derivation from the traditional maternal stereotype. The thematic implications inherent in both titles also suggest a link between the desire for wholeness, plenitude and oneness with nature and the desire for death.

2. The Woman's Position as (masculine) Subject

In different configurations all three stories represent the experience of separation as a precondition to independent self-assertion. This conflictual process, involving

the sense of an absence and the desire to recover the loss, is worked out by setting up tensions between the woman and her creative potential. In all three stories the course of this process is pre-determined by the woman's internalized traditional confusion between her sexuality and her reproductive powers.

In this respect, Ein Todesfall offers the most straightforward representation of the woman's entrapment in and by the socio-symbolic order and its consequence for her capacity to produce art. The interplay of different drives is projected into interactions between intimately related but separate characters. Esther's desire to comprehend the artist involves also the desire to clarify the sexual implications of their relationship. Her unquestioned acceptance of the father's interpretations bars her from gaining access to her own resources and produce her own representations.

When Eine Ausschweifung resumes the split into woman and artist in terms of an internal division within the female subject, the father's regular interference in the daughter's life is displaced by Adine's repeated gesture of closing her eyes at the emergence of self-destructive drives. Closing her eyes, she finds, however, nothing to see beyond the persisting fear of being entrapped by the male gaze and succumbing to the pleasure of becoming the selfless object of male desire.

The similar structural positioning of both gestures suggests that the woman's self-effected blindness is caused by the intervention of the father's text. In Ein Todesfall, the female perspective presents him as the one who possesses the power to see and the knowledge where to look, how to read and interpret correctly. Devoid of any inhibitions, he takes in a multiplicity of objects and, mediated by his desire, expresses them. Expression here operates in the way of manifesting desire by representing it in the matter

and form of an external object, that is by objectification.

Adine, however, fears the passivity of her gaze which she feels has no power to act on reality. By closing her eyes she affirms her powerlessness. Thus, out of fear, she contributes to maintaining the father's power over her, whose textual inscriptions she suffers in her body.

Activating her gaze would correspond to appropriating the father's powers. And this is exactly what she does when, writing she looks at a part of herself in order to signify it. Deliberately creating herself by reproducing herself as object of the male gaze and of male desire means, as Luce Irigaray has put it, to reverse

en affirmation une subordination et, de ce fait commencer à la déjouer. Alors que recuser cette condition revient, pour le féminin, à revendiquer de parler en 'sujet' (masculin), soit à postuler un rapport à l'intelligible qui maintient l'indifférence sexuelle (24).

For the woman writer, claiming the position of subject means to transgress into male territory and appropriate male powers. So the creative act must inevitably become a highly problematic experience, especially for one who so firmly advocates the traditional concept of femininity as Lou Andreas-Salomé.

Comparing the two artist figures in Ein Todesfall and in Eine Ausschweifung reveals two different ways of acknowledging creative potential, attenuating the fear of creation and the sense of guilt at transgressing social role constrictions.

Projected into a male impersonation and thus conforming with social and literary conventions, the artist's task is shown to consist in creating new cultural forms of awareness. Alluding to contemporary artistic conventions of naturalism, the son distances himself from his male ancestors. He rejects

the conventional focus on social reality represented by the father's art. A new object of desire has come into view to inform the artistic project : to represent the struggle of the human soul in adjusting to a changing cultural environment. So he says :

Aber es gibt auch ganz andere Arme, von anderen Qualen gequält und von ganz anderen Fiebern verzehrt , - Arme, in denen alles gärt und nagt, was unsere Zeit in ihren modernen Menschenseelen hervorbringen will und noch nicht weiß, wie (25).

His creation represents a difference within male subjectivity. The story emphasizes this notion by sealing the very instance of self-affirmation with the artist's death. Thus his refusal to remain subjected to the father's authority functions as a way of reinforcing the latter. In fact, the transgressor is re-incorporated into the order of the father. His symbolization of the son's subjectivity displaces the son's act of liberation.

For different reasons the woman's creation is also easily recuperable by the extant cultural order. She shares with her male counterpart the focus on interiority. But she does not aspire to inventing new forms of self-expression. Her adherence to conventional artistic forms confines her to repeating existing cultural representations of herself. As the artist traverses them, it enables the woman in her to avoid succumbing to its self-alienating effects. The male artist yields to the potent energy of irrational life currents, impelling him to move forward to places unknown to the father. The female artist is concerned with tracing and exorcising past selves. Her backward look fixes her to the threshold.

It is possible to regard Esther in Ein Todesfall as the failed artist, the reason being her enclosure in the patriarchal concept of the woman's social function as wife and mother. This sheds light on Adine's artistic compromise and her self-denigrating attitude towards her own work. The

energy taken up in suppressing tendencies towards domesticated femininity is not available for experiencing autonomous pleasures of fusion and inventing new forms of self-realization.

The story Ein Todesfall was originally entitled Der Sieger. This change of title betrays the author's perception of her theme. Attention is withdrawn from the male artist's achievement in accomplishing his separation from the father. Emphasis is instead placed on the immensity of his task to operate this separation at the cost of his life. The artist dies from a violent haemorrhage. This link between the emission of blood and artistic creation has a disquieting effect. The author kills him off instantly after allowing him to make his act of self-definition explicit. Lou Andreas-Salomé here imagines the artist to undergo exactly the same experience which, in her view, threatens the woman who strives for gaining a place in history.

In her essay Der Mensch als Weib, she posits the woman's enclosure in space and time as the essence of her feminine nature. Imprisoned in her body she is, like Esther, seen as the embodiment of omnipotent, miraculous life. Any venture to transgress the boundaries of her private self would be a betrayal of her innate femininity. In addition, it would land her in a crippling conflict that must inevitably diminish her work, which is also suggested by Adine's devaluation of her art. Lou Andreas-Salomé believes :

Es ist als kreise in ihm [=dem Weib] das Leben gleichsam innerhalb seiner eigenen Rundung, als dürfe es ohne Wunde und Verletzung so wenig daraus austreten wie Blut aus der Körperhaut (26).

The threat referring to a violation of the body's integrity generates a compensatory over-protective attitude towards inner space. This reaction appears very much associated with Lou Andreas-Salomé's own experience. Her desire to

appropriate traditionally male powers by engaging in academic studies results in the same suffering of bleeding lungs which she visits on the artist. This association suggests a very conflictual attitude towards her own creation. Thus positive identification with artistic potential is simultaneously asserted and cancelled in a way that resembles self-punishment.

A similar ambivalent gesture appears already in her very first novel Im Kampf um Gott. A self-inflicted wound in reaction to the father's demand for rational discipline marks the daughter's entry into the symbolic order of the father. Subjugated to the cultural discourse of male texts, the girl is forcefully separated from her emphatic fusion with nature. Her libidinal energies are re-directed into a seemingly self-willed inculcation of the logical and ontological values of rationality (27). In a helplessly defiant gesture to what she experiences as an alien influence, she cuts her arm with a knife.

Lou Andreas-Salomé represents creativity and rationality both as innate male properties. Her fiction suggests that exerting these faculties is not experienced with joy but as a cutting into the wholeness of the female body with death-dealing consequences. If, however, creation is linked with death and rationality experienced as a painful wounding, then the imaginative destruction of the artist may serve to accommodate fears of self-destruction. Similarly, her separation into the woman and artist may be read as a means of mitigating the terror of creation.

Her different attitudes towards her theoretical and fictional production also suggest that highly ambivalent feelings are bound up with the creative act. Sure of her intellectual potential, she felt no inhibitions in writing and publishing theoretical texts. Her lack of interest in

collecting them betrays a degree of indifference which contrasts significantly with the care she took of her fictions. Written primarily for herself, she preserved and hid them in a bank-safe until financial difficulties forced her to part with them. She emphasizes that, in most cases, she conceded to publication only very unwillingly (28). Her reluctance to publish fictional works despite her knowledge of their societal value, and her way of guarding them like hidden treasures carries connotations of self-protection and guilt.

Lou Andreas-Salomé herself attributed the genderized polarization of her writing experience to the effect of unconscious drives. They are held responsible for the formation of opposed relational attitudes as a sexualized human being. Her explanation, referring to Hendrik Gillot's influence, links the girl's intellectual development with the emergence of sexual desire. She notes :

in das Begriffliche, zu dem mein Freund mich
erzog, ist die Liebe zu ihm weiblich mit ein-
bezogen gewesen (29).

Traditionally, the organization of female sexuality proceeds, however, in the way of producing the woman as man's complementary other. Thus her theoretical work also poses no threat to the cultural order. On the contrary, her discourse mirrors and affirms representations appropriate to the masculine subject. Only the production of fantasies, literary or other, becomes a question of disobedience and transgression of cultural taboos.

Her autobiographical account of her mirror obsession connects the habit of fantasizing with her refusal to identify with the visible, definite, single self reflected in the mirror. She says :

irgendwie leugnete mein eigenes Empfinden den
Umstand, nicht in und mit Jeglichem vorhanden

zu sein, sondern ohne Aufnahme darein,
gleichsam obdachlos geworden (30).

This element of rupture within a coherent, unified and framed subjectivity is simultaneously acknowledged and controlled. Defining the desire to break the boundaries separating self from other, she calls it reichlich anormal (31). Anormal, in contrast to the equally possible unnormal, foregrounds its departure from the norm in terms of preceding it. This implies the desired return to a state of undifferentiation prior to the mirror stage with its construction of the coherent, social self. It is also expressive of the desire to dissolve separating distinctions and merge with an infinite number of selves, a condition characteristic of the imaginary realm preceding socialization. The mirror evokes the desire for something other than the familiar and visible. Its reductive frame generates the sense of the self's existence in another space and the impossibility of inhabiting it. Hence, what Rosemary Jackson has pointed out as being characteristic of a fantastic text would also be applicable to Lou Andreas-Salomé's specific mirror obsession:

it tells of an indomitable desire, a longing for that which does not yet exist, or which has not been allowed to exist, the unheard of, the unseen, the imaginary, as opposed to what already exists and is permitted as 'really' visible (32).

Associations revolving around the certainty of another space as a powerful presence, transgressive impulses, invisibility and impossibility also connect in the representation of the male artist's creative ambition in Ein Todesfall. As artist he is as much a figure of transition as the woman in Eine Ausschweifung. Their refusal to remain subjected to conventional representations of the real is manifest in their departure from the norm as artist, or as woman. However, neither of them is able to provide an alternative representation of the real

beyond this rupture.

Thus it is also possible to give the imaginary death of the artist another reading. Just as Lou Andreas-Salomé herself suffers from the frustrating sense of partly inhabiting a space that does not house her, so the artist is unable to signify the 'other space'. His movement towards recapturing what has not been defined yet nor identified by the symbolic order asserts the desire to re-enter the imaginary. His death, however, suggests the impossibility of gaining access to it and to allow it, through representation, to exist as reality. Dead he is subject to the same state of undifferentiation which the woman experiences as she feels herself dissolve into the rhythm of the sea. The fact that her experience of self-dissolution is coupled with her re-affirmation of her social functions suggests that the story is not only concerned with his but also with her death.

Underlying this double representation of thwarted desire is the sense of frustration which is compensated by its displacement into a longing for fusing with nature. Inversely, affirmation of the traditional stereotype of femininity thwarts the impulse towards transgression. This interlocked struggle between two contradictory impulses is seemingly resolved by expelling one object of desire - the artist.

However, the author's relationship to her characters is more ambiguous. She cannot leave the woman without opening in the end again the whole question of desire. Esther's longing to comprehend the artist has made her aware of a secret inner space, where she exists only for herself, and which bears no relation to her social status of mother and wife. The text ends on her remembering the meaning given to this kind of self-centred yearning by the creative personality. She recalls his question :

"Glaubst du nicht," meinte er zaghaft, " daß es mit einer großen Sehnsucht ist, wie mit dem Zug der Vögel nach Süden: - ein Zeichen, daß es schon irgendwo blüht - ?" (33)

The question is left hovering in her consciousness, receiving no response on the woman's part. This text defies closure even more directly than does Eine Ausschweifung. Thus it circumvents the formal pattern of the traditionally realist mode of creation. But it also subtly questions Lou Andreas-Salomé's firm position on woman's essential nature. Here the woman is confronted with the possibility of fusing matter and mind by pursuing a self-centered dream, after the course of the story has been seemingly brought to an end by her conscious acceptance of the feminine stereotype.

With Lou Andreas-Salomé the active yielding to irrational drives remains a mere suggestion of a possible way of recuperating the future. With Anaïs Nin it becomes a conscious aim informing the concept of adventure, on the psychological level as a means towards self-awareness and as a practice of signification. She makes its function explicit at the end of The Voice, insisting on the need of

catching up, catching up with the dream.
The dream was always running ahead of one.
To catch up, to live for a moment in unison with it, that was the miracle. The life on the stage, the life of the legend dovetailed with the daylight, and out of this marriage sparked the great birds of divinity, the eternal moments (34).

This enthusiastic insight concludes a meditative passage on the nature and function of fantasy and the creative imagination. It highlights the constructive use of the dream in order to achieve a state where self and other coincide, generating the liberating sense of being in total union with life.

Yet Anaïs Nin's thematic focus in relation to female

psychology is also very much on the passive indulgence in fantasies, betraying the confusion of self-images. Their twofold nature may either show in the woman's enjoyment of the pleasures of painless self-dissolution, when she dreams of 'all the things that she was not yet' (35). Or it may turn into a nightmarish experience, where she is at once 'the victim and observer' (36). Imprisoned in her body with its restlessly floating energy, indulgence in the dream generates

a series of explosions in which all the condemned fragments of [herself] burst into a mysterious and violent life, with the heavy maternal solicitude of the night ever attentive to their flowerering (37).

In Anaïs Nin's text The Voice, Djuna experiences alternating states of dreaming. Lou Andreas-Salomé projects a similar distinction between passive indulgence in pleasurable or painful fantasies into the separate figures of Esther in Ein Todesfall and into Adine in Eine Ausschweifung. Included in the maternal role, joy is at the same time excluded from artistic creation.

Anaïs Nin's reference to the maternal aspect of the night and the secret flowering of multiple selves within the body links up with Lou Andreas-Salomé's understanding of the woman's effortless achievement. Passive maternity and the reproductive character of female creation are associated, with complete disregard for the transformative power of maternal potential.

'Proceed from the dream outward', Anaïs Nin adopts Rank's motto almost at the beginning of her conscious quest for identity as woman and writer. But it is the same confusion between maternity and passivity, as a result of the internalized cultural stereotype of woman-as-mother, which prompts her initial resistance to writing fiction. The

latter thus reveals itself as a variant of Lou Andreas-Salomé's assumption that women are incapable of transcending their being. It may be understood in terms of a self-defensive rationalization that veils the sense of guilt connected with creation.

Relating self and other Anaïs Nin exposes a third possibility. In its emphasis on asserting a gap in coherent representation and the death of desire as pure absence, she foregrounds the same inaccessibility to different selves as implied in Ein Todesfall. So she says :

When the dream fell to one side, wounded,
and the daytime into another, what appeared
through the crack was the real death (38).

She develops her fictional technique in accordance with the service it performs to find

the original wish by examining early dreams
and fantasies, their progression, and their
withering (39).

Anaïs Nin gives priority to a certain movement. Must discovering desire inevitably lead to re-covering desire ? Rosemary Jackson has pointed out that

Unlike the symbolic, the imaginary is inhabited
by an infinite number of selves preceding
socialization, before the ego is produced within
a social frame. These selves allow an infinite
unnameable potential to emerge, one which a
fixed sense of character excludes in advance (40).

Anaïs Nin's movement corresponds rather to Lou Andreas-Salomé's ambivalent asserting and cancelling of desire in Ein Todesfall and its relatedness to enclosing characters in separate categories. Anaïs Nin's diaries offer ample proof that her own internalized image of selflessly subservient femininity frames her so as to inhibit her from making full use of her creative potential. Especially at the beginning of her career this inhibition translates as the fear of transformation.

3. The Fear of Transformation

Preoccupied with questions of art and the relationship between art and life, Lou Andreas-Salomé starts writing Eine Ausschweifung while still working on Ein Todesfall. Anais Nin's simultaneous writing of House of Incest and Winter of Artifice, her first published fiction, reveals significant parallels.

There is first of all the need for a double representation to express the act of separation from the father. Secondly, expression of the woman's self-awareness as woman and writer revolves around self-dissolution. Fantasies of pain and pleasure are made explicit which normally remain without words and hardly reach the threshold of consciousness. They represent the reverse side of the mirror in terms of nightmarish experiences which delimit the woman's form of creation. As in Eine Ausschweifung, the problem of vision and visibility also connotes the notion of imprisonment in House of Incest. Thus the narrator experiences writing as

a prisoner's walking back and forth
over the space allotted to him (41)

Comparable to the suffering which Lou Andreas-Salomé projects onto the male artist as a result of realizing his transgressive impulses, Anais Nin's diary entries speak of her tremendous pain accompanying the creation of House of Incest. In her later fiction she will increasingly resort to more traditional techniques than she uses here. They have much more in common with Winter of Artifice, which apparently does not produce the same suffering during the creative act. This implies that the pains of creation are bound up with the formal specificity of House of Incest. The text realizes the experience of fusion of self and other by means of dissolving language itself. Winter of Artifice, on the other

hand, relies more on fairly exact diary transcriptions. Anaïs Nin herself relates this dual form of expression to the difference between diary and fiction writing, wondering at the 'paradox between House of Incest and Winter of Artifice, between her diary and creation of fiction' (42).

Resembling Lou Andreas-Salomé's splitting of the woman into woman and artist, Anaïs Nin's conflict betrays a similar anxiety of actually fusing the identities of woman and creator. From this perspective, it is possible to read Anaïs Nin's straightforward realistic narrative, which thematizes the daughter's need to abandon the father, as an explanatory apology for writing House of Incest. For the latter epitomizes her faith in the autonomous source of woman's creative power and illustrates her belief in a specifically female form of creation.

Yet it is remarkable that the problematic father-daughter relationship here only plays the same marginal role as in Eine Ausschweifung. There the father is dead. Idealized, his authority remains unquestioned. In House of Incest, the father-daughter relationship emerges briefly in the form of an iconographic image representing

an unquenchable desire of
father and daughter (43).

This relationship is not subjected to the same destructive process that dissolves other objects of desire into atoms of language. On the contrary, the text emphasizes the unchanging 'joy and terror of their love' (44), while surrounding objects and structures crumble to pieces. The daughter desiring the desire of the father - in a text that thematizes the conditions of creative writing this monumental self-other relation is hardly shaken. Hence also the final image of the woman dancing to her own rhythms remains still removed from the observing I. Expression and recognition of desire only figure as the promise of a dream.

The difference between realizing transformation and dreaming of it becomes apparent in comparing it with Lou Andreas-Salome's representation of the male artist. His self-created image of a human figure leaving the shore in a boat expresses, transforms, transcends his self-willed separation from the father. In Anaïs Nin's text the daughter's need to leave the father in order to find herself remains unrelated to the creative act. Abandoning the father and recovering the loss in a specifically female form is a function assigned to diary writing. Begun as a letter to the absent parent, a yearning and dutiful daughter offers a life to the father that supposedly pleases him. Even when the diary gradually develops into a means of self-revelation, it retains to a certain extent this sense of an offering to a hostile world, which it intends to charm. For the occasions are numerous, where Anaïs Nin speaks of her storms and angers, while the published diary version omits their representation.

This internal division between the woman and the artist shows in her failure to integrate valuable insights concerning female psychology into her concept of woman's art. It is also manifest in her emotionally polarized attitude towards diary and fiction writing. Fiction writing is a painstaking experience, her personal 'Season in hell' (45). In contrast, she enjoys the personal expression in diary form. For it does not require her to subject her feelings to a stricter formal shaping process. Referring to diary writing, she insists

Here lies the personal over-flow, the personal and feminine over-fulness. Feelings that are not for books, not for fiction, not for art ... Here I can sketch, improvise, be free, and myself (46).

Yet this is a highly problematic assertion. The question 'who is the self?' provides the subject matter of House of Incest and is inseparable from its formal expression.

Interrogating the nature of the self is also the thematic issue of the diaries, but apparently independent of formal considerations. But who then is writing the diary where she confesses to feel more herself than in her art ? Or of what nature are the restrictions that art imposes on her self-expression ? After working on fiction, there is still something other requesting attention. She insists :

I still have something to say. And what I have to say is really distinct from the artist and art. It is the woman who has to speak (47).

This remark echoes Lou Andreas-Salomé's representation of the female artist. Adine's narrative within the story offers a comment about art by saying what it is not. Considering Adine's narrative as well as Anaïs Nin's diary writing in terms of their being direct forms of personal expression makes clear that both writers articulate the subject matter of their life - untransformed. Adine's painting, in contrast, exposes this transformation. But transformation is not fused with her specifically female experience. The woman is excluded from representation. This suggests that the autobiographic mode testifies to the fact that the woman's need for self-expression exceeds culturally acceptable art forms. For they keep the woman at a firm and secure distance from herself.

Similarly, Anaïs Nin's desire for self-expression exceeds its artistic formulation - not vice versa, as one might assume. This would imply that her overtly innovative form in House of Incest is much more related to traditional forms with their reproduction of female role constrictions than she is aware of.

Not unlike Adine who is shown to fear the activation of libidinal energies due to their self-destructive automatism, Anaïs Nin is afraid of her creative powers. Aware of presenting herself to the world through self-alienating

masks in order to secure its approval, she is afraid of her own imaginative distortions. This fear causes her to resist the creator's urge for imaginative transformations of reality.

Owing to her therapeutic sessions with Otto Rank, however, her attitude towards fiction writing begins to change. Accepting Rank's view that neurosis 'is a symptom of the power to create' (48) enables her to believe in the positively creative aspect of her imagination. Yet seeing art as male and simultaneously as a distortion of reality continues to obstruct her creative will. So four years later, she still insists :

I must continue the diary because it is a feminine activity, it is a personal and personified creation, the opposite of the masculine alchemy. I want to remain on the untransmuted, untransformed, untransposed plane. This alchemy called creation, or fiction has become for me as dangerous as the machine. Feelings and emotions are diverted at the source, used as the fuel to other purpose (49).

In a genderized opposition female creation is defined by its closeness to lived experience. The shaping of experience into an independent art object removed from the personal is considered as masculine. She completely overlooks the danger inherent in diary writing that she may reproduce herself as an already alienated self.

Questioning the adequacy of male forms of creation to represent universal truths, she also refuses to subscribe to Henry Miller's advice that 'art requires indifference' (50). That indifference is, in fact, a myth, concealing the artist's highly subjective attitude towards his material is one of the crucial insights Anaïs Nin gains from the opposed views either of them develops about Henry Miller's wife June. She notes that his image distorts her

because of the neurotic love of his mother and his hatred of her, his need and his repudiation of women (51).

She cannot but reject Miller's realistic portrait of June ,

especially as she observes its destructive effects on June as reader. She records :

Then I saw the ravages which Henry's literary inventions have caused in June's poor vacillating mind. Everything he has written, said, distorted, exaggerated, has confused her, disintegrated her personality, her own sincerity. Now she stands before the bulk of Henry's writing and cannot tell whether she is a prostitute, a goddess, a criminal, a saint (52).

This observation touches upon the circular effect which the disguised representation of male fears, needs and wants has on the self-alienation of women. As a pre-fabricated male image she enters the text again, while the realist mode enhances the author's claim to convey an impersonal truth. This experience reinforces Anaïs Nin's belief in the need to discard realism and to develop formal modes, which would allow her to reveal the influence of the unconscious on human actions. It also incites her to fight the myth of objectivity associated with realism by exposing the specificity of personal experience as the source of rationalized generalizations.

She develops these insights and aims as far back as in 1932 and continuously elaborates on them, in view of clarifying her belief that ' the woman artist has to fuse creation and life in her own way' (53). But four years later, her ambivalence bound up with fiction writing is still unresolved. It is not only the persistent fear that fiction-writing may be a self-alienating enterprise which conflicts with her creative will to ' transform, project, expand, deepen' (54). Her fear of becoming entrapped in preconceived male forms of creation is coupled with the terror of creation itself. She tries to explain it, saying :

The transformation required of creation terrifies me. Change, to me, represents tragedy, loss, insanity (55).

Ein Todesfall and Winter of Artifice thematize this experience of loss as an inevitable step towards self-awareness and self-expansion. Anais Nin explores and reveals the daughter's difficulties in realizing and accepting that her wishfulfilling projection is self-destructive. The father does not guarantee the possibility of recapturing a state of self-contained harmonious wholeness. House of Incest also represents the confusion of self-images and the desire to locate the self in another space. The fact that, here, self-dissolution and the decomposition of language are linked testifies to the strength of destructive impulses. Yet Anais Nin's failure to relate the problem of paternal authority to the problem of language leads her to accept a male-devised image of woman . She merely reverses its derogatory attributes and exploits it for its positive potential. This brings her close to Lou Andreas-Salomé's understanding of female creativity in terms of reproductive power.

On the other hand, she realizes what has made women believe in the delusion that they are incapable of producing art . Through her quarrels with Henry Miller and Lawrence Durrell about the impersonality of male writing she discovers that, traditionally, art has been bound up with the idea of a male creator-God who, in solitary isolation creates out of nothing. She ridicules this idea and opposes it to her concept of women's art :

As to all that nonsense Henry and Larry talked about, the necessity of 'I am God' in order to create (I suppose they mean 'I am God, I am not a woman'). Woman had never had direct communication with God anyway, but only through man, was never able to create as a woman. But what neither Larry nor Henry understands is that woman's creation far from being like man's must be exactly like her creation of children, that is it must come out of her own blood, englobed by her womb, nourished with her own milk (56).

Anaïs Nin here anticipates insights concerning the confusing impact of the godlike artist image on women's creativity and creation, which Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar have researched in great detail (57). Her direct link between the body and creation is also reminiscent of psychoanalytically oriented criticism that concerns itself with defining the relationship between sexuality and language. Thus Michèle Montrelay points out that, with women

Les mots sortent en direct . Là est la force.
Là est l'obstacle aussi qui a fait penser
aux femmes très longtemps qu'elles ne pouvaient
pas créer (58).

However, there is a big difference. Despite Anaïs Nin's emphasis on the need to make unconscious forms of perception explicit, she somehow never gets the sexualized body into view.

Mary Ellman hits bitinglly out at Anaïs Nin's use of feminine stereotypes which goes as far as confusing sexual intercourse with pregnancy by displacing vagina by womb. She writes :

This confusion of pregnancy
and copulation is tasteless (59).

But surely this is much more than a matter of taste. It is first of all and basically a matter of false naming. This is also all the more disturbing , because it reveals the persistence of cultural stereotypes. Anaïs Nin's therapeutic sessions with René Allendy had already made her perceive that

the masochism of woman . . . comes
from her maternal instinct (60).

So one would rather expect her to refrain from using maternal imagery in order to characterize the mode of woman's creation, or at least to problematize the relationship. Ignoring its derivation from the cultural context, which she refutes in relation to male metaphors of creation, she also suppresses recognition of her aggressive impulses, which not only aim at the conceptual but also at language itself.

Michèle Montrelay's reflections on women's specific relationship to language may explain why Anaïs Nin's polarization between 'feminine' reproduction and 'masculine' production obstructs her search for a language able to transcribe woman's 'diffused awareness' (61). Male sexual organization, Michèle Montrelay maintains, interposes a single, definite organ, *the penis, to mediate access to pleasure, operate the fusion of self and other and make the resources of the unconscious available for articulation.* She explains :

Qu'un homme écrive, travaille les mots, il met en jeu, d'abord le pénis, ce trait qu'il porte sur son corps. Avec lui, il articule la substance des mots. Il en joue. Il veut qu'elle jouisse dans la mesure ou, séparée de lui, elle est l'étoffe de sa féminité. Etoffe de jouissance perdue, que l'écriture fait retrouver, qu'elle anime mais aussi referme dans le silence et le secret... Avec les mots les femmes ont une autre relation, Ils sont le prolongement d'elles-mêmes (62).

For the woman, words are not

ces objets qu'on approche, touche et manipule, avec cette curiosité passionnée, faite de plaisir et de respect, qui est le propre de l'homme - écrivain (63).

Her sexual organization, being plural and not centered on one and the same physical mark, produces a different libidinal economy. Neither can the multiple complexity of her pleasure be subsumed under a single, central category. Nor is she separated from her imaginary realm through intervention of a single organ, which imposes its way of life as the only form of pleasure and cognition.

Long before psychoanalytically trained critics like Luce Irigaray and Hélène Cixous, proceeding from the above premise, sought to articulate new forms of cognition, Anaïs Nin was struggling to express similar insights. She claims that 'Woman thinks emotionally; her vision is based on intuition' (64), explaining that intuition is a synthesis.

It generates a way of acquiring knowledge by direct comprehension, which involves

a fusion of observation, emotion and experience passing by the intellect and using the senses, the instinct (65).

Anaïs Nin lacks any theoretical framework that focuses on the form of sexuality and its relation to cognition and language. But she is painfully aware of a link between the woman's psychological growth and her need to create her own language. The failure to understand her intuition, she believes, has rendered woman inarticulate.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's metaphorization of woman's creation as Fallobst suppresses the aspect of work. It is revealing that, in a letter to Rilke, where she contrasts the sculptor's mode of working to the poet's, she attributes their difference to the material involved. The sculptor's shaping of stone, his Dienst am Material is regarded as Dienst am realen Leben (66). Language, however, is not considered as matter to be shaped in the service of creating reality, nor is the body. Instead, she focuses on the immaterial substance of the soul along with the immaterial, one-dimensional, definite sign as concept, which abstracts from the reality of life. Words are characterized as

Zeichen für indirekt vermittelte Suggestionen
und an sich weit ärmer, stoffloser als Stein (67).

Consequently, she also believes Wörter können doch nicht bauen wie Steine (6). This unawareness of language risks to superimpose a pre-conceived system of signs and structures on a specific state of subjectivity and thus keep the subject in its acquired place.

Anaïs Nin's prefatory note to House of Incest, in contrast, makes explicit that she wants to construct truth by means of words. In this text, she transcribes a state of subjectivity by integrating it into a mode of presentation that blurs the logical coherence of language, disorients the attribution of definite meanings and also dissolves culturally established

boundaries between traditional fictional genres.

4. Lou Andreas-Salomé : Acceptance of Repression and Guilt of Authorship

In her essay Vom Kunsteffekt, Lou Andreas-Salomé opposes the artist to the non-creative personality, who directly transforms instinctual impulses into action. She likens the artist to the hysteric, believing that both are not able seelisch ganz gesund zu funktionieren (68). In contrast to the passively suffering hysteric the artist is, however, deemed to be endowed with a specific creative will. So

stauen sich im schaffenden Menschen, sobald er nicht schafft, die meisten dieser (Lebens-) Reize an, ohne ausgegeben zu werden, weil seine Art das Leben zu leben, das Leben zu verdauen, eben dessen künstlerische Verwandlung ist (69).

Creation itself is seen as depending on a slow unconscious maturation process which results in frenzied production.

Anais Nin appears to experience the creative act in a similar way. But her reflections on her addiction to living her emotions out in silence and keeping mute dreams alive, without confronting either with reality, suggest different conclusions. Comparing herself to her friend Henry Miller, she notes :

Because we cannot feel so much. Parts of us must die, must die to free us, to lighten us. How well parts of Henry die in him because he possesses the gift for destruction. I can only gather together until it becomes unbearable. To hear too much, to see too much, to have no detachment or protection or refuge from being alive (70)

Reluctance to engage in creative activity thus appears as an effect of the powerlessness of an undifferentiated feminine

subjectivity. Impulses towards power, transformation, creation and change are denied. They threaten to disrupt the subject's acquired identity, which rests on the woman's equation with being and passive living rather than guiding her towards acting and becoming.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's fiction differentiates between male and female creative experience. The letters which the male artist writes to his foster-sister in Ein Todesfall and to his mother in Das Haus are clearly presented as a pro-creative activity. They serve to achieve control of his diffuse energies and get his conflicting impulses focussed.

Adine, however, Lou Andreas-Salomé's own fictional counterpart in Eine Ausschweifung confirms Anaïs Nin's views. Her retrospective account of her initial abstention from artistic production points out specific obstacles that obstruct and delay the woman's creative activity. Without explicitly relating them the text foregrounds two interdependent functions of art. On the one hand, art is regarded as therapy. Adine stresses its capacity to deliver the subject of depressing impressions that are barred from expression in the normal system of communication. Thus the creation of art is valued for its power of lifting the burden of the self-sacrificial social order without directly attacking limitations of the feminine role. In this view, female creation would fulfill a wholly private function and correspond to what Lou Andreas-Salomé prescribes to be the proper function of woman's art.

Adine, however, refrains from making use of her creative potential for therapeutic purposes. The reason she gives indicates that creative self-expression by far surpasses its therapeutic function. For she feels that it is also

die größte Verführung, der nichts widersteht (71.).

The very act of externalizing herself in an image of her own making is opposed to the socially induced tendency to mould herself according to externally imposed images. This conflict requires a conscious act of will to reconcile contradictory impulses towards submissive selflessness and creative self-assertion. Refusing to create thus amounts to an evasion of this conflict. Well aware of the fact that everything may be affected by the disintegrating impact of desire, she fears the transformative effects of creation :

Ich fühlte, daß sie [die Kunst] mich losreißen würde von allem, was Benno wollte und was ich also selbst wollte, und mich ihm ganz fremd machen würde (72).

Anxiety about social alienation and the loss of love is coupled with the fear of a void. Her sense of identity, being solely based on her social role, abandoning this image would amount to self-destruction. From this perspective, the sudden, over-powering force of creative impulses would appear directly proportional to the energies employed in previously suppressing them.

Anais Nin spells out the relationship between fear and guilt at the core of the woman's paralyzing conflict which results in non-productive silence. Speaking of two kinds of guilt, she notes :

we have guilt for creating and for not creating, and these women are really caught up between the two: between the fear of asserting themselves, because then it would effect somehow the people near them, and the fear of not creating, of not realizing one's potential (73).

Although intrigued by the problem of non-creative silence, Lou Andreas-Salomé remains evasive on the question of guilt. It remains virtually un-named, when she ventures to approach it more directly in her essay Des Dichters Erleben. Here, the ecstatic experience of fusion between self and other is seen

in terms of a regressive narcissistic union, allowing

Einkehr ins Uranfängliche, ins Erstparadiesische,
wo noch ohne Unterscheidungen alles erlaubt
und alles unser war (74).

Immersion in this state of undifferentiated self-love provides the generative matrix enabling the creator to make

nun einen neuen Weg gangbar . . .
in die Existenz hinein (75).

Her use of the term Einkehr veils the fact that, from the position of the cultural self this re-entry into the plenitude of life is always a Rückkehr. She continues to conceal the nature of obstacles that may obstruct the experience of fusion by making failure or success vaguely dependent on the subject's ability to drop Sicherungen des Selbst (76).

Without problematizing the presence of aggressive impulses directed against the conscious self as well as against the existing cultural order, she personalizes the artist's conflict with reference to the individual's familial positioning. Feelings of guilt do not become conscious. Torturing self-reproaches at the stage of creative impotence are only attributed to the sense of powerlessness, which she considers similar to the child's experience of over-whelming parental authority. She asserts that, failing to re-activate the state of narcissistic union, the artist enters

das zunächst gelegene Dunkel, die Stätte der
Austreibungen aus dem Paradies, der Entwertungen
und Anschwärmungen, und er steht ihnen ebenso
hilflos gegenüber wie seinerzeit als ein Kind, ehe
es dem Urteil der Erwachsenen Eigengewordenes ent-
gegenzuhalten hat (77).

The fact that Lou Andreas-Salomé cannot bring herself to questioning the authority of the father and his construction of reality and culture causes her consistently to veil the ambivalent character of the subject's clinging to traditional

values. She opposes conservative emotional attitudes and progressive intellectual insights without realizing that emotions and thoughts are both subject to the same cultural conditioning. In Ein Todesfall, the artist's ambivalent attitude towards his father is directly linked to his state of self-assusatory despair preceding the act of creation. His conflict resembles that of Johannes, the male protagonist of Gerhart Hauptmann's play Einsame Menschen. Discussing it in 1891, Lou Andreas-Salomé describes him as the type

des modernen Menschen selbst, in dessen Gemüt noch alle Vorstellungen und theuren Erinnerungen einer überwundenen Weltanschauung lebendig sind, während er doch in der ganzen Entwicklung seines Wesens einer neuen Welt angehört (78).

She criticizes Hauptmann for complementing the psychological motivation of Johannes' failure to live according to his intellectual insights with a physiological one. Regretting that it diverts attention from the central struggle between head and heart, she considers his frail health as a superfluous remnant of materialistic concepts of literary naturalism. Unable to respond to Hauptmann's suggestion that the intensity of the conflict between two sets of meaning is worked out in the body itself, she only vaguely refers to an internal struggle :

Je kraftvoller Gemüt und Geist in ihm miteinander ringen, je mehr Herzensgröße und Verstandesschärfe Güte mit Entschlossenheit vereint ist, desto heißer und gefährvoller muß der Kampf entbrennen, dem Johannes erliegt (79).

Yet despite her radical criticism of Hauptmann's device, she attributes similar unexplained physical ailments to her male artist Eberhart. It is to simplify matters by merely to argue that in her portrayal of the son-as-artist she follows contemporary literary conventions (80). This discrepancy betrays a clash between her conscious disposition and a different kind of knowledge derived from the life of the body itself.

The woman, speaking the discourse of male rationality, refuses to acknowledge the body as problem. Yet fiction offers her a space of freedom, providing the possibility of articulating the body beyond its conditioning into silence. Her own imagination, indeed, increasingly revolves around problems of sickness and death. Two stories, Abteilung 'Innere Männer' and Eine Nacht, written a year before Ein Todesfall are located in hospitals. Eine Ausschweifung finally makes explicit that the will-ful suppression of creative impulses, conditioned by the pressures of an internalized female self-image, proves mentally and physically destructive. But not only does she veil this issue with regard to the male artist. She also does not problematize feelings of aggression, anger and guilt accompanying the presence of transgressive impulses.

Eberhart's self-image Einsame Fahrt in Ein Todesfall presents progression towards a new point of signification as a mere yielding to unconscious pressures. The subject is not shown actively to participate in his forward movement. He is presented as one being possessed and driven, without making use of his own physical and mental resources in order to forge his own way, at his own pace, towards a self-determined goal.

Lacking active participation prolongs the moment of leave-taking from the solid territory of a familiar world. Evoking a sense of dynamic stasis, the image recalls Rilke's expression of self-disgust during a tormenting phase of creative impotence, which Lou Andreas-Salomé quotes in her book on Rilke :

Meine Natur will so gern,
aber ich helfe ihr nicht (81).

Internal censorship obstructing the creative act is apprehended as a problem of the I, of the conscious self structured by cultural discourse. His admission

gegen alles Ererbte muß ich
feindselig sein (82)

highlights the fact that the conflict has to do with the conscious acceptance or repression of aggressive impulses.

Figures of transition also dominate women's novels written around the turn of the century. In 1896, Helene Stöcker describes similar problems with reference to Hedwig Dohm's fictional heroine Sibilla Dalmar, characterizing her as

eines jener unglückseligen Übergangsgeschöpfe,
deren Intellekt wohl das Neue, Zukunftsschaffende
versteht und ergreift, denen aber die sittliche
Kraft, die Energie des Willens fehlt, ihre An-
schauungen mit ihrem Leben in Einklang zu bringen (83).

Hedwig Dohm herself defines this division at the root of their being with specific reference to their situation as women, which is reminiscent of Adine's portrayal in Eine Ausschweifung . She says :

Das von allen früheren Frauengenerationen
erworbene, aufgehäuften Spezial-Weibtum heftet
sich als eine Art milder Furien oder Medusen an
die Sohlen der 'Neuen Frau' ihren Willen und ihr
Walten lähmend (84).

Lou Andreas-Salomé, however, does not allow her fictional women to confront their existential disease directly. Thus, in Ein Todesfall Esther is also prevented from recognizing her affinity with her male counterpart.

The description of Eberhart's first autonomous creation in terms of a different perception of reality requiring a different signifying practice is registered by the central consciousness embodied by Esther. Far from contentedly enjoying maternal bliss and wifely status, a diffuse yearning for significant activity and self-determined creation increasingly manifests itself. Her desire for otherness emerges without reason, exposing an emptiness, an absence of meaning within the cultural self-image. Restlessly looking out for

an outlet for her unused energies, she is confronted with the death of her double, the male artist. At this moment, fear and the sense of failure combine to arouse feelings of guilt at not having attended his call for support :

Ein ungeheuer angstvolles Gefühl von Verlust und Versäumnis schlug lähmend über ihr zusammen; eine sonderbare spitze Angst saß ihr am Herzen, - keine Trauer (85).

Her fascination with his self-image betrays her irrational identification with his conflict. Yet her basic acceptance of the cultural image of femininity turns her initial concern for herself into a concern for the other. Original desire for self-realization is displaced into the wish to understand the other's self-realization mediated through the father's representation.

The father's authority which primarily severed a developing bond between the woman and the artist by re-directing emerging sexual energy and desire into the feminine role-image has become an internalized authority. As such, it consistently diverts attention from her own self. On the foster-brother are projected the will towards self-assertion and self-defined creation while the woman remains partial.

Yet if her quest for meaning concerning the artist's objectives is understood as a displaced self-centred desire, then her acceptance of the father's meaning must also be read as a way of making amends for her own creative impulses. Unrecognized by the woman herself, there is a deep-seated sense of guilt bound up with her desire to create. Thus Lou Andreas-Salomé's own failure to confront the values of her society and enter into a direct discussion of the feminine role conflict causes her to develop strategies that work to atone for her own will to create.

Yet suppression of aggressive impulses coupled with her belief in woman's incapacity for transcendence also

reinforces fears revolving around the dangers of a chaotic feminine subjectivity that carries the threat of madness and death. In her first novel, she deals directly with the menace of an undifferentiated subjectivity. The woman who steps out of her socially allocated role by naïvely yielding to desires for otherness faces a void. Aggression is not allowed to flow out into reality. Instead, it is directed against the self. Representing the three main aspects of the conventional female image - the woman as beautiful object, the desexualized "Angel of the House", and the innocent child - she eliminates them all from the imaginative world of fiction by having them commit suicide or die an unnatural death.

This solution of the woman's conflict between her culturally formed self and her desiring body appears to serve the same purpose as she attributes to Rilke's creation of Malte Laurids Brigge. She uses it as a self-portrait

zum Zwecke einer Selbstunterscheidung davon . . .
um sich damit gestaltend zugleich selber vom . . .
Untergang zurückhalten zu lernen (86).

Henceforth, apart from her story Die Schwester, her fiction does not present any other female suicide. The fear of death, however, translates frequently as the fear of a primitive feminine subjectivity entailing the involuntary surrender of identity. In this respect, her fiction exhibits the same recurrent theme that also informs Simone de Beauvoir's work:

The essential danger which she identifies is that women may direct all their emotional energies (and indeed all their energies) into relationships with men, who will then leave them, betray them, or become indifferent (87).

Apprehending the woman's body as a threat rather than as a resource she also cannot see her writing as a vocation entailing conflict or responsibility. Her aligning it with fantasizing makes it a compensatory activity. She refuses

in particular to confront the aspects of protest and the desire for power bound up with fantasizing. Instead, she rationalizes her imaginative disposition as

eine weiterwirkende Unfähigkeit, sich auf die Außenwelt . . . zu beschränken (88).

Imaginative activity thus fulfils a similar purpose as diary writing initially does for Anaïs Nin. It is valued as a retreat from reality, allowing narcissistic compensation for the loss brought about by the construction of the social self. Energies in the desire for fusion of self and other are neutralized by foregrounding an individual incapacity to develop in the 'normal' way. Adopting this negative attitude towards the imaginary, she implicitly denies what, on the other hand, she considers as her specialness.

Elaine Showalter has pointed out that, for women

work meant labor for others. Work, in the sense of self-development, was in direct conflict with the subordination and repression inherent in the feminine ideal. The self-centredness implicit in the act of writing made this career an especially threatening one; it required an engagement with feeling and a cultivation of the ego rather than its negation (89, author's italics)

Yet 'cultivation of the ego', independent of different attitudes towards the normative values of society, is in itself problematic. As the ego is a cultural construct, emphasis on the conscious mind is also liable to confirm if not to reinforce culturally established structures. This consequence is particularly obvious with Lou Andreas-Salomé who invariably proposes two ways of assuming a solid identity.

On the one hand, there persists her nostalgic romanticizing of the traditional feminine role that arrests libidinal energies in the social function of mother and wife. On the

other hand, she stresses the values of rational thinking as a means of binding irrational energies. Yet both merely represent the social and symbolic aspect of the same frame, which constitutes the woman as 'Other' and excludes her body from signification.

Hélène Cixous describes this condition, saying

Eine Frau ist immer zerteilt, man gestattet ihr nur den Körper und schlägt ihr den Kopf ab, weil sich dort etwas denken ließe. Und wenn es eine Kastration der Frau gibt, dann findet sie hier statt in der Form der Ent-hauptung (90).

Already in 1911, Lou Andreas-Salomé's fervent critic Hedwig Dohm associated the fragmented functioning of the woman's body in her social role with her severed head :

Ein bisschen Köchin, ein bisschen Näherin, ein bisschen Plätterin, Kinderfrau usw. Man vierteilt doch die Menschen nicht mehr. Geköpft hat man das Weib längst schon. Bildlich gesprochen (91).

Yet Adine's creative self-representation in the form of a prisoner's head in Eine Ausschweifung illustrates that, Be - hauptung in the sense of human self-assertion is for her only possible by rendering the body invisible. Acceptance of repression restores her mental and physical health and secures her sanity. Her position as subject corresponds to the one Lou Andreas-Salomé assumes in her rational discourse. Yet, whereas fiction portrays it as a self-defensive reaction against cultural inscriptions, her theoretical discourse evades this issue.

Her conflicting attitudes towards the body are bound up with her division of the female artist into being a woman first and a creator second. Being the productive source for the artist, the woman apprehends her body simultaneously as a threat that has to be eliminated. This basic ambivalence is in full evidence in her comments on Ricarda Huch's novel Erinnerungen von Ludolf Ursleu dem Jüngeren. Reviewing it in

1895, she admires it in particular for its evocation of an all-pervasive Gemütsstimmung. In this respect, the novel corresponds to her own dream of a fictional technique as a form of discourse zwischen dem Traum und seiner Deutung (92). Her description of the son's first autonomous creation in Ein Todesfall reveals the same emphasis on his creation of a specific mood :

Die Radierung darf erzählen, und was diese erzählt, hört sich an wie ein Schicksal. Das liegt in der Stimmung, welche durch die raffinierte Technik in allen Nuancen zur Geltung kommt . . . welch ein Abschiednehmen in dieser Gestalt (93).

The etymological and phonetic relation between Stimmung (mood) and Stimme (voice) draws attention to the material nature of the sound as an extension of the body and the self's unconscious sensations. The non-signified is here introduced as a formative principle that makes disparate elements cohere to produce meaning. She emphasizes that the pleasure of writing and reading derives from the fact that the subject is affected by the non-signified, which exists prior to any differentiation into subject and object and is therefore common to all human beings. Apprehended through its effects within the symbolic it initiates cognition, allowing the experiencing of what is typical of the human condition

in dessen besonderer Gestaltung doch alle sich wiedererkennen (94).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's emphatic reaction to Huch's novel is very similar to the enthusiasm that accompanies Esther's dawning insight into her ~~father~~ brother's and her own desire for otherness. In both cases, this reaction is personal and intense. Like Adine's delayed engaging in creative activity theirs is also a delayed quest for meaning.

In her review, Lou Andreas-Salomé conceals the contribution of the subject in the construction of meaning. She makes

the specific nature of the object responsible for her delay in understanding it. Her fiction, on the other hand, locates the problem of comprehension and interpretation in the psychological readiness of the subject. The story suggests that the object unfolds its signifying power because it answers the subject's mute quest for meaning. Intersubjectivity, as the point of interaction between subject and object, is imagined as being due to a similarity of desire for otherness. Represented in visible form, it becomes recognizable for the subject who may use the sign to make sense of its own life.

Yet these are suggestions that are cancelled out by the text itself. Esther explains its reasons :

ihr war , als habe sie nur den Vater immer ganz verstehen können. So hoch er über ihr stand, besaßen sie doch eine gemeinsame Sprache (95).

Her conditioning by the father's language operates as an obstacle to perception. It does not allow her to recognize the other as self. Her mind operates like Lou Andreas-Salomé's own on the basis of binary oppositions which work to maintain the separation between subject and object. Believing in her feminine inferiority, Esther does not pass beyond the stage of dreaming into thinking. The desire for otherness is aborted at the very moment when interrogating the fusion of self and other may have generated a new meaning. Instead, ignorant about how meaning is created, all her efforts are directed towards understanding the father's vision of reality.

The gap between Lou Andreas-Salomé's first reading and her inability to understand Huch's novel and her fascinated writing about it reveals a similar structure. In either case, it is the concern with the woman's body that is simultaneously articulated and suppressed. Unconscious material presses upon consciousness to generate production after having become

assimilated into the pre-existent conscious frame. Thus it has lost its menace to disrupt the woman's identity. Michèle Montrelay has characterized this way of writing, as follows :

on travaille le langage et les pensées comme si on était un homme. On feint le recul. On fait semblant d'être 'séparé' et de jouir à leur manière. On s'identifie au plaisir et aux insignes de l'un d'eux (96).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's irrational identification is with the male narrator of the novel. Her review spells out the attraction she feels for the nostalgic mood that pervades his narrative that revolves around the decline of traditional moral norms. Their transgression by the female protagonist proves suicidal. Central to Huch's novel is the interrogation of the romantic concept of love. Its repressive character warrants an upsurge of sexual energies, defying the heroine's life-long devotion to this spiritualized concept of love. Her yielding to desire without its being grounded in a transcendental super-structure results in the destruction of her self-image, making her life appear devoid of sense.

In her first novel, Lou Andreas-Salomé presents in Jane a similar figure in so far as she is equally unable to confront her erotic needs and accept responsibility for her desires. At a loss to signify her transgressive sexual act other than by reference to traditional values, the ensuing sense of guilt results in depression which finally kills her.

Galeide and Jane are judged in almost similar terms. Lou Andreas-Salomé refrains from questioning the ideal of spiritual love that informs the characters' actions. In order to salvage the established concept, she turns away from the desiring body. So she declares that people whose moral strength derives from their naïve at-oneness with their spiritual ideal

dürfen eine Erfahrung nicht machen : daß auch das Gemeine und Sinnlose in ihnen seine Wurzel

hat, wie im gesamten Leben, aus dessen
Tiefe ja auch sie aufgestiegen sind, aus
dessen Stoff ja auch sie geschaffen sind (97).

She wards off the threat of disintegration by turning her back on life and discarding the woman's actual experience of herself. The woman's body becomes an area of non-signification that is valorized in negative terms. Like fantasizing desire is seen in terms of a regression into undifferentiated space prior to humanizing schemes. The word Gemeine connotes it with the vulgar. The fact that in her own novel a similar evaluation is presented from a male perspective as part of a male-devised text betrays its derivation from male-defined norms. These do not signify woman outside her social identity. Beyond there is nothing, loss of self, absence of sense, death.

5. Anaïs Nin : Desire and the Centrality of Language

Especially at the beginning of her writing career Anaïs Nin's diaries reveal the menace which Lou Andreas-Salomé keeps warding off. She says :

My descent into the inferno is a descent into the irrational level of existence, where the instincts and blind emotions are loose, where one lives by pure impulse, pure fantasy, and therefore pure madness (98).

Like Lou Andreas-Salomé she is also aware of the similarity between neurotic and creative reactions to life. Yet worse than being overwhelmed by an unending flux of images and disoriented by confused meanings she feels is the state

when life is frozen within the rigid confines of conscious patterns. Indulging in muted dreams, she insists,

No, that is not the inferno. While I am there I am as unconscious of misery as a man who is drunk; or, rather, my misery is a great joy. It is when I become conscious again that I feel unutterable pain (99).

Identifying conscious choice and personal will as a means of transcending the neurotic condition by siding with the other in herself, she maintains :

being an artist, I want to be in those states of extasy or vision while keeping my awareness intact. I am the poet and I must feel and see (100).

She recognizes the manifest desire for fusion of self and other as a mode of cognition :

It is at the basis of my life, analogy, interchange of souls, of identities. Doesn't love mean just that, this growing into the other like plants intertwining their roots, this interchange of souls and feelings. Not an abyss then but a new world. Not madness but a deep truth. A principle moving us, our inner fatality. We do not act ourselves. We act. We are possessed (101).

Consciously, she takes the characteristic form in which her neurosis expresses itself as the basic constituent of her fictional technique.

Her continual efforts to establish undeniable links between a woman's mode of experiencing life and ways of expressing it confront her with the opposed desires for fusion and separation. She realizes that it is the genderized onesidedness of this polarity which produces a tendency towards insanity. Separation involves the recognition of similarity and difference from the other :

It is as if by a fluid quality, a facility for identification with others, I become like water and instead of separating from others, as Henry does, I lose myself in others . . . Then I get

confused. This for me is the labyrinth.
Identification, projection. My identification with my father had to be broken.
Myself in June (102)

Thus she also obliterates Lou Andreas-Salomé's distinction between self-expression related to art and to life. Extending the notion of creativity to make it encompass life and art alike, she affirms :

the will to create, or creative will, which pursues and haunts the artist, I found to be applicable to our individual life, to our personal life, as it is to a work of art. That is, we do have a will, a possibility, and a potential to change ourselves (103).

Coinciding with Lou Andreas-Salomé's relationship to the young poet Rainer Maria Rilke there occurs a shift of emphasis in her fictional as well as in her theoretical production. In fiction, she turns from primarily exploring psychological problems to interrogating their relationship to artistic production. Similarly, in her essays which previously centred on the referential function of art, she moves towards describing the creative process, in view of exposing the link between art and life.

In her last novel Das Haus , she also drops the disguise of the woman artist as painter and directly acknowledges the woman's creation as work. Opposing it to silent, isolated fantasizing the recently married woman asserts her will to protect herself from being reduced to the social role of mother and wife. Aware that her human development and growth depend on her own labours, she regards the creative act as a means of self-realization :

Sie wußte jetzt, wie man es machen mußte, um unabhängig zu sein von der kleinen Mädchenstube, wo das Glück sich einstellte. Man mußte, ehe es sich davonstahl , jedes Stück, dessen man habhaft

geworden war, hineintun in Wörter wie in winzige diebessichere Gewahrsame, die es dann unbeschädigt wieder herausgaben. Man mußte nicht darüber träumen: arbeiten mußte man (104).

Yet Anaïs Nin's emphasis on change and Lou Andreas-Salomé's on growth effect different decisions in writing. Significantly, the developing female artist in Das Haus metaphorizes verbal expression as Gewahrsam. Ambiguously the word refers simultaneously to the writer's unquestioned trust in established conscious forms as guarantees of truth and to their imprisoning effects. Thus the woman's form of expression would reinforce culturally induced controls of the self by transforming them into self-controls (105).

Anaïs Nin calls into question the validity of the conscious I, emphasizing its inability to distinguish between genuine and externally imposed wishes. The confusion of desires is experienced as a labyrinth without issue, dissolving any sense of a coherent identity. Yet far from warding off the threat of disintegration as Lou Andreas-Salomé does, she concentrates all her efforts on deciphering what an absent area of the self excludes from realization. Not interested in changing pre-conceived male and female stereotypes, Lou Andreas-Salomé settles for the general idea that certain things cannot be known. So she asserts :

Gefühle, deren Kehrseite 'dem Unbewußten zugekehrt' bleiben, können sich nie total zu uns herumdrehen, wir können daher mit ihrem Anblick nie fertig werden; könnten wir es, so würde in Bezug auf sie vielleicht wahr werden, was in dem Bezug auf den Beschauer vom Antlitz der Wahrheit als eines Bildes zu Sais gilt: wer sie sieht, der stirbt (106, author's italics)

Anaïs Nin, concentrating not on the feeling but on the word representing it, notes :

When the word was the same, it did not move, nor did my feet. The word died and the anguish

came, about the death of this word, about
the death of the feeling inside this word (107).

Both passages refer to the nature of compulsive repetitions believed to be indicative of the pressures of unconscious material that does not become accessible to consciousness. With Lou Andreas-Salomé, it is the idea of self-discovery that is associated with death, inducing anxiety related to the fusion of self and other. Anaïs Nin experiences the repetition compulsion as a manifestation of the pure absence of self. It is this apprehension of dead-undead parts of the self that causes anxiety, urging the subject to find apertures through which desire is able to pass into the world.

She relies primarily on the structural device to elaborate a text around a specific image or phrase to gain access to deeper layers of the psyche. Repeatedly stressing the importance of finding and selecting

the image which liberates, unleashes
one's unconscious responses (108)

she values it for its capacity to bypass conscious censorship. It allows an unweaving of the familiar order of signs, thus penetrates beyond the labyrinth of confused desires to discover the original wish and helps to lead the subject out of the labyrinth of contradictory impulses. Pursuing the image, she insists, usually leads

to the untying of a knot in the psyche,
the opening of passageways into the richness
of accumulated experience which, like contra-
band, have been sealed off by fear or a trauma (109).

Anaïs Nin's focus on the other, the not-I prompts her to probe self-other relations generated by unconscious desires. Her simultaneous preoccupation with problems of discourse reveals her awareness of the fact that it is language that structures such interrelationships. She does not merely

assert the psychological need for rhythmic alternation between merging and separating in the process of coming into self-knowledge but expresses it linguistically.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's main concern is with thematizing problems of the female self-image as reflected in the mirror of patriarchal ideology. Thus preoccupied with problems of consciousness and perception, her texts reveal a predominance of the eye over other sense organs. Self-other relations are presented through a central perspective. Perception is thus framed by endowing the central character with a definite identity. Her narratives generally perform a course that begins with stating the subject's socio-psychological place, proceeds via an aborted moment of fusion to arrive finally at the same place, now recognized and accepted by the self-identical subject. Creation figures in terms of a finished product. The woman's writing in Eine Ausschweifung illustrates that she but adds an interpretation to a previous representation. Yet representing the other side of the mirror reflected in the cultural discourse of her painting reproduces only the same structure in reverse: the complexity of the self is divided into two opposing forces, one that suppresses and the other that is suppressed.

Her textual position resembles that of the day-dreamer. The central I dreams, but its fantasies do not disturb the coherent unity of the subject in any fundamental sense. Consequently, conventional forms of thinking and speaking which express and produce this identifiable subject remain equally intact.

House of Incest is Anaïs Nin's first published work of fiction. It not only contains already all the major themes of subsequent texts but also her artistic credo and its most consistent application. Like Eine Ausschweifung, it also stands out within Anaïs Nin's fictional output due to

its thematizing the conditions that generate a woman's fictional production. In each case, the main body of the text is preceded by a passage which establishes significant relations between living and writing.

House of Incest introduces an unnamed narrator. Thus Anaïs Nin conveys an understanding of the subject, and for that matter of any subject, male and female, which is at the same time one and many. Within the main body of the text, the I is shown to pass through identificatory experiences related to male and female figures alike. Foregrounded is the I's capacity for an indeterminate range of fusion of self and other in terms of identifications, projections, relations of emphatic sympathy or compassion. Vital energy circulating within the body may flow into any object, infusing it with life and assimilating it as a part of the I.

Unlike Lou Andreas-Salomé who speaks 'about' states of fusion, Anaïs Nin speaks this fusion itself in an effort to erase distinctions between subject and object, self and other. Identities of subject and object merge, not only in psychological but also in linguistic terms. Thus the I, awaking with a sense of stagnation due to utter confusion of desires and selves grammatically becomes the shipwrecked ship :

I awoke at dawn, thrown up on a rock,
the skeleton of a ship choked in its
own sails (110).

In contrast to Adine, who endures any dissolution of ego boundaries against her will - and the urge to write effects this dissolution - Anaïs Nin's writer carefully stages various entries into different states of fusion. They function as means to discover the dream and desire of a potential self

and simultaneously as an escape from the rigid confines of the social self. Writing offers a possibility of fusion among others. Movement in the book and within the dream is made synonymous.

Miming this state of identity loss and establishing a state of undifferentiation is achieved by making the form of the dream the principle of textual production. Collages of amalgamated poetic images imitating dream sequences open up a multitude of meanings defying logical coherence and linear causality. This textual position does not so much resemble the day-dreamer's but the dreamer's who may become everything and every act. Her vision is similar to Hélène Cixous', who says

Je regarde ailleurs et autrement. Je regarde
là où il n'y a pas de spectacle. Et ce regard
est extrêmement intérieur. Il est de l'ordre
de l'approximation . . . qui a trait au contact,
au toucher (111).

Contrary to Lou Andreas-Salomé, Anaïs Nin here presents writing not as the representation of an already experienced and pre-scribed text. She aims at creating an experience and at transposing into language the constant interaction between self and other, consciousness and desire, the symbol and the body.

Exemplifying the creative act by evoking 'the worship of an Indian for his mistress' who 'made a flute of her bones' (112) emphasizes the relationship between the act of self-expression and the body as material space from where the sound emerges. The unnamed I is comprehended as part of a community of writers sharing in the same experience: namely, to create the experience of fusion by producing an audible trace. Hence also Anaïs Nin's recourse to non-representational resources of language which she exploits for its musical qualities in order to transcribe

the fluid quality of life. She values images for their evocative power to arouse sensations, employing them rather in a metonymic sense correlative to the interdependent sensations of the body. Their traditionally metaphoric use would preserve their representational function and convey an idea anterior to the image itself.

With reference to the Indian's transformation of the female body into an instrument to suit his needs of self-expression the narrator-writer in House of Incest insists :

Only I do not want
my love to die (113).

Consequently, there would also be no interposed instrument to mediate the expression of the body. For the male creator, the woman's absence as a living self and her subsequent reification are preconditions for his inspiration. He does not touch her directly. No mutual interchange is possible. Dead, she becomes a suitable object for art. This logic of separation exhibits a specific movement. Proceeding from an initial separation, via re-calling and re-appropriating the fragmented loved object, the movement strives to master the loss, the separation. (114)

In Im Kampf um Gott, Lou Andreas-Salomé imagines male textual production in a similar way. The work which the central male character pursues after having constituted himself as father is appropriately called Umgang mit den Seelen armer, verstorbenen Menschen (115). Cast into the fragmented roles of mother, daughter, mistress and sister, the dead here are the women who through intimate contact with him encounter their death. Writing the story of his life and mental growth they become objects of his text.

Anais Nin as writer situates herself before any transformation of the living matrix of her writing. The other, being a constitutive factor within the act of creation, is evoked in terms of its material and relational presence. The grammatically ambiguous placing of the word 'love' in the above

quotation allows to relate it simultaneously to the passion of the subject and to the beloved object. Thus linguistic form emphasizes that the effect of fiction is not to posit the interdependence of self and other, I and you, inside and outside but to express it grammatically.

Yet Anaïs Nin's text also reveals that recovering the pleasures of unlimited fusion through writing discovers that this pleasure is an illusion. How to deal with an excess of sense, an excess of words, if the writer feels :

I am an insane woman for whom houses wink
and open their bellies. Significance stares
at me from everywhere, like a gigantic under-
lying ghostliness. Significance emerges out of
dark alleys and sombre faces, leans out of the
windows of strange houses (116).

The constant influx of words, sense, images makes it impossible to single out a partial object to which desire might get attached. Words lose their power to separate. Desire is constantly diverted from attaining its goal :

Desire which had stretched the nerve broke,
and each nerve seemed to break separately,
continuously making incisions, and acid ran
instead of blood (117).

Only the body remains into which to cut incessantly with words. The writer feels imprisoned in her body which is marked by male inscriptions, possessed by a language that dispossesses her of her own truths. These can only be told in the disguise of a fairytale

behind which all the truths are staring
as behind grilled mosque windows. With
veils (118).

Otherwise there would be no chance of saying the truth, and one would have to stop writing altogether.

The writer's problematic assertion that the book was 'written without witness' (119) suggests the need for self-affirmation as well as the feeling of isolation

and loneliness going with the struggle for independence. Yet it also wrongly implies that fiction can be free in terms of a literary tradition (120) and in its relation to the historical world (121). Moreover, it surprisingly contradicts Anaïs Nin's emphasis on the process of merging self and other within the act of creation.

Within the main body of the text, she opposes I and other in terms of seeing and dreaming. All her intention is directed towards articulating the I's muted fears and desires. Yet in relation to the I the 'witness' is also the other. Representing the separating, discriminating eye, the witness embodies also the separating power of language and the power of producing reality. Acknowledging the existence of a differentiating I/eye and simultaneously denying its presence amounts to avoiding dealing with the interrelationship between the imaginary, the symbolic and the real (122). This refusal conveys the idea that due to being the culturally repressed the unconscious has escaped the ordering influence of language that structures the social self. Hence also Anaïs Nin's view of fiction writing as a means of escape from the constricting order of reality.

Making the struggle for freedom a mere product of the imagination betrays a passive relation to the historical world. Living, she complies with feminine role expectations, manifest in her 'inability to cause pain' (123) and in her making

a prison out of devotions, fraternities,
indebtedness, loyalties (124).

Her belief in the traditional values of nurturing femininity causes her to apply all her energies to freeing others instead of herself. Although able to define the part she plays in her own entrapment in the feminine role, she cannot see its cultural determinants, wondering :

What is this prison? The difference, the violent contrast between what I dream, wish, and the

reality which diminishes, shrinks, interrupts, shrivels all things (125).

Despite Anaïs Nin's persistent concern with language this contrast between 'I' and 'reality' reveals ignorance about the function of language in the construction of reality and self-knowledge. Even at the peak of her writing career, while arguing for women's need for self-expression, she only vaguely states

We cannot be aware of something in a non-language state. Awareness is somehow connected with language (126).

On the other hand, she considers forms of unconscious expression a specifically woman's language, thus reversing the cultural assertion about innate female undifferentiatedness by assigning it a positive value. Her refusal to allow intercourse between the dreaming and the seeing self in House of Incest corresponds to her failure of relating her attitude towards creation to her historically constructed self. Thus her fiction serves the purpose of accommodating fears of colliding with reality while simultaneously perpetuating them.

Trying to clarify her relationship towards cultural production Anaïs Nin confronts in particular the need of coming to terms with interrelated problems of anger, transformation and separation. Accompanying fears of change are only gradually and insufficiently resolved in the course of her gaining increasing therapeutic insight into the cultural ideal of nurturing femininity. This enables her to accept aggressive impulses as indispensable to the act of creation. Yet its theoretical acceptance does not extinguish deep-seated fears of authorship. Those result from the fact, as Anaïs Nin observes

that as you work out your own individuality, you have anxiety about separating yourself

from others and creating distance (127).

Seeking to overcome the menace of social punishment inherent in self-exposure, she declares

Not wanting to be separated from human life
became the basis of my art (128).

The fact that the fear of social alienation decides questions in writing implies that in elaborating her fictional technique she pursues self-defensive strategies. Personal censorship had prompted the secrecy of the diary. Yet the imaginative freedom offered by fiction writing is again primarily valued for its capacity to say in disguise what publicly cannot be expressed directly. Thus her fiction retains functions that are originally fulfilled by diary writing, the convention of which she explicitly asks to consider also as an act of self-defense (129).

II. THE QUEST FOR LITERARY AUTHORITY

Am Anfang war das Wort
Und das Wort war bei Gott
Und Gott war das Wort (1)

Sie begriff, wie manche Leute zur
Sehergabe kommen : Ein starker Schmerz
oder eine starke Konzentration er-
leuchtet die Landschaft des Innern (2).

1. In Search of Origins : the Experience of God

The first chapter of Lou Andreas-Salomé's autobiography is entitled Das Erlebnis Gott. Like the first volume of Anaïs Nin's diaries it deals primarily with a double conquest : that of identity and of writing. The way in which both women experience God and interpret this experience plays a crucial role in shaping their self-image as women and in constructing their identity as artists. Their self-definition reveals the impossibility of removing male imagery from the name of God. Yet its process reflects contrasting movements.

Lou Andreas-Salomé considers the experience of a self-generated god and its sudden loss in childhood as the origin of her personality. The culturally induced masculinization of God which conceals the elimination of autonomous female power prevents her from recognizing its deformative

effects on her own creativity. Yet the discursive pattern she establishes in her autobiography from its very beginning reveals it as self-loss. The I disappears from discourse at significant instances. As a woman she enters her own story, describing her development into an independent human being. But as creator and writer she mutes her own story. Her selective choice from the raw material of lived experience devotes no separate chapter to her work. References to her work appear only in passing. As a creator she hides behind Rainer Maria Rilke, according him the space which she avoids occupying herself. Similarly, she veils her own sense of rational power by locating it in her male teacher, the priest and freethinker Hendrik Gillot.

With Anaïs Nin, her simultaneous quest for identity as woman and writer reveals itself as the two-faced effort to assert a female self within a society that tends to destroy female identity and female creativity. Her major concern is with clarifying the confusion between God the Father and the actual father. This struggle is projected as a necessary precondition to allowing autonomous female self-assertion. Her rejection of a masculinized God exposes the self to a void. It is this sense of utter lack and its simultaneous longing to fill it which prepares the adult woman for the experience of a self-generated god, in terms of the feeling of total wholeness and interconnectedness.

As children, both women grew up under the heightened influence of orthodox Christian faith. Thus it is not surprising that Christian symbolism should also provide them with an image around which to articulate their relationship towards their own sense of creative power. Within the Salomé household belief in and observance of Protestant dogma and ritual were reinforced beyond its historically normal situation. Belonging to the Protestant denomination provided a social bond for the non-Russian community living in St. Petersburg, where the girl's father served as an army general

under the Russian czar.

Yet Lou Andreas-Salomé emphasizes her early emotional detachment from conventional beliefs. Reluctance to fully adjust to the demands and conditions of reality prompted the child's creation of an imaginary ally

gegen religiöse oder moralische Fiktionen
seiner Eltern, seiner Umwelt (3).

Surpassing any pre-established authority, her self-generated divine image comprises maternal and paternal characteristics. It represents

beide Eltern übereinandergestülpt : mütterliche
Schoßwärme und väterliche Machtvollkommenheit (4)

Generator and container of the girl's fantasies, this authority is invested with ultimate power to gratify her desires according to laws that operate entirely in her favour. As the girl's invisible double it represents her own uninhibited will towards self-assertion and unrestricted power over reality. Her hidden self-communication asserts the power of the imagination and the freedom of discourse. Isolated from the rest of the world and located in the secrecy of her room, her god already possesses the indispensable characteristics of the writer's refuge.(5)

Anais Nin, on the other hand, describes herself as

that fervent little Spanish Catholic child who chastized herself for loving toys, who forbade herself the enjoyment of sweet foods, who practiced silence, who humiliated her pride, who adored symbols . . . for whom Communion was a great event (6).

After the father had abandoned the family for another woman the mother took the daughter and her two sons to Spain, where she stayed for some time with her in-laws. Here, the girl's religious passion was mediated through the close emotional bond that developed between herself and her grandmother. Being the father's mother, she represented the possibility

of maintaining an imaginary link with the absent father. Herself the self-sacrificial wife of a tyrannical husband, she is seen by Anaïs Nin as

the model for the wife he wanted,
abnegation, respect, selflessness (7).

Modelling herself in the grandmother's image and living up to traditional Christian virtues of goodness, submission and self-sacrifice became synonymous. Self-castigation and the voluntary endurance of pain were related to the hope that one day God might reward the child with his love by granting her the father's love.

The girl's dependence on the father's love and recognition is bound up with her identification with him as artist. An idealized version of her own self-image, she imagines him as 'strong, hero, famous musician . . . triumphant' (8). However, the father-daughter relationship is fraught with conflict and poses a threat to the daughter's identity from the very beginning. He is experienced as abusing his authority and exploiting the dependency of the child by negating all her attempts at creative production and independent self-assertion. Yet even in this explicit negation there is acknowledgement of her creativity. So the father's desertion of the family, far from being experienced as a relief, becomes a traumatic experience for the girl. It intensifies her conflict between contradictory impulses towards self-assertion and self-suppression. For, as Anaïs Nin observes herself :

in absence the father becomes glorified,
deified, eroticized (9).

Creative power being located in the father, his absence makes him

the haunting double of
the unfulfilled ideal (10).

Lacking paternal recognition is internalized in terms of self-doubt and self-condemnation.

Yet weary of self-imposed controls and disillusioned with a God who remained as unresponsive to the child's needs as the father remained absent, the girl rejected Catholicism at the age of sixteen. However, her latent incapacity for enjoyment as well as her confusion between God and the actual father as the one and only being in possession of the power to create miracles persisted. It was only in the course of her pregnancy that she began to recognize their non-identity, a realization that escaped Lou Andreas-Salomé's understanding.

The latter was about the same age as Anaïs Nin, namely seventeen, when shortly after the death of her father and to the great shock of her mother, she renounced orthodox religion altogether. But this public break with a conventional system of beliefs was less radical than, for instance Anaïs Nin believed it to be. She regarded Lou Andreas-Salomé's decision to study theology, philosophy and finally psychology as courageous steps towards creating herself as an independent personality. Yet, what both failed to realize is that, through a series of substitutions involving different categories of cultural discourse, Lou Andreas-Salomé invariably arrived at confirming the cultural order which she appeared to reject by abandoning the institutionalized form of the Church.

Establishing the prevalence of sameness over difference also emerges as the organizing principle of the first chapter of Lou Andreas-Salomé's collection of autobiographical essays. She calls it Lebensrückblick and subtitles it Grundriß einiger Lebenserinnerungen. Her naming suggests that memory as retrospective interpretation operates to impose a pattern on the lived in the process of representing it. Yet the pattern itself functions as an alien inherited presence that contradicts the subject's will towards autonomous self-assertion. She proceeds from a certain concept of repetition that posits an original event which provides the underlying ground for later experiences as identical repetitions.

The I is absent from discourse when, in the attempt to identify her beginning as a conscious subject, she resorts to a general description of the origin of consciousness. Similar to Freud, she sees the emergence of the subject in terms of a separation from a state of wholeness and plenitude of being. Focusing on human efforts to recapture a primeval unity, she likens the imaginative construct of her childhood god to publicly accepted forms of discourse. Religion is singled out as the prototypical human discourse, revealing how human beings organize their relationship to the surrounding world. She describes it as

ein fantasiertes Duplikat - berufen zu vertuschen,
was sich mit dem Menschen Fragwürdiges zugetragen
hat (11).

Fragwürdig, in the sense both of questionable and worthy of being questioned then is the event of castration, the moment of moving away from an undifferentiated realm of unity between self and non-self. Religion appears as a structural and structuring fantasy which retroactively inscribes origins, accommodates otherness, and seeks to transcend the dualism between consciousness and unconsciousness. Its public form and circulation recollects and commemorates the universal human experience of the emergence and constitution of the subject.

It is not until quite recently that feminist criticism has applied itself to analysing the biblical myth of genesis in view of exposing its joint production of a certain genderized concept of the subject and of work. Brigitte Wartmann has pointed out that the biblical myth reflects clearly that the law according to which history and culture are organized precedes individual consciousness. Paradise is less blissful than it is made to appear. It is already inhabited by two antagonistic forces, God's spiritual law and an untamed natural force. Eating from the forbidden tree of knowledge amounts to appropriating its naturally creative

power. The desire for knowledge being associated with the physical pleasure of eating implies that appropriating a partial object and making it part of the self is imagined as a pleasurable experience. However,

Eva hat zwar mit ihrer undisziplinierten Lust den entscheidenden Fortschritt der Zivilisation bewirkt, aber . . . Adam darf Evas Impuls zum Fortschritt zu seinem eigenen machen (12).

Her equation with nature, subordination to the male and complementary exclusion from cultural production goes hand in hand with eliminating from consciousness

das leiblich- sinnliche formende Moment der lebendigen Arbeit (13 , author's italics).

For Lou Andreas-Salomé, questions of gender do not become a matter of interrogation. Similar to Friedrich Nietzsche, she focuses on religion as imaginary discourse. She is aware that the symbolic duplicates a presence which the very act of displacing it into images and words conceals. This dependence of the re-presented on non-present elements defies the human attempt of assigning definite meanings to the real and enclosing it within a finite system of meaning. It makes religious discourse open to questioning.

In her essay Jesus der Jude , she links the creation of gods, ideals and moral values, locating their construction in the subjective perception of the perceiver who creates reality according to his fears and desires. She notes :

das Neue, was die großen Religionsstifter zu Stande bringen [ist] eigentlich nie ein neues Erschaffen von Gottheiten, sondern vielmehr eine neue Herzensstellung zu ihnen, ein Zurechtrenken der schiefen und zweideutigen Stellung, die durch den irdischen Gott-Ursprung gegeben ist (14).

Her concept of God does not figure any more within a supernatural economy but has come to signify otherness. As the invisible part of the conscious self it represents empty

space, the name being nothing but

eine außerordentlich zarte Hülle, in der wir jedesmal unser Köstlichstes bergen, dessen Inhalt je nach den Zeiten und nach den unter sich verschiedenen Gefühlsweisen und Wertschätzungen der Menschen wechselt, ohne die Hülle zu sprengen (15).

The questionable moment, then, which Lou Andreas-Salomé does not tire of thematizing in her fiction concerns the daughter's entry into the cultural order. Religious discourse is here replaced by the discourse of the father which destroys her way of relating to the world through fusing the principles of love and power. The daughter's relation to the father or father substitute is portrayed in terms of a mentor-pupil relationship. Lou Andreas-Salomé often doubles the father figure by splitting it into the autonomous law-giver and into the male teacher, husband or culturally valued text, itself as representatives of paternal agency, destined to carry out and enforce the Law of the Father.

Similarly, Anaïs Nin's fiction is centrally concerned with exploiting her personal experience of the deified father in order to objectify her relationship towards culture. A different biographical matrix, however, appears to account for the fact that she focuses on the collapse of the father's deification. As a result, she mostly thematizes the daughter's conflictual attempts to establish her female autonomy.

Lou Andreas-Salomé sees the creation of god and religious systems to stem from the same vitally productive source that finds expression in the unconscious workings of the dream, generates a sense of the uncanny through its doubling of reality and becomes articulate in the conscious production of fantasies or fiction.

However, her concern is with the finished product in the

shape of an objectified image of God and a rationally ordered system of ideas. As a result, and despite her understanding of God as a human creation, she fails to convey that God is also the image of human creative power itself. At the same time, she does not scrutinize the forms and laws along which the expressive discharge of energies operates. Consequently and in spite of her life-long opposition to orthodox Christian dogma, she reproduces the latter's basic

circular pattern/model for muted existence:
separation from and return to the same
immutable source (16).

Although she does conceive her self-created god as androgynous, she compares him at the same time to a Großvater, a benevolent, generous 'grand-father'. Her naming has the crucial effect of saving the idea of God the Father, whence anything proceeds and to which all life returns. The aim of this movement, then, is to achieve reconciliation with the father from whom she has been alienated whom she has lost. So she also produces the all-male trinitarian model of Christian religion when she traces her own sense of creative power. She proceeds from its origin in a grand-father like god, via its displacement into the male teacher as God's representative and subsequently into male discourse.

Despite her intense interest in the narcissistic phase in human development, she fails to see that the birth of her own god from religious aspirations conceals a desire for the mother. From the beginning, the emotionally distant relationship to her mother appears to have been lived as a painful experience. Fiction writing will function as a means to fill a fundamental lack which inscribes itself at the very beginning of her autobiography. Yet it appears that access to the mother remains blocked and therefore also a certain kind of creativity. So her creation corresponds rather to transmitting inherited meaning in contrast with Anaïs Nin's

efforts to create meaning. Maternal filiation, still present in Lou Andreas-Salomé's self-generated divine image will become the image of her relationship to a totality.

As one of the lasting effects of the pleasurable communion with her childhood god she emphasizes

eine damals dunkel erwachende, nie mehr
ablassende, durchgehende Grundempfindung
unermeßlicher Schicksalsgemeinschaft mit
allem, was ist (17).

But her sense of ultimate interconnectedness remains restricted to an irrational reverence towards anything alive. It thus provides the opposite pole of rationality. This polarity, however, holds a binary opposition in place that has traditionally assigned the sphere of love, nature and the irrational to the feminine and the sphere of power and rationality to the masculine.

Anaïs Nin also uses the name of God to describe as a religious experience her sense of total connectedness with the surrounding life continuum. She notes :

I melted into God. No image. I felt space,
gold, purity, ecstasy, immensity, a pro-
found inelectuable communion (18).

Like Lou Andreas-Salomé's creation of her divine image, this experience also relates to an origin. The experience of fusion between self and non-self goes with the feeling of being whole and at one with herself. This sense of wholeness validates her effort to transcend the painful experience of loss, resulting from her stillbirth, by affirming that her destiny lies in 'symbolic motherhood'. The moment of emergence from a state of undifferentiated unity posits the female subject in terms of a definite self-image. This self-ideal involves recognition of sexual difference, trust in the individual power of creative self-assertion and in her own insights and intuitions, as well as the sense of the interdependence of self and non-self.

Anaïs Nin's ecstatic communion with the whole of being results in a passionate affirmation of the surge of life within herself. Affirming her original source, she simultaneously confirms the absolute necessity of not confusing God and the father. She writes :

I felt my connection with God . . . full connection which gives me an immense joy and a sense of the greatness of life, eternity, I was born. I was born woman. To love God and to love man, supremely and separately. Not to confuse them. (19).

Correlative to this event happening involuntarily, creation is experienced as a conscious effort

to weave a web of connection with the world (20).

Her search is for an order that displaces the father's which she has experienced as painfully destructive. So she also uses love as a mode of cognition that relies on the unconscious perceptions of relations generated by emotional links. This concept of creation which she equally applies to life and fiction involves her efforts to extract the image of God from that of the actual father. She insists :

We were deluded by this shadow of God the Father cast on the world, a shadow larger than man. This shadow you would worship and seek to touch, dreaming day and night of its warmth, and of its greatness, dreaming of its covering you lulling you, larger than a hammock, as large as the sky, big enough to hold your soul and all your fears, larger than man or woman , than church or house, the shadow of a magic father who is nowhere to be found. It is the shadow of God the Father (21).

Her image of God here exhibits the same unity of power and love that characterizes Lou Andreas-Salomé's childhood god. However, in contrast to the latter, she also becomes aware of the fact that Christianity fosters the illusion that creative power can be equated with paternal power. She reaches the conclusion that the father's imperfections make him inadequate for playing the role of magic dispenser

of goods and gifts.

Lou Andreas-Salomé also finds it impossible to explain the derivation of her divine image with reference to the actual father alone. However, in order to save the father's integrity, his deification is seen as a fault of the child's disposition to magnify everything it loves. Within this discursive pattern the image of the father itself remains untouched. Anaïs Nin's frustrated attempts at winning the father's love have made her aware that the image of God the Father and of the Godhead are not identical, when she realizes :

I am beginning to feel a void which must be the absence of God. I have called for a father, a guide, a leader, a protector, a friend, a lover, but I still miss something: it must be God (22).

Gradually, and with Otto Rank's therapeutic help, she learned to separate the two images. In its course, she came to understand the effects of this illusory confusion as a universal experience, leading to the individual's

haunting the world for the lost father,
this fragment of your body and soul,
this lost fragment of your very self (23).

It is her exposure to an absolute void, this openness to nothingness which is also the all, that prepares her for her ecstatic communion with the whole of being.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's discourse reveals directly that her masculinization of God depends on a mistake in naming the source of life. This mistake is associated with her concept of repetition which equally amounts to a linguistic mistake. The fact that she believes in origin initiating linear progression makes her overlook the differential relations inherent in repetition. J. Hillis Miller has pointed out that

The mistake is linguistic because it sees things and persons not in their substantial uniqueness

but as signs pointing back to earlier things or persons, 'standing for' them (24).

Lou Andreas-Salomé insists on the likeness of her gender-transcending imaginative divine construct to the undifferentiated, pre-verbal stage of human development. Yet, defining its unity as a fusion of paternal power and maternal love, she also does observe :

sie beide scheiden und unterscheiden als Macht-und Liebessphäre, ist schon ein gewaltiger Bruch im sozusagen wunschlos-vorweltlichen Wohlsein (25).

However, she fails to draw conclusions from the fact that the original fusion and separation of self and non-self is not identical with subsequent experiences pertaining to the verbal stage and hence to the already socialized subject.

The first chapter of Lebensrückblick exposes a straight line that associates the continual displacement of her sense of power with the masculine. What is apprehended as the maternally creative matrix of life is repressed and excluded from naming. Yet the simultaneous elimination of a mythical female presence from the cosmos and the internalization of alienating male projections divides the woman at the root of her being. But this fact itself is not subjected to questioning. The sudden disappearance of her childhood god is taken for an irreversible event. It generates a sense of fundamental lack which corresponds to Anaïs Nin's feeling of being utterly negated by the father.

Her autobiography emphasizes the feeling of loneliness , fear, internal conflict and a tremendous sense of guilt brought about by lacking certainty in her genuine impulses. The child's world is suddenly transformed into a hell ruled by the devil, and the girl learns to apprehend her self-assertive impulses as evil. Without being affirmed by a gratifying god

they become a matter of self-hatred and self-condemnation.

Lou Andreas-Salomé later attributes her lack of feelings of guilt at contravening social conventions to the lasting impact of her powerful divine image. She argues that its very presence in childhood has the effect of reducing normal tendencies towards repression and has therefore left her forever with a sense

wie wenn das Relative an allen Verboten und Geboten in letzter Instanz immer fühlbar und gegenwärtig bliebe (26).

On the other hand, however, she suggests that the devil's intervention, which succeeds the loss of her God, disappears without leaving any trace. Yet, it is exactly at this time that her ongoing fantasizing takes on a different meaning and that she begins to assert the superiority of male systems of self-representation. Her reaction is similar to Anaïs Nin's whose efforts to compensate for the father's absence generate two contradictory types of discourse which are hierarchized. The latter professes the same self-denigrating attitude towards the adventure stories she invents for her brothers, as Lou Andreas-Salomé does towards her fantasized charting of emotional life via tracing the life stories of imagined human beings.

In both cases, the girl feels deprived of her absolute trust in the truth and reality of her desires and of her sense of power to realize them. Losing their initial grounding in an all-encompassing trust in life, fantasies now become divorced from the self. The conscious I does not recognize its own desire that through fantasy strives for an outlet into reality.

With Lou Andreas-Salomé, once her previous sense of power to effect reality is repressed, it is superseded by the act

of writing out her fantasies. A direct extension of the self, it unconsciously serves as a means of mastering emotional relationships between inside and outside. Halb Schriftwerk, halb Netzwerk (27) , these written fantasies come to contain unacknowledged feelings of fear and guilt as well as desires for power and pleasure that are barred from conscious realization.

However, judged from the position of the conscious I, the failure of fantasy to confront reality directly makes it in Anaïs Nin's eyes an escapist and in Lou Andreas-Salomé's an unhealthy activity. Having lost its assertive quality together with the loss of her divine image, fantasizing now appears to fulfill a therapeutic function, allowing the girl a secret discharge of energies and unconscious matter pressing upon consciousness. It is in this sense that the process of writing fiction comes to acquire its vital importance for Lou Andreas-Salomé, while retaining its inferior status in comparison with the production of rational discourse.

Yet the discourse of reason is also experienced to be separate from the self, due to its being divorced from any emotional background. She notes :

Nie ist mir vom Gedanklichen her die alte, ehemalige Gläubigkeit aufgerührt worden . . . Infolgedessen verharrten für mich alle Denkgebiete, auch die Theologischen auf der gleichen Ebene bloßen Denkinteresses; eine Berührung oder gar Vermischung mit dem, was einstmals die Gemütssphäre damit zu tun gehabt, kam gar nicht in Frage (28, author's underlining)

Nevertheless, rational discourse asserts its dominance. And with both women, it is intimately bound up with the father, respectively, a father substitute. Lou Andreas-Salomé is introduced to exercising her outstanding intellectual faculties by writing sermons for her male teacher and thus learns to appropriate a culturally accepted form of

discourse as a means of achieving control of reality. The desire for love, previously associated with her divine image, is directed towards the father substitute himself and operates as a mediating instance, furthering her voluntary compliance with the requirements of self-alienating discourse.

Similarly, when Anais Nin begins to write her diary as a letter towards the absent father, her representation of reality is modified by her efforts to charm the father into rewarding her with love, recognition and his ultimate return. However, she appears to have remained closer to herself than Lou Andreas-Salomé. Her diary writing depends on a close look at the reality she perceives outside herself and at her relationship to that same reality. As a result, she is also aware of modifying what she actually perceives and feels in order to elicit the father's positive response.

Lou Andreas-Salomé voices no such self-criticism. Her rational appropriation of reality by means of theological and philosophical discourse sublimates the desire for the father beyond recognition. The discourse of religion, believed to be universal and gender-neutral, is seen as giving visible shape to all fears and desires. Consequently, she argues,

steigt aus dem Mutterdunkel
das Grauen vor der Vernichtung (29).

Yet eliminating an autonomous female principle from consciousness results in the fact that

celle qui cherche à s'instruire est-elle obligée de
laisser croître en elle un petit homme qui, s'il
veut comprendre ce qu'il lit ou ce qu'il voit,
doit oublier entièrement son origine (30).

Anais Nin acknowledges a conflict between two equal forces that results in a painful splitting of the self. Divided

into the social persona and a repressed self, she sees herself

like a person walking through a mirror broken in two . . . One woman, stylish, fresh, blooming is walking towards the Trocadero, and the other walks into nightmares (31).

This conflict takes on a genderized meaning, when she encounters it as a struggle between two antagonistic forces, embodied in the relationship between Henry and June Miller. Anaïs Nin and Henry Miller were close friends almost from the beginning of both their writing careers in Paris. He introduced his wife to Anaïs Nin, when she came to join him, hoping that she would help him understand June and organize her chaotic way of living by impulses and obscure desires. Yet Anaïs Nin is fascinated by June Miller's capacity and courage to abandon herself to life and pleasure and withstand all her husband's efforts to tame her urge to live out her fantasies. She sees in her

our fantasy let loose upon the world. She does what others only do in their dreams. Mindless, the life of our unconscious without control (32).

At the same time, she realizes that the opposition between reality and illusion set up by Henry Miller prevents him from penetrating to the truth of the woman's desires concealed in her fantasies. A challenge and a threat to male rationality, the force of female desire asserts its own discourse. Elusive, heterogeneous, multiple, it opposes the male logic of unified representation and definite certainties.

Contrary to Lou Andreas-Salomé who associates the non-rational with the fear of self-alienation, Anaïs Nin now exposes two different attitudes towards fantasy. They depend on whether the subject takes up the position of the conscious self or of the desiring self. Using her favourite

symbol of the labyrinthical oriental town to evoke , through its association with 'womb' and 'brain', an autonomous female principle, she writes :

Certain cities of the Orient were designed to baffle the enemy by a tangle of intricate streets. For those concealed within the labyrinth, its detours were a measure of safety; for the invader, it presented an image of fearful mystery (33).

Anais Nin foregrounds the defensive character of a form of creative expression which, with regard to June Miller's fantasizing she defines positively 'as a natural flowering of her femininity' (34). Her focus thus is on a typically veiled form of female expression within a cultural order that conditions women into suppressing their genuine desires and muting their questioning of established reality.

With Lou Andreas-Salomé, the question of female desire remains a threatening one. Her fiction portrays it by articulating the daughter's frustrated or repressed desire for the mother. The story Eine Ausschweifung, for example, thematizes the woman's restricted availability of her creative powers and the repression of sexual desire. The female artist articulates her self-alienation as woman in terms of the impossibility of enjoying a supportive mother-daughter bond. From the position of the socialized female I the wish to undo the effects of repression is judged an infantile regression that is not to be realized nor communicated. So the woman acknowledges it only as a secret desire :

Und mich überkam heimlich und heiß eine kindische Sehnsucht, mich zur Mutter zurückzuretten und in die erste Kindheit, die nicht wiederkam (35).

The self-denigrating evaluation of this desire for intimacy between mother and daughter as kindisch betrays a belief in linear development, in the course of which the daughter is assumed to outgrow her need of the mother.

It reflects on Lou Andreas-Salomé's internalization of cultural values that, despite her enduring interest in the relevance of the narcissistic phase for artistic development, she ignores the positive effects of the mother-daughter relationship at that stage. Equally revealing is the fact that her major quarrel with Freud concerns his distinction between primary and secondary narcissism. Insisting on sameness, she strives to disregard the fact that the heightened re-emergence of primary narcissism at the age of puberty brings about the organization of sexuality along genderized role divisions.

Tracing the origin of their personality, Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anais Nin both accord only comparatively little space to their mother's influence on their development. However, the freer-ranging self-portrait which they draw in their fiction makes up for it. Here, they emphasize her educational role and maternal filiation asserts itself on the level of the signifier.

2. Fantasy and the Diary

Beginning with her first novel Im Kampf um Gott, Lou Andreas-Salomé's fiction continues to revolve frequently around a particular moment in the daughter's development. She explores the forces that contribute to transforming the little girl into a woman, focusing primarily on the paternal prohibition on the daughter's fantasies. This change is localized in puberty, when the transition from androgynous childhood to genderized adulthood accomplishes the daughter's insertion into the feminine role.

For the male protagonist in Im Kampf um Gott , puberty means that it gives him the knowledge of greater power, the drive to pursue his aspirations in resistance to the father, and the faith in the realization of his dreams. Märchen, the first of Lou Andreas-Salomé's gifted, sensitive and passionate fictional daughters reappears in Ruth, as the protagonist of her third novel which also bears her name. Both girls experience puberty as a phase of utter dependence on paternal authority. As a result of this influence, they remain unconscious of their autonomous desire and are deprived of the possibility to develop their own ways of relating to the world. Their sense of identity derives from becoming objects of the father's dream.

The paternal prohibition on the daughter's fantasies gains in persuasion and force by the threat of madness, which paves the way for the girl's voluntary subjection under the authority of paternal discourse. In Im Kampf um Gott , the danger of mental insanity is proclaimed by the father, in Ruth by a father substitute, who presents himself as the dispenser of rationality. The link between mental insanity and femaleness thus comes to figure as the Other of male rationality which, however, culturally is assumed to be gender-neutral.

Both novels comment on the father's view that over-indulgence in fantasizing leads to madness. Märchen's mother and Ruth's substitute mother are the finished products of the very socialization process which the daughters are required to undergo in order to be able to fulfill her feminine destiny. The first meets with an untimely death due to not recovering from severe depression. The second suffers from hysterical paralysis of the legs. Neurosis, then, is presented as the extreme consequence of the woman's inability to recognize her own sexual desire and her suppression of ambitious drives towards independent self-

affirmation.

The relationship between the effects of paternal discourse and the daughter's development of neurosis does not enter Lou Andreas-Salomé's psychological essays as a specific problem. Only fiction compels her to return to this critical stage which, judging from her autobiography, marked her own adolescence in terms of a menace to be feared. Making it such a prominent thematic focus in her fiction, resembles what Anaïs Nin sees as the driving force behind her obsessive diary writing. In her text The Labyrinth, which conveys her emotional relationship to diary writing, she emphasizes :

an anguish about returning, and about seeing these things but once. There was a definite feeling that their meaning could only be revealed the second time. If I were forced to go on, unknowing, blind, everything would be lost. I was infinitely far from my first steps. I did not know exactly why I must return. I did not know that at the end I would not find myself where I started. The beginning and the end were different, and why should the coming to an end annihilate the beginning ? And why should the beginning be retained ? I did not know, but for the anguish in my being, an anguish over something lost (36).

Establishing a link between the human learning process and the repetition compulsion Lacan points out in 'Le Circuit' :

c'est dans la mesure où une tâche est inachevée que le sujet y revient. C'est dans la mesure où un échec a été cuisant que le sujet s'en souvient mieux (37).

He adds:

C'est toujours l'apprentissage de quelqu'un qui fera mieux la prochaine fois. Et quand je dis qu'il fera mieux la prochaine fois, c'est qu'il faudra qu'il fasse tout autre chose (38).

The uncompleted task that drives Lou Andreas-Salomé to set out the same scene in so many different ways in pursuit of another, a better, a different solution involves the question of aborted female desires.

In House of Incest, Anaïs Nin directly confronts issues of neurosis in relation to the process that brings the work of art into existence. She thematizes the birth of the woman-as-writer, proceeding from the assumption that

Guérir la névrose, c'est remettre la personnalité créatrice dans le droit chemin, c'est rendre l'œuvre possible; parallèlement, réussir l'œuvre, c'est peut-être le signe de la guérison de l'imagination (39).

At the beginning of this birth fantasy, the reader's attention is immediately directed to the I's 'uncompleted self'. In contrast to the forward thrust for growth that inspires the fiction, her diary appears for a long time to serve a kind of static function. So she is aware of writing in the diary primarily for fear of loss, using it, as she says, 'to hold on to my soul, to myself' (40). Appropriating her emotional experience through writing allows her a certain measure of control over her excess of feeling, energy and imagination instead of being submerged by it. Afraid of acting out her passionate self in reality, lest it should conflict with her ideal of feminine 'goodness', she entrusts it to the secrecy of the diary.

Reminiscent of Lou Andreas-Salomé's definition of the name of God as the receptacle of the most precious part of the self is Anaïs Nin's view of her diary. She calls it:

representative of all I hold most sacred, which is the subtle transition of thoughts and emotions into words, which are to me invested with holy joys (41).

But contrary to Lou Andreas-Salomé who in this context relates to a rationally ordered system of thought, Anaïs Nin exults in the joy of writing itself. The very act of transposing the yet unnamed energized body into solid material form is for her

a joy so intense, so pure, so all-absorbing and free and all-encompassing, flooding the soul in mystical ecstasy (42).

However, because this love of writing and her overflowing mental activity assert themselves independently of womanly love and even surpass it, she also continuously blames herself for being 'monstrously selfish'(43). Equating loving care for others with 'goodness', she struggles against what she regards as her 'badness', namely her 'big, voracious passionate self' (44). At the same time, it is this passionate and ambitious self striving desperately to find its form to transmit her experience of life through the medium of art that she apprehends as her real self. The diary serves her to affirm this passionately desiring self against all her conscious efforts to constrain and subdue it. Aware of the warring opposites within her, she notes :

My very real self is not wifely, not good. It is wayward, moody, desperately active and hungry. I control myself only because I love - because of love I am sweet, I dress and act to please. I control my writing, my imagination, my bursts of cruel frankness (45).

Only half ready to acknowledge that her rigid self-control also affects her writing, she is happy to succeed in taming her passionate self for the sake of love, asserting :

I am glad to have learned to control myself because I need this control to be 'submissive' in my talk, to be sweet . . . Silence and self-effacement - that, for the wife. And to these violent overflowings with which I am cursed, this intensity which brings tears and ideas and individualisms to such a quick ripening and flowing, these are good enough for the artist and must only show themselves in writing (46).

The fact that the war she wages against her insubordinate self may also obstruct the realization of her artistic ambitions did not present itself as a problem during the early years of her marriage. So she is also unable to see that, as a result of her consciously effected blockage of desire, she is about to repeat what she clearly perceives

as the reason for her mother's failure as artist. As with Lou Andreas-Salomé, the split into woman and artist always privileges being a woman above being an artist. With regard to her mother, Anaïs Nin notes :

One accusation brought against Mother and which in the same breath serves as an apology for the meagerness of her achievements is that she is first a woman and then an artist. I would so desire my life to be a refutation of this (47).

At the same time, however, her rigid efforts at self-effacements make her resemble more and more the neurotic women Lou Andreas-Salomé portrays in the figures of Adine, Jane and Klare-Bel. Suppressed creative energies ' turning wildly within its harmless looking shell' (48) of the self-sacrificial but loving wife result in heightened fantasies. They induce increasing restlessness, which she perceives as 'a kind of madness' (49).

About thirteen years later, she characterized this phase of diary writing as a 'labyrinthian' wandering in 'streets without issues - the streets of my desires'(50). The diary itself is metaphorized as a suffocating, sealed-off space with

serpentine walls without doorways,
desires without issues (51).

In House of Incest, elaborate variations on the image of the serpent establish an intricate textual network that associates the blocked flow of desire with problems of speaking and difficulties in living. In her story Die Stunde ohne Gott, Lou Andreas-Salomé also uses the central biblical image of the serpent to convey the suppression of autonomous female power. The story renders her own experience of the loss of her self-generated childhood god into fiction. Its title echoes that of her first novel Im Kampf um Gott . Their contrasting messages signal the different effects caused by gender role

divisions. The novel focuses on a male protagonist, depicting his struggle towards self-realization as a conquest of the self. The story concentrates on the girl and explores her experience of self-loss. In this story, Lou Andreas-Salomé rewrites the biblical myth of genesis from a psychological perspective, exploring the socio-psychological content locked up in cultural discourse. She thus expands the message in which individual and collective female experience originates.

Similar to her novels, this story also suggests an antagonistic relationship between fantasy and reality. Products of the daughter's imaginative power are ridiculed as lies by the parental couple. In Winter of Artifice, which fictionalizes Anaïs Nin's conflictual relationship to her father, the daughter encounters a similar rejection by the parents. However, while Lou Andreas-Salomé reproduces the conventional bias which considers fantasies as an inadequate means of dealing with reality, Anaïs Nin's story makes clear that aggression is directed against the girl's creative potency as such. The mother, unable to vent her own aggression directly on her husband, criminalizes the daughter's sense of identification with her artist father:

The great crime, her mother made them feel was their resemblance to their father . . . Her imagination, her exaggerations, her fantasies, her lies, then too, sprang from her father (52).

In Lou Andreas-Salomé's story, the daughter is partly absolved from guilt because her fantasies are shown to be instigated and fostered by a male servant. This male-female alliance is, however, also suggestive of the bisexuality of childhood. In relation to the parental couple, the child and the male servant are both in a position of powerlessness, he through his lowly position and lack of education and she through her innocence and ignorance as a child. Fantasy in both stories appears as a mode of self-expression reserved for the powerless. Anaïs Nin goes further in insisting that it is also the daughter's only means of coming to terms with a repressive and an

unbearably painful reality constructed by parental authority.

Lou Andreas-Salomé invariably absolves the father from responsibility by directing the daughter's hostility solely against the mother. It is the mother who functions as the primary agent to curb the daughter's desire for power. She breaks the alliance between daughter and male servant by eliminating the latter from the estate. Then the girl's suffers the mother's rebuke for her inefficient attempt to act out her belief in her power to operate on reality by hatching an egg. Thus the text establishes direct links between the suppression of the daughter's ability to relate to her own body as a source of power and the mother's intervention in the daughter's life as a guardian of feminine proprieties.

Lou Andreas-Salomé traces the daughter's efforts to save the androgynous state of childhood and to transpose it into adult life against the mother's will. This transitional phase between childhood and adolescence is projected into the co-existence of two houses. The daughter's new home is devised by the father and constructed according to his vision and orders by the male servant. It is situated on the edge, still within the boundaries of the parental estate. Lou Andreas-Salomé thus suggests that not only the desire for growth and independence is equated with a male desire, but also the ways of construction that independence through fantasy follows male ordering principles. This would mean that there is no autonomous female power available to the girl that would enable her to construct her own origin.

However, the daughter's fantasy is one of unity, that is, of keeping the creative principle of love and the desire for power fused. It revolves around a couple of figures made of snow, begging for entry into her new abode. Their rigidification and division suggests that increasing differentiation

by the rational mind has broken up the anterior principle of unity. But as soon as the frozen couple melts away into oblivion, it is actually only one component that is obscured by being driven underground and transformed into Feuchte im Boden, Pflanzen treibende (53). It is the mother's generative archaic power that is being hidden by being reduced to its association with natural productivity that remains unconscious of itself. Above it, visible, erect and solid, remains the product of the father's desires, ready to house the daughter.

Associated with repressed maternal power is the body as the site of unconscious desires. Dream material is significantly introduced in terms of a feminized, fear-inducing serpent. It is designated as the successor of the daughter's omnipotent, invisible father God. The female connotation is, however, reinforced by presenting the serpent as a transformed and split-off aspect of a maternal figure. Moreover, its being the aunt's false hairpiece associates the desire for power with the head as the site of knowledge and speech. Reference to costume reveals the acceptable and unacceptable aspects of woman. Visibly dressed in ordinary female costume which conceals her body, she represents the known and familiar. Dress here indicates her dependence on conventions which cover

was nur nachts sich offen herauswagt, weil es darauf rechnet, dann nicht gesehen zu werden, wie es ist . . . was sich versteckt und heimlich bleiben muß (54).

The writer behaves in much the same way by concealing and revealing at the same time what the ordinary language of communication does not allow to be said or to be communicated. Reference to the false hairpiece implies that, living in accordance with the cultural feminine role does not only hide the reality of her body, but also falsifies her very being.

Evocation of the serpent recalls the biblical context. The serpent which tempts Eve to eat from the Tree of Knowledge

in the middle of the garden of Paradise can be read as the natural presence of the woman's autonomous desire for power and knowledge. The tree image, on the other hand, suggests the autonomous female power to posit the self at that point of intersection that unites below and above, inside and outside, unconsciousness and consciousness, the invisible and visible.

However, emergence of the suppressed desire for self-generated signification in the shape of the dream serpent arouses the girl's fear of death in terms of the inability to breathe and speak. Anxiety is associated with the feeling of guilt, because the awakening of desire makes the girl aware of her body. Socialized into denying it, violent fears are converted into the feeling of nausea towards her own body and into the desire to be rid of it.

The progress of the narrative makes the father the daughter's supportive ally after the daughter suffers the mother's restrictive rebuke. The mother's hostility seems to prompt the girl's overcompensatory identification with her father. Yet Lou Andreas-Salomé is also quite clear in maintaining that mother and daughter alike are subject to the same cultural prohibition that rests on the expression and communication of female subjectivity. The text equally points out that this prohibition originates in male assumptions. Thus the girl's male playmate voices the cultural belief :

Mädchen sind minderwertig.
Das Beste fehlt ihnen (55).

That it is the lack of power invested in phallic potency which constitutes the daughter's inferiority is implied by phallic connotations associated with the serpent. It appears that it is the confusion between phallus and penis that makes the desire for power, or in fact all desire, a male prerogative.

When the father takes the daughter on a pleasurable walk

to the fair-ground to make good the mother's rejection, they both indulge in fantasies revolving around the replicas of different animals. The father is shown to have appropriated the serpent among other animal forces by means of his fantasies. This leaves kein richtiges Tier für die Mutter (56). Once the mother is dispossessed of her archaic energy potential, the daughter participates in the father's power by identifying with him. Lou Andreas-Salomé's prototype for all self-other relations is this coupling, this imaginary fusion of father and daughter. As for her fictional daughter, her own identification with representations of paternal power is

von lebenslanger Dauer. Dadurch gerät es außerhalb aller Zeit und Elternschaft, außer aller Ordnung und alles Zuhause : es bleibt auch beim Erzählen noch wie ein süßes Geheimnis zwischen dem Vater und Ursula allein (57).

Anais Nin's biographical situation is different. Winter of Artifice reveals that the feeling of being rejected by the father leads the daughter to concentrate all her efforts on winning the mother's approval. As a result she adopts a maternal role herself. The pressures of this role turn diary writing into a welcome refuge :

Within the covers of the diary she created another world wherein she told the truth, in contrast to the lies which she spun when she was conversing with others (58).

Hidden from the mother with whose code of conduct she overtly complies, the diary serves to maintain a sense of identity by keeping her relationship to the father alive. However, establishing such a sharp contrast between the 'truth' of the diary and the 'lies' of actual life is a problematic assertion. In Winter of Artifice, the claim that the diary houses the real self is immediately followed by a statement

to the contrary. The diarist actually draws an elaborate image of reality, in view of concealing the true relationship between the perceiving subject and the perceived object. The fear of not being loved results in a denial of emotional reality and distorts the act of self-expression . For ,

Though she detested New York, she painted a picture of it in glowing terms, hoping that it would entice him to come home (59).

Anais Nin refers to the beginning of her writing at the age of nine as a 'traumatic genesis' (60). It resulted from a wrong medical diagnosis that she might never be able to walk again. The impending threat of being reduced to immobility and absolute dependence on others made writing desirable as a means of active self-expression. A substitute for walking, it carried connotations of movement and control, of purposeful activity, advancing and making progress, suggesting desire for independence and growth.

She defines her transition from unconsciously turning to writing as a means of self-centred expression to making it a conscious choice her 'artistic genesis' (61). Writing now came to serve a double purpose. Added to the desire for self-expression and self-control was the desire to impress an audience. Writing was invested with the power to control others. Similar to her fictional daughter in Winter of Artifice Anais Nin says with reference to herself :

At eleven the diary was written to persuade my absent father to return, and the stories were written to entertain my brothers (62).

Resembling Lou Andreas-Salomé's separation of rational discourse and imaginative production, the very act of making writing a conscious choice doubles the form of writing with Anais Nin. It effects a split into the diary and invented stories. The doubling of its purpose, however, comes to

bear on both forms. In relation to the mother, diary writing functions as genuine self-expression and counteracts the sense of stasis and stagnation brought about by the daughter's adoption of the self-sacrificial feminine role. However, in order to secure the father's love the authenticity of self-expression is again compromised. It leaves a vacuum, which generates fantasies of escape, adventure, travelling, expressing a desire for 'other' places and spaces.

Lou Andreas-Salomé presents this other space as known and constructed by the father. The fact that, with Anaïs Nin, diary writing functions both ways, namely to secure the mother's and the father's love, resembles the fantasy of unity represented in Lou Andreas-Salomé's Die Stunde ohne Gott. There, it is resolved by the daughter's imaginary fusion with her father. For Anaïs Nin, this solution is not available. Hence, the escape into fantasy that defers the possibility of self-integration.

Later in her career, she puzzled over her inability to invent. Yet from the beginning, invention carried the stigma of lies. It is also likely that her refusal to see her childhood inventions as veiled desires for conquest and change is caused by her regarding them primarily in their manipulative effect on others. Her unwillingness to take the fantasies of adventure seriously amounts to an act of self-denial.

Almost twenty years later, she recognized clearly that the unredeemed search for the father's recognition had exerted a formative influence on her writing. She notes :

Every act related to my writing was connected in me with an act of charm, seduction of my father. Every act was accompanied by guilt and retraction. Every act was doomed. I was doomed by the enormity of my sin (the wish to charm my father) to be punished, to fail (63).

Anais Nin connects Lou Andreas-Salomé's absence of guilt in creating her independence with her freedom in sexual matters. She herself apprehends self-assertion as improper self-exposure and as such in clearly sexual terms, admitting :

In my dreams at night I did not achieve a work of art and present the world with it, but I lay naked on a bed (with an invisible lover) and all the world could see me (64).

As in Lou Andreas-Salomé's story Die Stunde ohne Gott, with Anais Nin the sexual prohibition is also primarily associated with the mother in her social function as the guardian of feminine proprieties and sexual mores. She remembers :

my mother had condemned my writing: "How can you, who wrote so charmingly as a little girl, write now about that monster D.H.Lawrence?" (65).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's fictional daughter, like Anais Nin herself, experiences the mother's feminine sphere as leaving no space for acting out self-centered desires for power. The former's participation in the father's authority, as a guarantee against imprisoning the desiring self within the social confines of the properly feminine, is presented as an antidote against insanity. The fact that Anais Nin wants to save the mother together with qualities that are culturally attributed to the feminine confronts her with enormous problems. Guilt at usurping the father's creative power is connected with an ideal of feminity that rests on the desexualized maternal body.

This tension effects a compromise. Fiction remains associated with her fantasized adventure stories, but transgressing the boundaries of visible and accepted reality corresponds to sexual transgression. She recognizes that the sense of being subjected to the public

eye bends and blocks her desire for articulation :

I do not feel free or equal, able to
continue my growth, my explorations,
experiments, adventures (66).

So her pursuit of the marvellous by expanding on a given reality remains within feminine role expectations related to female sensibility, sensitivity and sentiment as well as the woman's presumed closeness to life. It is only when she was having problems with writing the last text of Cities of the Interior, after the death of her mother, that she realized that her dependence on the diary had obstructed her power of mapping out new terrains. She comments:

So I have been reliving the death of my mother and even obeying her in not being able to write. But I am coming out of this possession. 'Solar Barque' is for the greater part invention, more invention than I have ever practiced. Very little taken from life. And now I realize it was difficult to write because I did not depend on diary events for it, it lay outside the periphery of the diary, and for the first time I felt truly thrust into the space of invention (67).

The problem of power in direct relation with fantasizing and the woman's frustrated desire for self-generated signification plays a central role in Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel Ruth. A crucial dialogue between Erik, the mentor and substitute father and his pupil Ruth emphasizes the desire for power concealed in fantasies. This dialogue equally suggests that it is primarily the fact of female ignorance about how meaning is created that prevents her from developing autonomous ways of knowing. The text implies that Erik's power over Ruth is also, if not primarily, a matter of knowing how to use language in view of controlling the object.

He fantasizes her as a small tree, proposing that its full development would be achieved

wenn ein guter Gärtner an diesem Bäumchen
unablässig seine Dienste tut, und wenn das

Bäumchen sich willig behandeln und biegen,
pfropfen und beschneiden läßt (68).

What is at stake is the teacher's desire for absolute domination. Metaphorization, however, serves him to conceal the real issue. For not only is the use of fantasy and metaphor inconsistent with his otherwise rational form of discourse. But it also contradicts his explicit intention to concentrate all his energies on purifying the girl's vision of reality from imaginative distortions.

His gardening fantasy exposes the mutilating effects of the girl's education into male-ordered rationality. The cultural aim informing it is the rational appropriation and control of nature. As suggested by the male proposition, this process does not only exclude the woman from taking an active part in the process itself. Her passivity also permits him to bend, curtail and replace her natural needs and desires according to his own.

Through Erik's wife Klare-Bel, the novel represents the actual effects of women's accomplishment subjected to such man-made cultural controls. Paralyzed, she is robbed of the possibility to control her own body and use it according to her own will and desire. Instead, she is at her husband's mercy for every move she intends to make. Ruth, in contrast, would rather prefer to be her own gardener and control her own growth. So she counters the teacher's question

Möchtest du ein solches Bäumchen für
den Gärtner werden, Ruth ? (69)

with

Noch lieber möchte ich der
Gärtner werden (70).

Lou Andreas-Salomé describes the situation as pervaded by heightened eroticism, suggesting that the girl's desire for love, or rather being loved, makes her relinquish her desire for power. For she concedes:

aber es ist vielleicht dasselbe (71).

Yet is it the same ? Is it not rather the course of the novel that makes it so ? Ruth is shown to subject herself to his teaching and to gain her independence through introjecting his signifying practice. Rudolf Binion misses the ambiguity of Ruth's response, asserting

This is Ruth's project
from the very outset (72).

Implicit in the girl's reluctant yielding to male tutelage is the question of female knowledge and power. Lacking a mother's supportive knowledge, Ruth is in no position to identify the difference between self-control and being controlled.

In relation to the male's visionary plans, the text emphasizes the positive function of the imagination. It conveys the idea that his fantasies are procreative stages of self-realization. They allow

daß man sich ausdenken kann,
was noch am Leben fehlt, und
es hinzutun kann (73).

Although it is Ruth herself who pronounces this faith in the power of the imagination, her education consists in learning to relinquish the desire for power inhabiting her own fantasies and to put their energy and creative power at the male teacher's service. In the course of this process, she is dispossessed of her desire for power which is projected on the male teacher. He comes to function as a mirror reflecting the unconscious part of herself which the female socialization process suppresses from consciousness. As he achieves his aim to dominate her, she invents him as a figure of power. At the same time, she constitutes herself as his powerless opposite. Convinced of her own inadequacies, she relies on his using her fantasies creatively, while she finally and literally becomes the scribe of his visions. Controlled by her own creation, she neither learns to

question the actual basis of his realizations nor to explore and test the reality of her own fantasies.

This disregard for expanding one's knowledge of reality by scrutinizing the self and the other is summed up in an image. It appears with reference to Ruth and is taken from Lou Andreas-Salomé's own autobiography. A christmas cracker, the grandfather's gift to the girl, is cherished for its possibility of holding and hiding the marvellous. Its contents are fantasized. As a result, reality is denied in favour of an illusory feeling of omnipotence. It is therefore not surprising that Ruth should already be associated with the same gesture which later characterizes Adine in Eine Ausschweifung. Confronted with the demand to discriminate between reality and fantasy Ruth covers her eyes. This allows her to keep her own desire for power projected on the male without assuming responsibility for it herself.

The novel characterizes the difference between the male and female use of the imagination as one of activity and passivity. She is restricted to indulging in passive day-dreaming. Her male mentor, on the other hand, having absolute faith in his power to create reality uses his dreams creatively by subjecting them to his work.

Anaïs Nin, quoting E.Graham Howe in her diary, also emphasizes the difference between fantasy and the creative imagination, writing

Fantasy I would define as imagination used as a means of flight from reality . . . as distinct from the make-believe of the creative imagination (which is towards life). The make-believe of fantasy is away from it (74).

With regard to her own dreams, she claims :

my dreams did not lead me away from life but towards it, always guiding me towards realization, so that I always collided with a wall : I wanted to live out my

dreams . . . I always awakened to the presence of the barred window. I had a gift for freeing others and not myself, because I took on the responsibility of setting them free (75).

Although she establishes a link between her caring concern for others and the blockage of her self-centred desire, she remains unaware of its cause, wondering

What is this prison ? The difference, the violent contrast between what I dream, wish, and the reality which diminishes, shrinks, interrupts, shrivels all things (76).

In misplacing her desire for power into moulding others according to her ideal image of them, she assumes what Lou Andreas-Salomé characterizes as a male attitude in Ruth. However, it also resembles the unconscious stance of maternal nurturance which she criticizes through the figure of Jane, Märchen's mother, in her first novel. Jane has developed it into an idealistic philosophy about the creative power of love.

The male connotation is ambiguous, in so far as Lou Andreas-Salomé usually equates the conjunction of love and power characteristic of the mother's social role with male qualities. It is an equation that also serves her to prove the equality of both sexes. Associated with the paternal mentor in Ruth, however, she represents it as a self-alienated and self-alienating fantasy of omnipotence. She clearly analyses the desire for love and the sexualized body as the suppressed other side of Erik's desire for power. Regarding the woman, it is this self-alienating attitude that has culturally been defined as a feminine property, but with a telling difference: the fact of naming. The same attitude acted out by a man is seen as an expression of power and acted out by a woman as a work of love and reduced to selfless devotion in the service of others.

It is this genderization of discourse itself that conceals from the woman her own will to power as well as her sexuality. Jane, carrying her vision of creative love to its extreme consequence by also offering her body, destroys her self-image as spiritually nurturing guide. She never recovers from her ensuing depression caused by self-hatred and guilt. Failing to conform and having no other option open to her but the personal sphere in which to invest her creative power, her energies run free, producing

marternde und äffende Trugbilder (77).

Shortly after this reference to Jane's mental disorder, there is a mention of her diary. It is linked to her desire for self-control. Using it as a means of self-confrontation, the woman enters her own story and tries to make sense of it. At the same time, it functions as a means of self-communication, offering the possibility to articulate a secret self that exists independent of her self-condemnation. Secretly, she voices a diffuse yearning, an anonymous limitless desire that has lost its grounding in reality and can see no new ground in which to take root.

Anais Nin uses her diary in much the same way while, as a young wife, she vainly tries to reconcile her desire for love with her desire for independent, creative self-assertion. But having her dream of becoming an artist, she also uses it to work out her conflict. Lou Andreas-Salomé presents her figure as being so deeply entrapped in her feminine role that she is compelled to deny any desire beyond it. As a result, her diary writing ultimately confirms what she perceives as her existential inadequacy and precipitates her self-dissolution by reinforcing her self-hatred.

The male perspective of the novel confirms Jane's ideal of creative love to express

die höchste, innere Vision der menschlichen Schöpfermacht (78).

Again it is the naming which conceals the fact that being a woman she is denied access to full human potential. Jane herself compares the faith of the artist in his vision to the woman's vision of the ideal potential inherent in the beloved object, asserting

Die Offenbarungen, die er von seiner Kunst zu erhalten glaubt, die Entschleierungen künstlerischer Ideale, die gleich einer Vision über ihn kommen, ist auch nur ein Traumbild seiner schöpferischen Phantasie. Die eigene Schöpferkraft ist es, die in ihnen tätig ist und niemals wird das Jenseits, welches der Künstler in seiner Brust mit sich trägt, völlig zum greifbaren Diesseits des jedesmaligen Kunstwerks. Trotzdem kommt erst in dieser Vision das künstlerische Ideal gleichsam zu seiner Wesenswahrheit . . . weil er so ganz, so völlig zu ihr angelegt ist (79).

She defends herself against the charge that she only projects a private fantasy into a deified object and insists :

Ihr tiefer Einblick in des Geliebten Wesen ist zugleich ein schöpferisches Herausschaffen desselben in die Wirklichkeit, sie ist unmittelbarer in ihrem innersten verständnisvollsten Mitgefühl zugleich Mitkampf um die Verwirklichung des Empfangenen. Auch ihr Glaube ist ihre eigene, höchste Schöpferkraft (80).

Similarly, as writer controlling the destiny of her fictional characters Lou Andreas-Salomé embodies and transcends the conflictual relationship between the conditioning of the feminine role and her desire for mastery. The result is a defensive strategy that fantasizes about the cultural legacy, like Ruth does about the grandfather's gift, but leaves it sealed. Producing her work, she clearly analyses the forces that constitute gender

role divisions and therefore determine men's and women's lives in significantly different ways. But she does not fundamentally question the cultural ordering system itself. Fiction writing appears to function for her in much the same way , as Rachel Blau DuPlessis characterizes it with reference to Anaïs Nin's diary writing, saying

Her diary as form and process is a stratagem to solve a contradiction often present in acute form for women: between the desire to please, making woman an object, and the desire to reveal, making her a subject . . . And Nin's diary as fact and artifact transposes these conflicting forces, reveals and protects simultaneously, allowing her to please others . . . while writing to please herself. Double, sometimes duplicitious needs (81).

Anaïs Nin's fiction, on the other hand, also reveals the attempt to integrate two essential aspects which Lou Andreas-Salome's texts raise as a specific female problem in relation with fantasizing. The final imagery in Die Stunde ohne Gott assembles biblical connotations that emphasize the subjective pleasure of fusion between subject and object inherent in the acquisition of knowledge and the exercise of creative work. Yet the daughter is shown to recover a pleasurable union with nature in an ecstatic joy of self-dissolution through isolated day-dreaming, before falling asleep in a tree. Her ascent is a descent into the unconscious . Achieving a feeling of at-oneness with the self-contained source of fertility in this way corresponds to a silencing of female subjectivity.

Anaïs Nin uses fantasies and day-dreams and approximates the language of the dream with a view to unblocking the flow of desire interrupted by self-alienating role - conditioning that informs the censorship of the conscious I. In so far as this results in a naming of reality that is different from referential representation, her language

resembles Märchen's re-naming of reality according to her fears and desires, before intervention of the father's rationality puts an end to her fantasies. Moreover, her insistence on wanting

to prove that there is infinite space,
infinite meaning, infinite dimension (82)

is related to Jane's unrestrained desire and accompanying neurotic confusion of fantasies. By making the position of the hysteric a conscious choice, she sides with the desiring self in view of making lost parts of the self accessible to consciousness.

On the level of content, with Anaïs Nin, the danger inherent in Jane's vision of creative love becomes a central thematic focus. Relational empathic identifications are often presented as fantasies with regard to the other's reality but also as significant ways of achieving self-knowledge. What is more, she also frees Jane's vision of specific female creativity from its reduction to the personal level of human relationships to bring it to bear on the form of creation itself. She employs the technique of free association, fantasies and dreams in conjunction with reflective interpretation in view of signifying submerged desire. Or, as she claims herself :

The act of writing resembles putting one's self in a dreamlike state. Improvisation in the novel may either begin with a theme, or one first line, as in a poem. The writing of a novel is, in a sense, a directed dream, embroidered upon a certain theme or thought or sensation. In maintaining the passageways between various states of consciousness I became aware of the pull of the conscious, casting its nets into the unconscious life to lift up its treasures to the light (83).

III. THE FIRST LITERARY PUBLICATION

Ecrire? Je n'y pensais pas. J'y songeais sans cesse, mais avec le chagrin et l'humilité, la résignation, l'innocence des pauvres. L'écriture est Dieu. Mais ce n'est pas le tien (1).

Jedenfalls gab es starke Barrieren, die nur durch starke Erschütterungen durchbrochen werden konnten und einen Zwang zum Schreiben auslösten (2).

1. Creation and Survival

Reflecting on the genesis of a literary work, Christa Wolf suggests that it is more useful

das Schreiben nicht von seinen Endprodukten her zu sehen, sondern als einen Vorgang, der das Leben unaufhörlich begleitet, es mit bestimmt, zu deuten sucht: als Möglichkeit, intensiver in der Welt zu sein, als Steigerung und Konzentration von Denken, Sprechen, Handeln (3).

However, seeing writing as a continuing process that pervades all phases of a person's life makes it almost impossible to identify Lou Andreas-Salomé's and Anaïs Nin's very first piece of fiction. Both writers also acknowledge that their first published text is not their first attempt at producing a literary work. The very fact that Lou Andreas-Salomé'

novel Im Kampf um Gott and Anaïs Nin's prose poem House of Incest are intended for publication and do become their first published fictional texts distinguishes them significantly from previous literary attempts. They are the manifest result of a decision to produce a work that demands public recognition.

Exposure to public view involves determination to assert a truth beyond the known and familiar. Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anaïs Nin both derive the courage to assert their transgressive impulses in public form from the disturbing impact of external circumstances. It is their disruptive influence on the subject that turns a habitual need to write into an existential act of self-affirmation.

Lou Andreas-Salomé insists in Lebensrückblick that she wrote her first novel for merely practical purposes. Gaining public recognition as a writer was meant to persuade her mother not to withdraw her financial support and so allow her daughter to stay on in central Europe. Eighteen years old, Lou Salomé was full of enthusiasm and drive to mould her life in accordance with her own needs and wishes, free from conventional moral constraints. Returning home to Russia would have deprived her of the intellectual stimulation she enjoyed in the cultural climate of Berlin. There, she had set up home with her friend, the philosopher Paul Rée, and both moved among a group of philosophically oriented young academics. Establishing what from the point of view of contemporary morality was considered a scandalous domestic situation, Lou Salomé shaped her relationship with Paul Rée in terms of a platonic friendship to suit her own wishes for personal development.

The mother's request therefore poses a fundamental threat to the daughter's desire for self-expansion and personal growth. So the work comes into existence as the result

of the daughter's determined will to ward off the death of herself as autonomous subject. Underlying the need for public success, ambivalent attitudes towards the mother enter the process of expression and formulation. The daughter writes for the mother who, in her own life, subscribes to the traditional feminine role of mother and wife. But she also writes against her by rejecting this same role for herself. In need of the mother's support, the daughter, at the same time, opposes her wishes. The daughter's resistance to the mother's threatening request inscribes itself into the novel, which traverses and rejects various aspects of traditional femininity. By killing these women off as fictional characters, she suggests the unviability of their attitudes and affirms writing as her possibility

ihre Identität als Subjekt, als 'eigenes' Ich zu schaffen, da die Geschichte diese Identität stets zum 'anderen' abgestempelt hat (4).

In Lebensrückblick, Lou Andreas-Salomé presents the writing of this book simultaneously as a significant cultural achievement and as a transgressive act. Gaining social prestige as a writer conflicts with what is regarded as properly feminine behaviour. Her own ambition towards self-assertion as writer remains hidden behind her emphasis on its significance due to being a mere response to external pressures. Similarly, she conceals her own fear of self-exposure behind her willingness to protect the family honour. The choice of a male pseudonym is claimed to be a simple matter of wanting to save the family name from public exposure.

Given this awareness of actual social constraints, her professed ignorance in literary matters to defend the weaknesses of the novel sounds equally ambiguous. It is possible to assume that the aim to achieve public recognition at all costs prompts her to minimize the transgressive

element in writing. Overt subject matter and form were as much as possible adjusted to the requirements of a male-dominated literary market. So she chose to model her hero on the figure of the Faustian over-reacher and to adopt the form of the male bildungsroman. Thematically, she situated herself within the mainstream of cultural preoccupations by joining the male debate on religion.

Apparently, the choice of a male pseudonym contributed considerably to directing public appreciation towards judging author and book on their intellectual merits and diverting interest from the various love stories. A significant change in critical attitude occurred immediately when, after the success of her first novel, Lou Andreas-Salomé dropped the male pseudonym. Especially her third novel Aus fremder Seele revolves centrally around problems already raised in her first. The Nietzschean insight that

das meiste bewußte Denken eines Philosophen
. . . durch seine Instinkte heimlich geführt
und in bestimmte Bahnen gezwungen ist (5)

informs her exploration into the subjective basis of what is generally accepted as objective truth. However, the fact that the author is female seems to have been reason enough to ignore the philosophical questions addressed in the novel. Instead, the critical focus centers self-contradictorily on proclaiming Lou Andreas-Salomé's superior psychological insight while simultaneously refuting her psychological premise (6).

With regard to her first novel, Lou Andreas-Salomé derided its public acclaim based on her intellectual capacity. In her autobiography, she stresses the fact that its subject matter derived primarily from essays she wrote as an adolescent under the tutelage of her teacher Hendrik Gillot. Implicit in this hostile attitude towards her public acceptance as writer is the admission that the need for

public recognition entered the process of self-expression in such a way as to bend and distort a more direct form of self-affirmation.

She modified this conflictual relationship between individual self-realization and cultural self-affirmation in her second novel Ruth. It offers a more emancipatory representation of female potential and feminine possibilities. Concentrating on the daughter's development into an autonomous human being, it picks up an overtly subordinate theme from her first novel. Im Kampf um Gott illustrates

daß der Ausschluß von Weiblichkeit konstitutiv für die Hervorbringung der kulturellen Ordnung ist (7).

Any form of protest against this education into feminine selflessness is shown to have suicidal consequences. In Ruth, mother and daughter are both offered a possibility of survival.

Lou Andreas-Salomé used her first novel to preserve a space for herself that suited her individual needs for self-expansion. More directly than others, it exposes the contradiction between adjusting to the cultural frame and subverting the feminine role. In this respect, she inherits a form of self-expression and self-affirmation that has been characteristic of women's writing, ever since women began to write in the 18th century :

Partielle Anpassung und Unterwerfung - als Strategie, als Schutz oder auch ganz unproblematisiert als verinnerlichte Verhaltensform - waren zumeist der Preis, der bezahlt wurde, um an einer oder an mehreren Stellen aus der Rolle zu fallen (8).

For Anaïs Nin, writing House of Incest became a matter of appropriating and affirming a space that her feminine role forbade her to enter. Lou Andreas-Salomé projected the desire for power and significance on a male hero. Anaïs Nin

acknowledged those desires as belonging to the woman herself.

Her text establishes a direct relationship between creation and survival. The beginning of House of Incest emphasizes that writing proceeds from and follows a refusal to die. Possessed by a choking cough the narrator states :

Something was coming out of my throat :
it was strangling me (9).

The desire to write manifests itself as a force that the I cannot consciously control.

Anaïs Nin's diaries document her continuing effort to tame and subdue what she experiences as an anonymous force that disrupts her feminine identity. Within her life as a loving wife, she has, like Margherita in Im Kampf um Gott,

volle Freiheit in allen ihren Mußstunden durch
die Träume einer glühenden Phantasie sich aus
diesem . . . Leben zu erheben (10).

Margherita is also the woman who comes closest to articulating Lou Andreas-Salomé's own passionate thirst for life and significance. She escapes her uninspiring life of domestic duties to become a medical student because of her desire

das Leben voller zu umfassen, und voller
kennen zu lernen, mehr zu sein und mehr
zu bedeuten (11).

Characterizing her through Kuno, the male writer, Lou Andreas-Salomé endows her with the basic qualities that drive her to pursue her ambition to determine her own life. Capacity for self-expression, talent, unlimited potential for enjoying life to the full and fearless courage to embrace whatever life has to offer are presented as necessary preconditions for experimenting with and realizing one's own dreams.

Anais Nin conveys the emergence of diffuse desires for self-expression in terms of the body, which asserts itself as another space. Well aware of the diary as a means of discovering and appropriating other selves and spaces, she notes :

I do not become fully conscious of events and phrases and people until I have 'phrased' them. This consciousness, sometimes so painful, is useful as a literary asset. It becomes a habit of observation which has this advantage: that it includes two processes generally separated and each demanding its own time. The moment I see a thing and feel it, I put it into a phrase . . . I do it so swiftly now that it seems but one thing: Seeing and feeling in phrases (12).

However, felt as an anonymous force, the desire to write surpasses its formulation in the diary. Its excess asserts itself simultaneously as the desire for another language. Already while re-writing the diary, she comes upon the problem of authentic self-expression, complaining

But such borrowed phrases, gathered from miscellaneous reading, thousands of them ! How difficult it is to find one's true self (13).

All the more acute are the pain and shame she feels about her inability to give adequate form to her excess of vitality, emotion and imagination. She calls herself

Ambitious but incapable of materializing [her] fantastic dreams (14).

In Im Kampf um Gott , Lou Andreas-Salome presents passion and drive as universally human properties. At the same time, however, Margherita herself is well aware that they

are generally considered as a male prerogative. So she feels the need to defend herself against Kuno's charges of abnormality that, in pursuing her dream of self-affirmation, she would never become a

wirklich seltene und großartige Frauen-
erscheinung . . . sondern ein Curiosum (15).

Asserting that the force of her desire for freedom equals man's, she claims

ich fühle, daß ich mit dem Verlangen und
der Furchtlosigkeit eines Mannes das Leben
anfassen werde (16).

But she also wavers immediately before his critical judgement, asking

wodurch sollte dem Mann eine Größe
möglich sein, die mir abgeht (17)?

Lou Andreas-Salomé here presents the conflict between imagination and reason, desire and will in the form of a male-female dialogue. Anaïs Nin's diaries reveal the same conflict as a struggle between warring opposites within the woman herself. The socialized feminine subject, who is also the perceiving and speaking I, houses a split consciousness. Continually forced to distinguish between herself as conditioned self and as genuine self, Anaïs Nin engaged in a process of renaming her actions and failures. Similar to Margherita, the first thing she discarded was the possibility that her over-abundant imagination and intense feelings made her an unnatural being. Given this self-acceptance allowing her to yield to the nameless pressure that was urging her to write, she faced another problem. It was also similar to Margherita's, namely : how to transpose this energy into work ?

Failing to find the form of language that would enable her to produce the work she was dreaming of, Anaïs Nin

continued to blame herself for her lack of talent, defining herself as

one who writes without talent - who writes urged by a nameless pressure (18).

Referring to the original meaning of the word 'talent', Christa Wolf has pointed out that, rather than understanding it as an innate or lacking property, it ought to be regarded as a given potential :

das Pfund, mit dem man zu wuchern hat. So daß es an einem jeden selber liegt, dem auch nur einige Gramm des Pfundes 'vertrauet' sind, ob er sie verkommen oder sich vermehren läßt. Talent als ein Prozeß, als eine Herausforderung, ein Stachel, dem man auch die Spitze abbrechen kann (19).

Similarly, Anaïs Nin's fear of suffering from an inborn incapacity for creation gradually turns into her realization that creative work requires a disciplined effort of will. She notes :

I leave too much to impulse, to desire. I cover up an ordinary laziness with the word 'temperament'. I elude an effort of will, discipline, regularity. This temperament has made a whole year empty. When I should be writing, I do insignificant things that fill the hours, and I deceive myself into believing that I have been busy (20).

The survival imagery at the beginning of House of Incest equally emphasizes that obtaining relief from internal pressures requires the I's active participation in operating a separation. The narrator states :

I broke the thread which held it and yanked it out (21).

Separating a partial object from the rest of the body may be read as a metaphor for the act of writing itself. Passing into the register of language, where the I is able to recognize its desire the string of interconnected sensations and images floating in the body is cut.

Through Kuno's reflection Lou Andreas-Salomé makes a similar point. Passionate refusal to accept restrictive conditions, talent and the desire for freedom and self-expansion are considered the basis for any development towards personal autonomy. But they are not sufficient to enable the realization of one's dreams. Kuno observes :

Es wurde mir bald sehr klar, daß Margherita schwerlich, jemals ihr geträumtes Ziel erreichen würde, dessen Weg über so viele Berge von Mühe ging, zu dessen Bewältigung wahrscheinlich ihr Geist aber gewiß nicht ihr Wille befähigt waren. Es schien mir entscheidend, daß sie dieses Ziel aus Unlust an den bestehenden Verhältnissen, in welchen sie lebte, aber nicht aus drängender Lust an den ergriffenen Studien und Lebenszwecken sich gesteckt hatte (22, my underlining).

In order to realize ambitions the diffuse yearning for otherness has to go with a passionate desire for power over the object and with a determined will to perform the work of appropriating it to the self. Stating that Margherita is lacking in both, Kuno moreover explains that the woman's way of achieving extraordinary aims requires different qualities. He insists :

dem Weibe ist keine Größe möglich, - zu der sie nicht bestimmende Liebe oder begeisterte Kraft hinangeführt hatten (23, my underlining).

Substituting bestimmende Liebe for drängende Lust and begeisterte Kraft for Wille has the effect of eliminating the notions of projective performance and rational effort and determination, in favour of irrational choice and inspired but unconscious use of energies. Lou Andreas-Salomé exemplifies this understanding of what constitutes a woman's work in her story Eine Ausschweifung. However, it is also for the very reason that the desire for self-expression manifest in Adine's writing is seen as the natural result of unconscious pressures, that it is not considered as work.

Similar to Margherita, Lou Andreas-Salomé wished to realize her desire, as she put it,

mein Leben nach mir selber
zu leben (24)

With a determined effort of will she, however, also undertook the work required to achieve her ambition. In doing so, she exercised what the novel declares to be masculine qualities. So did Anaïs Nin, of course, in applying all her energies to writing House of Incest. But her approach to writing was the very opposite of Lou Andreas-Salomé's detached attitude. The fact that, for Anaïs Nin, the quest for identity as woman and as writer were inseparable made the writing of House of Incest a very private matter. That also accounts for the fact that, as writer, she opted for Margherita's position.

The fictional and the actual woman are in a similar situation, in so far as they are both at the beginning of realizing their dream of self-expansion and creating their own identity. Their refusal to accept a self-mutilating feminine role, also confronts them with the same problem. For, as Sharon Spencer has pointed out :

In a special sense, in fact, the woman artist and all women who choose serious work besides marriage and child-rearing are probably partly "masculine" as tradition defines this state of being. The very fact of her success suggests that a woman has developed capabilities that are conventionally reserved for males : rational thought (as opposed to intuitive knowledge); ambition; aggression; tenacity; the will to shape her own identity and her life beyond biological possibilities (25).

Lou Andreas-Salomé compensated for the risk of possibly being considered "unfeminine" by punishing any transgression of the culturally prescribed feminine role of her fictional women with death. Anaïs Nin employed the opposite strategy

to counteract any charges of abnormality. Approximating the language of the dream, she reinforces the semblance of the conventionally feminine as irrational, emotional and selfless interiority.

Not unlike Lou Andreas-Salomé's retrospective critical attitude towards Im Kampf um Gott, Anaïs Nin also retrospectively criticized House of Incest. She observed :

I describe what it is to be trapped in the dream unable to relate it to life, unable to reach "daylight". It was never my intention to remain within those realms but to explore them (26).

With both writers, subsequent development of their fiction reveals that they were concerned with eliminating notions of the woman's absolute powerlessness and lack of rational power, which they had conveyed in their first works. It prompted the need to link the woman's desire for self-realization to her active pursuit of it. This interdependence of dream and rational consciousness is reflected on the level of fictional technique.

Lou Andreas-Salomé increasingly introduced dreams as a corrective of a clearly defined visible reality. In her earlier stories, dreams are mostly used to express aborted or checked desires. They also serve to evoke affinities between characters, which the conventional moral code is not allowed to recognize. Or they function as a mode of cognition, making the woman aware of psychological conditions which her conscious mind alone is unable to grasp. However, the dream is subjected to the writer's interpretation to suit the conscious attitudes of the character. Thus, the subversive nature of the dream is controlled by designating physical sensations according to preconceived ideas.

Anais Nin, in contrast, who started out with portraying private fantasy worlds, apparently felt the need to relate those fantasies to reality. So her technique evolves in the direction of introducing more narrative structure and setting. Moreover, her initial concentration on transcribing the flowing subjectivity of her characters becomes linked to more rational explanations of their symbolic acts. Contrary to Franklin/Schneider, who believe her last novel Collages 'to be so uncharacteristic of Nin' (27), this book may be read as her most complex statement on her vision of the dream and positive nature of the unconscious and their relation to her concept of art.

Ranging from day-dreams to concretized fantasies and artistic creation, she demonstrates in Collages the power of the dream to operate as a vehicle of mobility and a source of transformation. At the same time, the dream is linked to her understanding of the human self. She refuses to accept a definite and final form of being but conceives of it in terms of the dream as fluid, capable of changing identities and therefore potentially capable of unlimited expansion. As such, the dream became the cornerstone of her

philosophy of creation that connects a theory of the development of the self with that of the artist (28).

It also relates to her faith in the possibility of changing an acquired identity, formulated already in the first volume of her diaries, where she noted :

What we call our destiny is truly our character and that character can be altered . . . if we have the courage to examine how it formed us. We can alter the chemistry provided we have the courage to dissect the elements (29).

Collages foregrounds the interrelationship between art and life, insisting on the need to develop the capacity to understand symbolic acts as means of self-discovery

and communication. It is to the woman artist, in particular, whom she attributed this task, explaining :

I made Renate the hub of Collages because her personality is mobile and receptive. She turns her whole attentiveness towards the people who enter her life. She is a turnstile, a turntable, seeking the meaning of inanimate and animate objects equally. She is also the one who relates to everyone (30).

Contrasting the painter Renate and the novelist Judith Sands with the two male artists and sculptors, Anaïs Nin makes a significant point with respect to the difference between female and male creative work. The woman artist may learn from male creators and use their techniques to effect transformations of given conditions, as Anaïs Nin herself learnt from D.H. Lawrence, Marcel Proust and the Surrealists. However, what distinguishes them is their approach to the object and their dealing with it. Anaïs Nin emphasizes the receptivity of the female artists and their attentiveness and sense of relatedness in bringing the object to life. This is similar to Kuno's assertion in Im Kampf um Gott that the woman's work derives from bestimmende Liebe.

Anaïs Nin shows that, in contrast, the male artist ignores the otherness of the object in order to dominate it. He destroys the notion of difference to assimilate it to his subjectivity. She describes Varda's creative act in a similar way to Henry Miller's re-creation of June almost forty years earlier, saying in Collages :

With scissors and glue and small pieces of fabrics he continued to invent women who glittered, charmed, levitated and wore luminous aureoles like saints. But his daughter resisted all her father's potions, as if she had decided from the day she was born never to become one of the women he cut out in the shapes of circles, triangles, cubes, to suit the changing forms of his desires (31).

Just as Anaïs Nin before had rejected Henry Miller's negative image of June as a monstrously threatening force,

so Varda's daughter refuses to identify with the opposite image as man's idealized, spiritual and desexualized other. The woman artist, in contrast, through empathy and identification, is able to respect the otherness of the object and is able to interpret its dreams, fantasies and symbolic acts. Thus she gives birth to a new self. In Collages the writer Judith Sands is approached by a certain Dr. Mann, requesting her to enter into a dialogue with him. The association of healing and masculinity evoked in the name, together with his reassuring words addressed to the silent and withdrawn novelist allows at least two possible readings. Dr. Mann may be taken as a projection of Anaïs Nin's own increased rational insight into her mode of writing and as a self-confident affirmation as author.

Through Dr. Mann's theorizing on the creative power of Judith Sands, Anaïs Nin situates the woman novelist again within a community of writers, as she already did in the introductory passage of House of Incest. The difference is that, there, she refers to a common experience in the process of writing itself, whereas, in Collages, she foregrounds the effects of the product, asserting :

Every novelist knows that at one time or other he will be confronted with the incarnation of one of his characters. Whether that character is based on a living person or not, it will draw into its circle those who resemble it. Sooner or later the portrait will attract its twin, by the magnetism of narcissism, and the author will feel this inhabitant of his novel come to life (32).

At the same time, Anaïs Nin articulates the writer's need for public recognition in order to lend reality to the self that dares to break conventional patterns. Dr. Mann insists :

Remember this, it is good for a writer to meet with the incarnation of a character he has invented. It gives him an affirmation, a substantial proof of his intuitions, divinations (33).

This relationship between private, isolated dreaming and its external embodiment also informed Anaïs Nin's encounter with June Miller. Recognition of the other living self as part of her own self had the power not only to generate confidence in the power of her imagination and creativity. It also inspired her to create, changing dormant energies into what, in Im Kampf um Gott Kuno calls begeisterte Kraft. Anaïs Nin described this inspirational effect in ecstatic terms :

June supplies the presence of the body, the incarnation of our dreams and creations. What are we ? Only the creators. She IS . . . Sterile, all our staggering words, all the heat and fervor of story telling, sterile our creations, if there were no June passing through, like the supreme materialization of them all, with a demonic indifference to human order, human limitations, and restrictions (34).

It is this encounter with June Miller that made Anaïs Nin fully aware of the function and validity of her own dreams and fantasies and prompted her to use them as the matrix for House of Incest. It also gave her groping search for a specifically female language a clear direction.

Fascinated by the sensuous beauty of another woman, she discovered the body as limitless space. The absence of a defined identity of one who only

lives on the reflections of herself
in the eyes of others (35)

made the body as a site of contradictory drives visible. Anaïs Nin perceived June Miller's elusive role-playing and fluid capacity for endless identifications, her imaginative inventions and creations of dramas as

the essence of the theatre itself, stirring
the imagination, promising such an intensity
and heightening of experience (36).

She was fascinated by the fantastic strangeness of her discourse through which she exerted magic control over

others by responding to their unconscious wishes. It appeared to her like a marvellous land, where all differences were abolished and contradictions co-extant within a mythical universe that she apprehended as pervasively meaningful.

Seeing her own diffuse yearning for life reflected in the other woman and thus also validated, intensified her desire for a form of language to translate this veiled state of being. She felt :

The struggle for expression was not as acute for me before I met June. Her talk is like my secret writing. At times incoherent, at times abstract, at times blind (37).

Her elusive mythmaking answered her own desire to 'escape the confines of definition' (38). She defended her against Henry Miller's insistent request for order, definite meaning and rational control, explaining to him :

She is suspicious of words. She lives by her intuition. We don't have a language for the senses. Feelings, images, sensations are like musical sounds: how are you going to tell about them (39) ?

Her continuous defense of June made her also aware that the self-hate directed against her own passionate feelings and unlimited imagination together with her efforts to define them in preconceived male terms was a form of suicide. She noted in her diary :

At first I protested and rebelled against poetry. I was about to deny my poetic worlds. I was doing violence to my illusions with analysis, science, and learning Henry's language, entering Henry's world. I wanted to destroy by violence and animalism my tenuous fantasies and illusions and my hypersensitivity. A kind of suicide. The ignominy awakened me. Then June came and answered the cravings of my imagination and saved me (40).

Although much more indirectly, Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel Im Kampf um Gott articulates a similar uneasiness with the discourse of reason. Framing Margherita as object of male definitions, the text evokes the impression that male rationality pronounces the truth about women. So her suicide appears to prove the correctness of Kuno's evaluation of her lacking capacity for self-fulfillment. The novel, however, counteracts this view, implying that it is Kuno's traditional discourse of power and domination that does not recognize the woman's self-centred desire or her individuality. It continues to channel her yearning for life into personalized sexual desire.

However, Margherita's dependency on the male, who embodies the essence of rationality and control, may also be read as a projection of the woman's own desire for power. Anaïs Nin discovered in June's fantasies the distorted expression of the woman's desire for power and self-assertion. Realizing that June's entrapment in a wholly imaginary life kept her in ignorance about herself and did not allow her any control over herself and her own life, Anaïs Nin felt like wanting 'to do violence to her', 'to force her into reality' and drive 'obscure, mysterious emotions out into the open' (41). Confronted with this confusion of veiled desires and selves which remained unconscious to the subject, Anaïs Nin felt a strong need for form, clarity and limits, directed at

pursuing and exposing these selves
to crude daylight (42).

Lou Andreas-Salomé presents the relationship between Kuno and Margherita as a drama of division and isolation that is both internal and external. Clear demarcation lines between the masculine and the feminine, conscious control and desire, prevent any possibility of unity. In House of Incest, a similar problem is worked out in terms of the relationship between two women. They represent :

the two faces, the night and day faces of woman, one all instinct, impulse, desire, impetus without control, the other who had thought to control by awareness (43).

However, integrating those two aspects is not a simple matter of imposing a preconceived principle of unity that functions as the opposite of fragmentation. For this reason, Anaïs Nin rejected Henry Miller's

portrait of a June scattered in fragments, beyond all reassemblage (44).

It is grounded in a binary opposition that posits fragmentation as the negative pole of a clearly defined and desirable unified identity. For Anaïs Nin, identity was and remained only thinkable in terms of a multiplicity of selves that strove for an outlet into reality. Hence, her need for a language that would translate this break-up of a unified consciousness. In Collages, she offered a sarcastic comment on male art that strove to subsume heterogeneous parts under a coherent whole, presenting it as a self-destructive mechanism.

The novelist Judith Sands witnesses the spectacle of a 'Machine that Destroys Itself'. It is the manifest dream of the male artist Tinguely. The multiple discarded objects from a junk yard that make up the machine are comparable to the confusion of suppressed fantasies and feelings which are part of the whole personality, but considered as useless and unacceptable. The fact that the machine is the result of a creative process suggests that it is a specific conscious disposition which turns those neglected things into a self-destructive mechanism. In so far as artists subscribe to this attitude, their art is part of this drive towards destruction, as is implied by

the roll of paper unrolling and the brush painting erratically the names of the artists like stock

marked quotations. But before the list was finished, the roll of paper rolled backwards perversely, and swallowed the names in desperate inversion (45)

Anaïs Nin, in contrast, sought to resuscitate the neglected fragments by incorporating them into a texture, where they fulfilled a meaningful purpose. In Collages, it is seeing the self-destructive principle at work in male creation that wrenches Judith Sands

from her self-imposed solitude. The havoc generates her own creativity. She is compelled to allow her own creation to re-enter the world (46).

Similarly, Anaïs Nin's resistance to Henry Miller's views on art as lies, his failure to understand the significance of June's mythmaking and his distorted image of her as an empty box operated, for Anaïs Nin, as a powerful incentive

To go where Henry cannot go, into the Myth into June's dreams, fantasies, into the poetry of June. To write as a woman, and as a woman only (47).

In doing so, she started equally with June's dreams and her own, thus emphasizing their affinity as women. In the figure of Sabina, June reappears throughout Anaïs Nin's fiction. In House of Incest Sabina's relationship to the narrator dramatizes the woman's quest for wholeness by merging the social persona and the socially unacknowledged aspects of woman. The dream fragments that compose House of Incest are related through the theme of women's struggle to free suppressed aspects of herself, to confront qualities that are considered socially unacceptable. Among those, overt sexuality in women and creative ambition are predominant.

June being the inspiring object, Anaïs Nin's emphatic identification with her opened her mind to the possibilities

of a life in adventure, in striving to discover the autonomy of her nature and to realize her personal destiny. The impact of this relationship resulted in her decision to write House of Incest and in her definition of an aesthetic theory that she formulates in the introductory passages to the text. Entering June's myth thus constitutes the beginning of developing her own creative myth

which springs from the unpredictable, unprecedented experience-in-illumination of an object by a subject and the labor, then, of achieving communication of the effect (48).

Similarly, through her fiction, Lou Andreas-Salomé makes herself the centre of her own mythology to circumscribe the same essential psychic fact of her own intelligible individuality. Gertrud Bäumer has described her as a creative personality :

eine unerschrockene Natur, die ihren Weg fliegen mußte und eine ebenso kühne Intelligenz, in der die naturhafte Richtungssicherheit durch das Denken noch einmal gewonnen ist. Ihr Leben war darauf ausgegangen, diese beiden Welten zur Deckung zu bringen (49).

This emphasis on Lou Andreas-Salomé's instinctual self-confidence in her own nature, however, mystifies the fact that human nature does not exist within a social vacuum. In fact and unlike Anaïs Nin, Lou Andreas-Salomé took her inspiration not from a woman but from a man. Moreover, just as June entered House of Incest as Anaïs Nin's alter ego, so Lou Andreas-Salomé's encounter and subsequent friendship with Nietzsche left its traces in the figure of Kuno, in her novel Im Kampf um Gott.

Jane Miller, examining men's presence in women's novels, has suggested :

The men in women's novel may reflect the shadowy admonishing figures outside them, absorbed and internalized by women, who, as they write, chuck off their own apparent invisibility (50).

So Kuno , modelled on Nietzsche, doubles Lou Andreas-Salomé's own quest for an informing principle substantial to existence. At the same time, the nature of Kuno's pursuit of truth dramatizes the relationship between sexuality and creative ambition in the development towards personal autonomy. As in her book about Nietzsche himself, Lou Andreas-Salomé endows Kuno with an excess of energies. Its manifestation alternates between the pursuit of sexually oriented desire and the will to knowledge. Established as polar opposites, they remain unrelated. Anaïs Nin's text presents this conflict between irrational and rational aspects of the individual in relation to possible ways of interaction that are able to enlarge a reduced identity. In Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel, in contrast, this conflict appears in terms of a dominance-submission pattern. Analogous to Kuno's suppression of his sexual passion, women figure only as objects to be overcome at various stages in the masculine search for identity.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's effort to conceal her own talent and learning behind a male impersonation is more than a self-defensive strategy. It also reveals more clearly than in her other pieces of fiction that Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anaïs Nin take different positions in writing. Those are closely linked to their difference in identity formation. Referring to Julia Kristeva's theory of the constitution of the subject, Toril Moi has pointed out that Julia Kristeva

delineates two different options for women: mother-identification, which will intensify the pre-Oedipal components of the woman's psyche and render her marginal to the symbolic order, or father-identification, which will create a woman who will derive her identity from the same symbolic order (51).

Anaïs Nin presents writing as an act of remembering another woman's body. Not unlike Hélène Cixous' vision of female

writing, House of Incest starts with establishing a space that 'reflects the comforting security of the mother's womb' (52). Lou Andreas-Salomé, in contrast, evokes the death of the mother and daughter and presents writing in terms of a reading of the father's text.

2. Reconstruction of Inherited Meaning and Creation of Sense

Im Kampf um Gott and House of Incest both reveal a particular concern with establishing a beginning. In each case the main body of the text is preceded by introductory passages. Although forming an integral part of the whole text, they do not directly belong to the following narrative. In addition, both parts are typographically marked off as separate entities. This division draws specific attention to the act of writing as being distinct from that of producing a text. The introduction serves to affirm textual production as a special kind of activity that lays claim to originality and authority. In doing so, it reflects the coming into existence of vision through language and of language through vision.

At the very beginning of House of Incest, Anais Nin presents an unnamed narrator who insists :

ALL I KNOW IS CONTAINED IN THIS BOOK
WRITTEN WITHOUT WITNESS, AN EDIFICE
WITHOUT DIMENSIONS, A CITY HANGING
IN THE SKY (53).

One may easily be tempted to relate this anonymous I back to the author's name and establish its gender as female. However, not only does Lou Andreas-Salomé's adoption of a male pseudonym prove the impossibility of assuming such a

direct relationship, but Anaïs Nin's failure to attribute gender also suggests a state of subjectivity that surpasses gender identification. What the whole text conveys instead, is an understanding of the subject, and for that matter of any subject, which is at the same time 'one' and 'many', namely constituted by a multitude of selves.

Transforming the subject's experience of being in the world into a tangible object, the book, is conceived as knowledge. Authority presumes a possession of that knowledge. However, authority is assumed and asserted and made manifest in the construction of meaning. It is not grounded in any specific innate capacity but appears conditioned by a set of complex circumstances. Like the following image of frightened awakening Lou Andreas-Salomé's introduction suggests that the writing of a text requires a setting, or rather the setting of a scene that creates a field of play which enables performance. Establishing a space in which the text as meaningful structure originates, the writer faces the problem of circumscribing the co-existence of two incommensurable quantities . The question is how to represent simultaneously

that which describes, the ego, and that which is described, the beginning, which is prior to any ego (54).

Relying exclusively on the sense of sight, Lou Andreas-Salomé produces elaborate winter imagery which foregrounds the absence of distinctive elements and directive guidelines. Within this setting, the energies of aspiration are evoked and gathered towards a focus. An anonymous eye/I moves towards a house at the centre of the snow-covered mountain valley. The initial image reflects a situation, where unconscious content is still contained in the unconscious and impossible to grasp by the conscious eye/I but manifest by exerting a certain fascination on the eye :

Ringsum in den Bergen war es eingeschneit. Der Schneesturm fegte seit zwei Tagen schon die weißen Flocken zusammen so daß Steg und Weg nicht mehr zu unterscheiden waren. Das kleine Haus am Gebirgssee, welches sich, abgelegen vom Dorfe, in die dunklen Föhren der Bergenge schmiegte, blinkte im hellen Schein, der aus den Stuben auf die weiße Schneefläche fiel, wie Silber und Cristall in die Dunkelheit hinaus (55).

The amorphous mass of whirling snow, located beyond the confines of familiar space, is a free field for the projection of unconscious content. Its unfamiliarity receives additional emphasis by its separation from the ordinary social world. The landmarks in this imaginary landscape include elements that legend and myth generally associate with an event where a significant psychic experience takes place. The dark forest, the mountainous enclosure with its house and lake at the centre bear resemblance to ancient symbols of transformation, initiation and rebirth found in creation myths.

The beginning of a unique experience is specifically marked off by emphasizing the extraordinary character of the entrance to the house :

Die Türpfosten glichen zwei riesigen
Zuckerstangen aus dem Märchen (56).

Gaining access to the core of the enigmatic object would thus amount to the crossing of a threshold, the effect of which is a passage from undifferentiated darkness into light. This imagery conveys a concept of knowledge as the result of an intentional transition from a state of irrational confusion to enlightened perception. At the same time, the will to knowledge that moves the text towards a focus establishes a connection between the human being and language.

As soon as the eye/I is in a position to grasp the object, all interest is concentrated on the interior of the house that is inhabited by an old man. As a significant psychic

factor, he absorbs all psychic energies. It is within this house that the text is going to unfold, written by the old man who, retrospectively, transforms his life into a story that translates his quest for identity. Meaning is thus produced by turning the natural sequence of events of his life into a series of interpretations.

Presented as the inhabitant of interior space, the old man is also introduced as the enigmatic object that informs all inherited and transmitted discourse and gives rise to a prolific variety of interpretations surrounding the same event. In this view, production of discourse appears as a self-perpetuating re-interpretation of the same subject matter. The introduction emphasizes that the mysterious focus of people's discursive interests transcends the old man as a person :

Niemand kannte ihn mehr. Niemand hatte irgendwelche Beziehungen zu ihm, Um so mehr gab er in den Spinnstuben des Dorfes einen willkommenen Gesprächsstoff für die langen Winterabende ab (57).

It is the absence of any real relationship that constitutes the old man as a central enigma to the conscious mind. As such, he inhabits and controls in particular the discourse of women whose main task consists in manual labour. The combined reference to spinning (also meaning 'to fantasize' in German) and winter evenings hints at the women's concoction of mystifying fantasies that stem from an unenlightened mind. What the novel proposes to do is to demystify the object in question by offering a true interpretation. Rendering an interpretative total image of the same event that involves the old man, an old woman and the lake thus enlarges on the concept of knowledge by making it the account of a repetition-with-a- difference.

Compared with Anaïs Nin's direct self-assertion as author at the beginning of House of Incest, Lou Andreas-Salomé uses a more indirect way to assert authority. Relying on the conventional device of omniscient narrator, she foregrounds the importance of the look in the production of meaning. The one who knows is the one who subjects the object to close scrutiny and inspection. A generalized identification of the subject in Wer genauer zusah, der bemerkte wohl (58) leaves the writer as undetermined as Anaïs Nin's use of the pronoun I. Lou Andreas-Salomé's image of progressive awareness as a transition from darkness to light, corresponds to Anaïs Nin's image of awakening from sleep. Thus, the I's production of meaning is also associated with the advent of light and hence with the capacity of vision and perception. In this respect, both writers betray their dependence on a culture in which

knowledge, comprehension, reason, are established through the power of the look, through the 'eye' and the 'I' of the human subject whose relation to objects is structured through his field of vision (59, author's italics).

The end of the novel reveals the introduction as part of a frame. At the same time, the initially anonymous narrator is identified as a man. An artist and the old man's longstanding friend, he is also the reader of the other one's life story which constitutes the main body of the text. The act of writing is thus closely linked to the act of reading a male-devised text through male eyes. Contrary to Lou Andreas-Salomé's emphasis on the reproductive aspect in the construction of meaning, Anaïs Nin conceives it as a creation of sense. The implications of this difference are particularly obvious in their different use of the house image. In both texts, it serves to convey the idea of a meaningful spiritual structure. Yet Anaïs Nin's aspiration to build 'an edifice without dimensions' (60) foregrounds the absolute originality of its construction.

Before presenting her male protagonist as writer, Lou Andreas-Salomé introduces him as one whose first act consists in displacing the originally female owner of the house. This identifies him as an invader of interior space, and more specifically of female territory. Among the isolated fragments of female character within the novel, the dead old woman represents a negative image of the mother. Alluded to as a witch, she is invested with archaic potential and appears to possess magic powers over life and death. He has replaced her in particular as inhabitant of the lower rooms, where her previous activity is defined as schalten. Within the imagery of light and darkness, this choice of word connotes the use of (electric) energy and light. Implicitly, the woman is thus ascribed the capacity to direct invisible energies along clear-cut lines and to use these energy charged currents to illuminate interior space. So, when after the woman's death, the father is presented as thinking and writing by the light of a lamp, the implication is that he uses the resources of power that originally belonged to her. This indispensable source of energy and light enables him to pursue his own work.

In his discussion of the writer's intention at the beginning, Edward W. Said suggests :

The ideal course of fiction can be characterized as including one or more instances of returning to a point of fertile beginning in the past from which the narrative subsequently unfolds and to which it can repeatedly return (61).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's beginning combines winter imagery and the death of a maternal figure to situate the beginning of writing after the separation from the origin of life. The narrative sequence extends this point so as to suggest that, for the male writer any relationship to a woman recalls the relation to the mother and that the act of symbolization is organized as an act of resistance against her. Having appropriated maternal powers, he subsequently exercises his paternal authority to dispossess the daughter of her emphatic limit-transcending interchange with nature. He re-directs her

expansive libidinal energies to make himself centre and sole object of her desire. At the same time, his discourse prepares her unwittingly to acquiesce in the role of self-effacing wife. Formed into a mirror of male needs and desires, she is robbed of the possibility of identifying narcissistically with objects that would reflect her own independent desires and impulses.

Significantly, it is the idealized image of the daughter's dead mother which circulates between father and daughter. The father's unwillingness to acknowledge his biological paternity and his insistence on the image of the spiritualized and desexualized mother serves to prevent the daughter from gaining access to her real origin. The daughter's questions about the mother are frustrated and silenced by the father. His silence suggests that her autonomous will to truth is being rejected by a culture that does not allow the daughter to surpass the father's teaching. Her never-answered questions reveal a lack which is also the mother's absence.

Cut off from this knowledge about her mother, the daughter's creative capacity is disoriented. Her obedient appropriation of male discourse leads to an obsessional emptying out of her creative powers in his service. Ignorant about her maternal origin, she cannot recognize herself being reflected in relation to the mother. This deprives her also of the possibility to relate to another female body, which is also her own body. Similarly, all the other female characters in the novel exist in continual isolation from each other, being unreflective and not being reflected by another woman.

Anais Nin carries out her intention to constitute the woman as subject of desire and to articulate her body. Her female figures exist within a kaleidoscopic play of mirrors, in constant danger of losing or never attaining their individual

identity. Unconscious identifications, however, also contain the possibility of becoming conscious and thus operate as self-identificatory reflections which advance the construction of identity.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's interrogation of the function of the father reveals the relation between the male quest for identity and the form of male symbolization. His efforts to achieve power over life consist in inaugurating a linear course of history that constitutes him as the central consciousness. Lou Andreas-Salomé thus conveys a view of the production of knowledge as an expression of the will towards mastery, similar to the one outlined by Nietzsche. He asserts:

daß alles Geschehen in der organischen Welt ein Überwältigen, Herr-werden und daß wiederum alles Überwältigen und Herrwerden ein Neu-Interpretieren ein Zurechtmachen ist, bei dem der bisherige "Sinn" und "Zweck" nothwendig verdunkelt oder ganz ausgelöscht werden muß (62, author's emphasis).

However, the end of the father's manuscript makes it directly explicit that this form of creation is organized as an effort of resistance against the forces of life and of the desire for love and fusion. Just as the protagonist proves to be unable to establish a relationship to any woman during his life, so his spiritual reconstruction is subject to a divorce between feelings and intellect. He declares :

Still ist geworden in mir was für mich lebte.
Aber in rastloser Kraft erhob sich da erst
mächtig aus diesem Grabe der schaffende,
forschende, ringende Geist (63).

Evoking the writer as a versteinerte Pflanze (64) who lives in his spiritual house as in a steinernen Kapsel (65) conveys notions of petrified being enclosed in rigid, unalterable structures. Yet his hymnic language celebrates this erection of a closed system as the ultimate achievement of the human spirit, declaring

nur wer so das Leben selber überlebt hat,
der mag ewig leben zu schaffen, zu forschen,
zu denken, - von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit (66).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's introduction to the father's text also emphasizes the notion of encircling confinement that frames reader and writer alike within rigid inherited cultural forms. The two sentences

Ringsum in den Bergen war es eingeschneit(67)

and :

Dichtgefüllte Bücherreihen bedeckten
ringsum die Wände (68)

do not only establish the house as a transformation of the mountain cleft, but also suggest a correspondence between snow and books. The phonetic echoes resounding in the description of the snowstorm and the male act of textual production associate the latter with the same menacing violence and threat of disorientation that characterizes the snowstorm. It projects the act of writing also as a transformation that changes a fluid, yet unified body into pieces of a rigidly limited substance to allow some control over them. The implied correspondence between the whirling snowflakes and the joining together of solid graphic forms associates the repeatedly mentioned lake as its opposite. The reference to water suggests that the infusion of life and warmth into the sign would dissolve its limited meaning and give it back its original fluid and flexible nature as symbol.

Within the womb-like enclosure of the mountain cave - the lake, is as much a centre as the house. The narrative connects the lake with the daughter's creative power and imagination and with the mother. The daughter's maternal inheritance being an acute sense of union and harmonious relatedness of all things, the dead mother represents an ideal image of life :

welches gleichsam als vorschwebendes Bild
das Ziel ihres künstlerischen Strebens wie
ihrer Lebenssehnsucht verkörpert. Jane wird
ihres Kindes Muse (69).

From the beginning the daughter is represented as double.
The conscious social self co-exists with an imaginary sister
self that lives in

einem großen Kristallpalaß
tief unten im See (70).

The edge of the lake is the site of self-communion where,
in flight from social and paternal pressures, the daughter
escapes into an imaginary world. Yet Lou Andreas-Salomé
offers her no chance to bring this confusion of intricate
desires and aspirations up into consciousness and focus it
onto a particular object through which she would be able
to express her innermost being.

The daughter's continual alienation from her own independent
desires and impulses through the father's tutelage is
completed by her fall into gender and the awakening of her
sexuality. Speaking of D.H. Lawrence's portrayal of sexual
relationships, Anaïs Nin emphasizes its symbolic content,
insisting that the sexual struggle

expresses at the same time another struggle,
another craving. It is no mere sexual phenomenon,
but more truly the creator's craving for a climax
far bigger than the climaxes life has to offer. It
is symbolical of the creative voraciousness which is,
as a general instinct, unsatisfiable, because it is
out of proportion with the universe, with the realities
surrounding him. It is the allegory of the urge which
was never meant to be answered but merely to exist,
like the urge to live in spite of, and even because
of the certain knowledge of death, to live in the
largest possible 'circuitous way towards death' in
Freud's words (71).

Yet Lou Andreas-Salomé's fictional daughter, lacking the
support of a mother and having been forced to invest all her

desire for life and love in the father, comes up against the incest taboo. Inability to re-direct desire, guilt at transgressing the fundamental social law, despair about never being able to achieve fulfillment of her desire for life drive the daughter to drowning herself in the lake.

The main body of Anaïs Nin's House of Incest begins with a situation that, in Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel, seals the daughter's death. Oceanic water imagery suggests simultaneously a conscious regression to the mother's womb as the place of birth and the narcissistic phase of pleasurable union with the whole universe. This immersion in the unconscious as the wondrous land of plenitude without conflict, differences and limits involves the temporary death of the conscious self and a clearly defined identity.

Lou Andreas-Salomé presents writing as an act of reading within the frame of an existing structure. So writing becomes also the re-presentation of an already experienced and written text. The novel alludes to the father's text as pages from a diary. Anaïs Nin perceives literary writing as the production of experience itself. So her wish to write fiction also asserts itself as the desire for a language that is different from the one she uses in the diary to re-produce lived experience. Yet this other language, which she calls 'the language of nerves', also brings her close to her neurosis. It makes her feel like

a hammock suspended in space
swarming with hallucinations (72).

The writing of House of Incest therefore articulates

deux projets parallèles et distincts:
le projet existentiel de rejouer sa
propre vie, sa propre naissance, de
's'enfanter soi-même' et retrouver
l'unité perdu de sa personnalité; et
le projet littéraire de faire de ce
simulacre d'entrée au monde un mouve-
ment vers l'œuvre (73).

The introduction to House of Incest evokes the creative act in terms of an interaction between the body and the conscious I :

Something was coming out of my throat: it was strangling me. I broke the thread which held it and yanked it out (74).

A part of the body, striving to discharge its energy potential has become a threatening obstacle. Barred from expression in the conventional sign system of communication, the drive for self-expression translates in physical terms, as a hysterical symptom. It is language that mediates between self and other, the other being at the same time inside and outside, the matter of one's own body and another body. Excluded from language, the object can neither be known nor communicated. Passing into the register of language, the string of interconnected sensations and images floating in the body is cut. In order to enable creation, there has to be a determined effort of will to break the neurotically deformed, unmediated way of self-expression. Referring to this separation, Régis Durand has emphasized :

Rupture nécessaire peut-être, mais qui précède l'oeuvre et ne lui appartient pas en propre. Il faut suivre le passage du plan événementiel à la transcription de l'événement dans la première partie : la rupture y apparaît à la fois comme une naissance et un réveil, qui arrachent l'être à un monde prénatal (75).

However, this view tends to reduce the text to its conceptual content. In fact, like Lou Andreas-Salomé's winter imagery, Anaïs Nin's initial image inaugurates the process of writing. It constitutes the situation

où s'opère un certain ébranlement de la personne, un renversement des anciennes lectures, une secousse du sens, déchiré, exténué jusqu'à son vide insubstituable, sans que l'objet cesse jamais d'être signifiant, désirable (76).

In fact, variations on Anaïs Nin's introductory image appear throughout the main body of the text. They all metaphorize

the displacement of non-verbal expression by entering the process of signification. Images like the subterranean waters and the ship, black seas and hissing serpents, the house and a path, the cauldron with the avenue coming out of a mouth revolve around creative power and speaking, oscillating between the deformation of creative energies, the quest for the birth of autonomous desire and the anxiety before creation.

Moreover, the introductory image focuses on the specific condition of the body as the principal object of attention of the I. Lou Andreas-Salomé, in contrast, directs the reader's interest towards the magic potency of male symbolization and associates it with the sun and the head. The father's way of telling his story is not perceived as a problem. It is accepted. The aim is to dispossess the cultural inheritance of its powerful magic by appropriating the ways in which it operates. In Anaïs Nin's text, attention is not merely directed inward but also backward to activate the depth of memory :

Always listening for lost sounds and searching
for lost colours, standing forever on the threshold
like one troubled with memories and walking with a
swimming stride I cut the air with wide-slicing fins
and swim through wall-less rooms (77).

The attempt to remember, recollect the lost object is presented in terms of an advancing body that effects incisions in limitless, unstructured space. Known material forms are decomposed, associated with different matter only to be rebuilt in different form. In the absence of rigid definitions, objects change colour and meaning along imperceptible rhythms according to their oscillating libidinal investment. The text is composed of heterogeneous matter. Natural objects mixed with manufactured objects move, disintegrate, only to take new forms and images :

Fishes made of velvet, of organdie with lace faces, made of spangled taffeta, of silks and feathers and whiskers, with lacquered flanks and rock crystal eyes, fishes of withered leather, with gooseberry eyes, eyes like the white of an egg (78).

The joy of unrestricted movement that provides the pleasure of existing within an unlimited range of constant metamorphosis contrasts with the 'rigid new city' (79). Creation can only take place after separation from the realm of undifferentiated unity has occurred. But 'ejected from a paradise of soundlessness' (79) into the 'rigidity of the new world' (79), the I can now purposely regress to a state anterior to conscious decisions and delimiting definitions. Writing is thus regarded as a means to dissolve transmitted and inherited forms :

Als Mittel also, Sinn, Kraft, Ursprung
neu zu schaffen (80).

Lou Andreas-Salomé imagines the unfolding of the writing intention in terms of a continual progress towards interrogating the logic of patriarchal reason. Anaïs Nin uses regression as a means of transgression. It leaves the father's discourse behind to establish a relation to the mother, another female body and thus release autonomous desire. This is

Ein Schreiben des Objekts, das zum Subjekt wird
und sich als wunschbegabtes Subjekt gegenläufig
zum Fortschritt konstituiert (81).

Anaïs Nin refuses the passivity and inferiority that frames Lou Andreas-Salomé's fictional daughter whose only means to accede to the plenitude of life consists in self-destruction. Her associations of water, dream and sleep also convey a sense of self-loss, which is however expressive of

le désir d'un mode d'être et de connaître qui
exige la mort, non du sujet mais de son Logos:
d'où l'acceptation confidante de cette mort (82).

Writing, Anais Nin uses memory in its function of forgetting, and not that of remembering in order to resuscitate the creative power of desire. Immersion in water corresponds to a consciously willed abandonment of self to fluid subjectivity. Not selflessly devotional love of a deified object as in Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel characterizes this state, but love without an object, desire without object :

Loving without knowingness, moving without effort, in the soft current of water and desire, breathing in an ecstasy of dissolution (83).

This attitude of self- abandonment effects a transformation, as the writer feels

moving into the body of another - absorbed and lost within the flesh of another, lulled by the rhythm of water, the slow palpitation of the senses (84).

Yielding to the current of life that inhabits the body, establishes one's own body as more than one, capable of limitless relationships to other bodies and spaces. Memory also involves language itself. Anais Nin wrote in her book about D.H.Lawrence :

The effort of memory is a kind of pilgrimage; the use of worn words to which there is no genuine reaction is like senseless, unfelt mechanical recitation of a rosary (85).

The most potent traditional symbol which she uses in her vision of writing is that of a serpent. The initial image of the life threatening thread is picked up again, evoking a string of words that assures a smooth way of being in the world :

The road came out of my mouth like a velvet ribbon . It lay there serpentine (86).

Its meandering course evokes also the river, suggesting that living and writing in accordance with vital rhythms

does not depend on linearity. Writing is repeatedly evoked as having a therapeutic function, providing a way to escape from the pains of living by transforming it into words :

I writhed within my own life, seeking a free avenue to carry the molten cries, to melt the pain into a cauldron of words (87).

The metonymic chain relates the body, the womblike enclosure in subterranean waters to the cauldron as container, in which elements are transformed, to the house as social referent :

The white path sprouted from the heart of the white house . . . the house has the shape of an egg, and it was carpeted with cotton and windowless (88).

Fantasies of escape from a painful reality consistently betray an oscillating movement. The writer enjoys the ecstasy of self-dissolution that contains the seeds of a new life and also fears the threat of madness and the severing of any bond with reality. Already in her book on D.H. Lawrence, Anaïs Nin emphasized the painful anxiety before creation, pointing out :

Now when the creator submits to that urge for livingness it almost destroys him because his emotional receptivity is in proportion to the extreme of his desires and hunger (89).

House of Incest revolves around this anxiety, illustrating the woman's problem that her discourse dissolves in the imaginary, because there is

Rien pour ordonner son discours et donner forme à son histoire. Pas d'avènement possible de son corps au niveau symbolique, pas de parole vraie qui la nomme en son sexe, pas de parole où enraciner sa parole (90).

Anaïs Nin's text shows that neither the pleasure of fusion nor the decomposition of language, can be imagined in unequivocally positive terms. The discourse of the hysteric, with its unceasing flow of words, reveals itself as the

other of male discourse. It is apprehended as an articulation of lies to veil the woman's rejection by the symbolic order, as mere echoing sounds and reflected forms inscribed in the space of her body :

I cannot tell the truth because I have felt
the heads of men in my womb . . . I am wrapped
in lies which do not penetrate my soul . . . the
moment I step into the cavern of my lies I drop
into darkness (91).

Feeling blotted out in reality, the writer desperately asks :

Does anyone know who I am ? (92)

It is in relation to another female body that the I begins to constitute a positive image of its own sexualized body and capacity for symbolization :

When I saw you, Sabina, I chose my body.
I will let you carry me into the fecundity
of destruction. I choose a body, then a
face, a voice (93).

In Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel, the daughter's first step towards symbolization of her autonomous desire is aborted. At the edge of the lake, in self-communication with her double, she is separated from the mother's actual presence and reconstructs for herself a reservoir of life and unity. But there is nothing that effects a separation. So the daughter drowns in the image and the waters of origin become again the maternal womb. The mirror as resistant surface that reflects an image is forgotten and transformed into a fluid container that abolishes all differences. Anaïs Nin's text conveys a similar

Appel à la fusion du contenu et du contenant
où chacune est les deux ensemble (94).

The other woman appears first as a separate image with which to identify, when a 'photograph unglued from its frame' (85).

It effects an entry into a vertiginous collapse of limits ,
leading up to a mutual submersion of identities :

The house opened its great gate mouth
and swallowed us (96).

This fusion establishes a relationship between the woman's
sexualized body and creative power, while simultaneously
realizing the difference in identity :

Deep into each other we turned our harlot eyes.
She was an idol in Bycanze, an idol dancing with
legs parted; and I write with pollen and honey (97).

The same and not the same, the writing I constitutes itself
in relation to the other woman, who is absent :

It was dawn and she was lost (98).

From her as image, contact is established to her own body :

There is no mockery between women. One lies
down at peace as on one's own breast (99).

It is the opposite movement to the one performed by Lou
Andreas-Salomé's fictional daughter, who submerges her own
self in the image. Anaïs Nin constructs a discourse in which
the writing I separates from her double the Atlantide and
Sabina. Distance is put between herself and her origin in
order to create a place of her own among women. Anxiety
disappears as soon as she asserts herself as subject, sure of
her own creative power :

It was through you I made my imprint
on the world. I praised my own flame in
you. This is the book you wrote. And you
are the woman I am (100).

However, similarly to what Marcelle Marini observes to be
at the centre of Marguerite Duras' work, Anaïs Nin's text
also conveys the impression

comme si la transgression opérée par un sujet féminin
en son propre nom ne parvenait pas à pratiquer une
brèche dans l'ordre familial, social, symbolique
pour le transformer. Comme s'il n'y avait pas de
dialectisation possible entre les deux pôles du

système présent, son endroit et son envers,
pour la mise en place d'un nouveau système
qu'elle aurait contribué à établir en faisant
éclater les contradictions de l'ancien (101).

House of Incest , in fact, exists as the articulation of this impossible enterprise to make the woman subject of her own history. Sabina, associated with the image of the internal labyrinth and the serpent, represents the source of autonomous female power and as such the opposite pole of the present symbolic order. But this power remains unconscious of itself, incapable of entering into any relationship with the symbolic but that of its total refusal :

She was spreading herself like the night over the universe and found no god to lie with. The other half belonged to the sun, and she was at war with the sun and the light. She would tolerate no bars of light on open books, no orchestration of ideas knitted by a single theme; she would not be covered by the sun, and half the universe belonged to him; she was turning her serpent back to that alone which might overshadow her own stature giving her the joy of fecundation (102).

Yet recognizing through identification with Sabina the body as the source of life and symbolization consolidates the writer's intention 'to destroy reality' (103). For reality means to be out of one's pro-creative waters, reduced to a rock-hard surface life, out of touch with one's own depth. At the same time, the inability to make use of one's diffuse energies produces extreme suffering and anxiety.

However, it is the extent of this pain that opens up the space of the text. It effects a decentering of the conscious personality and thus produces a fissure in reality. Through this fissure, images and and sounds emerge and a series of doubles reflecting the other of the conscious I. Accepting the creative power of the imagination to invent another reality appears therefore as the first step towards writing. Writing itself becomes the setting out of that other scene by engaging in a play with reality and the symbols that constitute it.

So the writer insists :

Your lies are not lies, Sabina. They are arrows flung out of your orbit by the strength of your fantasy. To nourish illusion . . . step out of your role and rest yourself on the core of your true desires. Leave for a moment your violent deviations (104).

But establishing the I as subject of desire only leads to recognition of its own powerlessness. The hope to create, within the space of daily existence, a new mode of being is couched within imagery that conveys impressions of immobility, sleep and the failure of vision to relate fantasies to life :

The house had the shape of an egg, and it was carpeted with cotton and windowless; one slept in the down and heard through the shell the street organ and the apple vendor who could not find the door bell . . . Images made the blood run back and forth, and the watchfulness of the mind watching against dangerous ecstasies was now useless. Reality was drowned and fantasies choked each hour of the day (105).

The I remains suspended between past and future, unable to anchor discourse in the present that would construct a self-image which translates the unity between impulse and image, energized matter and form. Yet the memory of this state of being, where

light had a sound and sunlight
was an orchestra (106)

lends energy to the writer's decomposition of conventional discourse. It breaks its coherence into disordered fragments, attending more to the rhythm and sound than to conventional meanings of the words and foregrounding the word itself through insistent repetitions.

This approximation to poetic discourse constitutes a transgression of the established separation between literary forms of discourse. A similar effort is discernible in Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel, where interspersed

poems have the effect of breaking up the linear progress of narrative organization, allowing heterogeneity to emerge that writes the lived in different form. But the poems are only used to accommodate the same and are thus integrated again into the over-all structure. Each represents a closed unity, mirroring the image of wholeness and totality that informs the father's text.

Anaïs Nin's attack on the ordered form of discourse has the opposite effect. The void which it recovers, in view of discovering a signifier that would constitute a new relation between inside and outside, remains empty. Vision is obscured, as the writer perceives :

The moment I step into the cavern of
my lies I drop into darkness (107).

The I, writing itself, reveals the self as a storehouse of language that speaks itself in an unceasing play of reflections and echoes without limits. Compared to the advancing movement towards a clearly defined object, which Lou Andreas-Salomé describes in her introduction and repeats on the level of narrative organization, Anaïs Nin's text produces no progression. The sliding signifiers, enacting and expressing the collapse of limits, establish a space that is dense and closed. It conveys the impression which Marguerite Duras has found characteristic of her own texts :

Ça n'avance pas. Ça va nulle part, ça bouge. (108).

This imaginary closure, where the plenitude of life corresponds to an emptiness of meaning due to its utterly broken connection with the outside world, generates two kinds of fear. There is the fear of madness:

My house is empty, sun-glazed, reflectively alive,
its stillness gathering implications, secret images
which some day will madden me when I stand before
blank walls, hearing far too much and seeing more
than is humanly bearable (109).

Yet this terror is cancelled out by the fear of venturing into the utterly unknown. It prevents the writer from enduring the void and results in a premature escape from the space that, alone, could yield the name which would anchor the female subject in reality :

I know that if I stayed in this room a few days an entirely new life could begin - like the soldering of human flesh after an operation. It is the terror of this new life, more than the terror of dying, which arouses me. I jump out and run out of this room growing around me like a poisoned web (110).

Betraying the conditioning of self-perception through the interiorized male look at the self, there is also the fear that the writer's transgression may be confused with her private existence as woman, or that she would do so herself. For she says :

I might have awakened next morning
mad or a whore (111).

With reference to Sabina, Anaïs Nin consistently emphasizes the relationship between sexuality and creativity. Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel shows that, with Margherita and Jane, ambitious energies are channelled into personalized sexual contact. Attending to the body as the source of creativity, Anaïs Nin has to deal with the same cultural definitions of woman and discovers the woman's enclosure within her body. No less than Lou Andreas-Salomé does she represent the woman as a prisoner of collective discourse that makes her history the myth of a dead being, unable to find the word that would root her desire in reality. Yet in contrast to Lou Andreas-Salomé, she also elaborates a space from where a new signifying being might emerge. In doing so, writing becomes for her a giving shape to the internal labyrinth that contains the veiled history of the woman's desire. Her discourse is organized around the metaphor of pro-creative maternal waters, as an

elementary signifier of desire through which she probes the relation to her maternal origin. Particularly apt for transcribing the sliding of meaning, it translates her refusal to remain fixed in genderized definitions. She thus realizes the assertion made at the very beginning that the book is 'written without witness'.

At the same time, however, the duplicity inherent in 'without' also gains shape. Situating herself as writer at the 'other scene' takes her out of the prescribed structures of traditional discourse. But it is also cultural discourse that inhabits the subject, and the other scene is built up with elements that also constitute collective reality. The following image, for instance, echoes the biblical creation myth with its expulsion from paradise and the inauguration of patriarchal history. At the same time, the radically different form it takes locates it outside a traditionally meaningful context :

I saw a city where each house stood on a rock
between black seas full of purple serpents
hissing alarm, licking the rocks and peering
over the walls of their garden with bulbous
eyes (112).

The movement towards a field of non-meaning relates to its original context by focusing on the transgressive character of the serpents and alluding to the garden. However, Anais Nin's venture into the other side of conscious discourse connects with the latter as a kind of metaphorical reflection that does not interrogate established meanings. The terror inscribed into each image that articulates boundary dissolving pleasures and the emergence of desire suggests stagnation. Just as in the above image the serpents are not allowed to enter the garden, so energies are not allowed to flow and gather at the core of the rejected ordering system, where their potential of violence might instigate transformations.

Desire is lodged within an over-abundance of traces. Translating them and containing them within language sets a limit to the endless procession of forms and images and thus annihilates their alienating effects. Anaïs Nin emphasizes this therapeutic effect of writing in a talk with Antonin Artaud, explaining

In my self-created world of dreams, nightmares, hallucinations, I am at ease . . . I am glad to be in it. The most terrifying images which haunt me, once I have written them, no longer frighten me (113).

Lou Andreas-Salomé borrows the father's voice and reconstructs a collective discourse in which women only figure as objects of discourse and are refused the status of subject of desire. In doing so, she explores the representations that imprison her as woman, seeking out the sites where her history is fixed to become a fate which the woman cannot escape. Interrogating and passing through that beginning of history, she transcends that situation herself. It offers her the chance which Christa Wolf has described with reference to the poet Caroline von Günderode. Objecting to the male denial of her creative powers, Caroline insists :

Warum wollen Sie mir nicht zugestehen, daß ich
in der Poesie wie in einem Spiegel mich zu
sammeln, mich selber zu sehen, durch mich
hindurch und über mich hinaus zu gehn versuche (114)?

Given Lou Andreas-Salomé's acceptance of the cultural order, her representation of woman as seen through male eyes leads her to re-construct the woman as muted possibility, fixes her as incomplete and as lack, ultimately as dead and forever unable to enter her own history. Anaïs Nin's text, in contrast, conveys the plenitude of life inscribed in the body and the presence of desire in search for itself. However, lack and plenitude, absence and presence of speech reveal ultimately two aspects of the same undifferentiatedness. Anaïs Nin's discourse discovers an imaginary body that cannot

recognize its desire, just as the women in Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel are unable to name their desire. Both texts interrogate this failure by making the problem of incestuous transgression a central focus.

3. Incestuous Transgression and Writing

The most striking feature that Im Kampf um Gott and House of Incest have in common is that they both establish a relationship between the woman's self-affirmation as author, incest fantasies and the production of discourse. This is not immediately obvious in Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel. Her thematic phrase 'im Kampf um Gott' relates to a tradition of realist story telling that recalls the dynamics of the quest. The classic theme is evoked in terms of a struggle that aims at appropriating the most highly valued cultural images, values and qualities contained in the human construct of God. The implication is that the quest has a twofold orientation. It involves a desire for knowing the 'Articles of Faith' that emanate from the 'Supreme Being' in terms of dogmas and laws that constitute a given social system (115). At the same time, it associates the desire for participating in the qualities of omniscience and omnipotence, the constituents of creative power invested in the concept of God. Appropriating these powers would confer on the successful quester the power to create and to legislate. Lacking identification of the quester implies that this conquest of identity is posited as a universally human possibility.

Yet the subsequent narrative contradicts such reading expectations. It progressively reveals itself as the son's quest for identity. His goal is to assume his paternity

and recognize himself in the role of father. The project of the novel to fix knowledge consists in providing a definite account of the acquisition of paternal power. Making the father the subject of discourse, it deals with a particular form of patriarchal power in society, namely that of constructing meaning. It shows that the male production of meaning is achieved by defining women. This definition of women, moreover, rests on a recognition of sexual difference which involves the father's emergence and simultaneous denial of incestuous desires.

Inversely, the woman writer imagines the writing of the novel in terms of a reading of the father's text after the latter's death. This may be seen as an attempt on her part to reunite with the father and thus master the separation. This evocation of incestuous transgression is reinforced by Lou Andreas-Salomé's choice of the pseudonym 'Henri Lou'. Juxtaposing an allusion to her spiritual father Hendrik Gillot with her Cristian name is suggestive of a symbolic father-daughter incest.

However, contrary to the father's text, which proceeds to construct female identity in relation to female bodies, the novel does not come into existence as a process of self-definition in relation to the father's body but to his discourse. So the woman's writing establishes a relation to what he represents and not to what he is. Her text is concerned with discovering the origin and nature of the father's system of representation. It does not focus on asserting a female sexual economy that constitutes itself as different in relation to the father. The very point the novel makes is that a single economy reigns supreme. Hence, the same resistance to castration that organizes the male quest for identity and meaning constructs the daughter as object of

male desire. This prevents her from acceding to the status of subject of desire and creating her own meaning.

Anaïs Nin, in contrast, notes that her writing originates in a variety of emotions bound up with the father as living self. She says :

Whenever I feel sadness about my father, I write.
When I yearn for him, I write. When I feel regrets, I write (116).

Defending herself against hostile criticism turning on implied incestuous desire in Winter of Artifice, Anaïs Nin explains this fantasy as a symbolic desire for union. She insists that the symbol evokes

an experience which is not physical, not acted out, not literal. It expresses a feeling, a more complex psychological reality (117).

Neither in Lou Andreas-Salomé's nor in Anaïs Nin's text is incest acted out physically. The taboo is respected. Yet the very fact that it is, also causes the suffering of the daughter and sister, leading in Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel to suicide and in Anaïs Nin's text to psychological stagnation.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's thematic phrase 'im Kampf um Gott' refers to an aspiring individual that constitutes its identity in relation to an invisible other. Although Anaïs Nin's text is no less concerned with the search for identity, her title House of Incest evokes the family as the smallest social unit. Any notion of identity disappears within the social construct, and so does the notion of transcendence. She humanizes God in so far as she focuses directly on the relational quality of the fundamental law that is constitutive of human society. Foregrounding its violation, the title signals the writer's intention to reveal what is normally obscured from cultural discourse.

Contrary to Lou Andreas-Salomé's assumption of the transparency of language with its apparent access to truth, Anaïs Nin's association of 'house' and 'incest' is indicative of a very self-conscious use of language. Both, the house and the notion of incest, carry individual as well as collective connotations. The house is the visible collective construct that, like language, provides a home for the socialized individual. Incestuous desires run counter to the socializing process. They work in two ways. On the one hand, they prevent socialization by not allowing differentiation from the family circle. Thus they bar the coming of selfhood by confining the individual self within unconscious patterns. On the other hand, they threaten the socio-symbolic system by undoing the repression on which it is erected in view of re-covering repressed parts of the self.

A metonymic chain relates the body, the house, the book and the subject as writing I. The house points to the need of producing a gestalt, a coherent form, organized and structured - as opposed, for example, to the labyrinth - that would intergrate the force of prohibited libidinal drives. Contrary to Lou Andreas-Salomé's exposure of the social development that constructs femininity as lack and absence, Anaïs Nin is concerned with articulating the woman's suffering from her enclosure in that historically conditioned image. The writing of the book consists in formulating the unconscious patterns that determine the life of the socialized subject. Their elucidation aims at establishing a new and different relation between self and other, desiring body and symbolic form.

The symbol 'house of incest' condenses two superimposed concepts which simultaneously keep in view the socially permitted and the prohibited. Anaïs Nin's foregrounding of the prohibited relation conveys disrespect of the social ordering system. Yet it also releases fear. Undoing the

repression required by the system threatens to destroy the element of protection it provides and thus to expose the self to a void. These fears of being reduced to a disintegrated, amorphous state anterior to humanization are made explicit, as the writer states :

But none of us could bear to pass through the tunnel which led from the house into the world on the other side of the walls, where there were leaves on the trees, where water ran beside the paths, where there was daylight and joy. We could not believe that the tunnel would open on daylight: we feared to be trapped into darkness again; we feared to return whence we had come, from darkness and night (118).

Lou Andreas-Salomé allays such fears by situating the theme of the quest within a culturally accepted context. She, moreover characterizes the social construct of the house as a centre of protective refuge within a menacing area of undifferentiated space.

It appears that both writers experience a thorough need to come to terms with the theme of incest at the very beginning of their writing career before they are able to turn to a different subject matter. So Anaïs Nin's simultaneously written Winter of Artifice deals with the father-daughter relationship, which is only marginal in House of Incest. Lou Andreas-Salomé makes it the central focus in her second novel Ruth, written ten years after Im Kampf um Gott, where the father-daughter relation only figures as a secondary theme.

What is more, with both writers the theme of incest recurs throughout their fictional production, usually couched in less obvious terms than at the beginning. With Anaïs Nin, it is the figure of the psychoanalyst, who comes to displace the father and to whom the woman's question 'Who am I?' is addressed. In Lou Andreas-Salomé's fiction, after a number of father substitutes, it is ultimately the culturally valued male
text

to which the daughters turn to make sense of a reality they do not understand. Yet later variations reveal essentially the same structure as displayed in the first text.

So, about fifteen years after writing Im Kampf um Gott, Lou Andreas-Salomé again represents a daughter whose inability to deal with her emerging sexuality at the age of puberty drives her to commit suicide in a lake. The daughter's fate is here confirmed by the Rilke poem that introduces the text, while the story Die Schwester directly answers the question already implicit in her first novel. That is, it expresses the impossibility of an answer that could explain the daughter's death as a sexualized body and desiring self. The rational, sexually still unawakened sister sees her sister's death as prefiguring her own :

Mascha hatte sie zurückgelassen. Sie hatte sich allein vorausgeschlichen, - leise, heimlich, - in das Leben hinein, durch das rätselhaft, unbegreifliche, und hinein in den Tod, in den geheimnisvollen Tod. Sie hatte alles schon für Dascha vorausgenommen. Voraus-erfahren. Vorausgelebt. Dascha erfuhr davon nur, daß es lauter Rätsel und Geheimnis war und Tod .
Rätsel, Geheimnis, Tod (119).

Explaining the emergence of sexual desire to a boy in Drei Briefe an einen Knaben, Lou Andreas-Salomé emphasizes the need to achieve a union between the demands of the body and the rational mind, insisting that

Vom Leiblichen getrennt bleiben im Gefühl unserer selbst, unserem Ichgefühl, hieße nicht bloß Trennung unserer vom Dasein draußen, es hieße im eigenen Selbst halbiert, gespalten, uneins werden, verzichten auf sich (120).

The same circular movement which also informs Im Kampf um Gott associates in Die Schwester the sister's suicide with the Rilke poem, as Dascha reflects on the mysterious fulfillment of its prophecy. From a girl's position, it articulates the death of the feminine :

Mein Schicksal singst du viel zu früh,
so daß ich, wie ich blüh' und blüh' -
es nie mehr leben kann.

Er sang. Und dann verklang sein Schritt -
er mußte weiter ziehn;
und sang mein Leid, das ich nie litt,
und sang mein Glück, das mir entglitt,
und nahm mich mit, und nahm mich mit -
und keiner weiß, wohin ... (121).

Similar to the movement from darkness to light as a metaphor of gaining knowledge in Im Kampf um Gott, the daughters are initially presented as they bend over the poem. It is framed by a distinctive circle of light :

Das Buch lag aufgeschlagen mitten im hellen
Lichtfleck unter der Lampe, dessen Umkreis
scharf abgegrenzt wurde durch den Lampenschirm
. . . Beinahe aneinandergeschmiegt beugten beide
Mädchengesichter sich tief über das Buch, gleich
ihm strahlendhell erleuchtet. Die Gestalten blie-
ben im Schatten (122).

The male text promises illuminating insight into the reality of their lives. But there is a hole, darkness, silence at the core of the text which the intensity of light is unable to reveal, just as the girls' bodies remain hidden in darkness, excluded from the circle of light. The sisters' dialogue, in which they in vain try to get to the core of the girl's sudden self-alienation, suggests that the daughter's death in the story is to be understood in symbolic terms. The rational Dascha wonders :

"Aber eigentlich kann das doch nicht mit rechten Dingen zugehen. Denn eigentlich nimmt er sie ja gar nicht mit. Nein, das tut er ja gar nicht. Sie bleibt ja noch da, - - Wie ist denn das Mascha?" (123).

The sister who, within the narrative, comes to represent self-centered female desire declares promptly :

" - Das ist schon so." (124).

Yet Dascha still hesitates to accept as reality the daughter's absence from herself, inquiring :

" - Also wir glauben an das gruselige
Mitnehmen, Mascha ?" (125)

Finally, it is the reality of life that, without her having any say in it, confirms the statement of the text as law, which she has no choice but to accept. Yet the law itself that orders the woman to live with part of herself absent, not seen, remains unexplained and assimilates her self-centered desire to that of the male.

The silence at the centre of male discourse is equally the crucial fact that confronts Lillian, Anaïs Nin's female protagonist of her novel Seduction of the Minotaur. Lou Andreas-Salomé's texts suggest that female inability to deal with overwhelming irrational impulses is a matter of developmental immaturity. *Lillian's description of herself* makes clear that the adult woman faces the same problem. Concerning her ignorance about herself she says :

I've never been able to describe or understand what I felt. I've lived so long in an impulsive world, desiring without knowing why, destroying without knowing why, losing without knowing why, being defeated, hurting myself and others . . . All this was painful, like a jungle in which I was constantly lost. A chaos. (126).

Dr Hernandez' knowledge about the human habit to enact compulsive repetitions of unconscious patterns helps her to gain insight into her own unconscious wish to escape the truth and delude herself as to the nature of her real desires. His sudden death prevents him from naming the buried part of the self that has failed to take root in reality. Corresponding to Dascha's acceptance of her own death as outlined in the Rilke poem, Lillian relives in her body Dr Hernandez' death. Yet contrary to Dascha's complete identification with the male text, Lillian refuses to accept reality as immutable fact. She seeks to ward off the notion

of death and silence that would also be hers, if she did not pursue the interrupted dialogue with Dr Hernandez :

Lillian did not believe in the death of Dr Hernandez, and yet she heard the shot, she felt in her body the sound of the car hitting the pole, she knew the moment of death, as if all of them had happened to her.

He had something to say, which he had not said, and he had gone, taking with him his secrets (127).

Like Lillian, Lou Andreas-Salomé's fictional daughters all expect the father to reveal them to themselves. Yet Die Schwester presents a father who is conspicuous by his absence. Anaïs Nin describes Dr Hernandez' evasive response to Lillian's inquisitiveness as that of a deaf-mute. A similar attitude characterizes the father in Lou Andreas-Salomé's first novel, who feigns not to hear the daughter's questions about her origin. He cuts them short by his silence and continually postpones any revelation of the truth. The daughter's identification with Rilke's poetic I, and Lillian's insight that man and woman are confronted with similar problems, establish the buried part of the self as 'the feminine', and not as a specific property pertaining to women alone.

It is this eternal silence of male discourse about female desire that House of Incest metaphorizes by establishing a tension between the house and the hidden room that conceals the lost brother. The text shows that the force of the incest taboo operates so as to keep brother and sister locked up in the incestuous relation without any possibility of escape.

Like the father in Winter of Artifice, here, the brother has become 'invisible, untouchable, unattainable' (128). Yet not being able to relate to the other means simultaneously to be out of touch with a part of one's own self. Anaïs Nin describes it as a sterile prison of self-love, defining it as

this house of incest where we only love ourselves in the other (129).

In Lacanian terms Jeanne's continual association with the mirror suggests her alienation in an image of herself given to her by others. It consists in her

playing the guitar, of knitting, and walking,
and bearing children (130).

Underneath this visible feminine role image, there is a 'continuity of ecstasy' (130), betraying the diffuse yearnings of a self that have not been integrated into the socialized I.

The evocation of socialized interior space that inhabits the subject as much as it is walled in within its structures is characterized by immobility :

Everything had been made to stand still
in the house of incest, because they all
had such a fear of movement and warmth,
such a fear that all love and all life
should flow out of reach and be lost (131).

The annihilation of difference between self and other makes the presence of incestuous wishes appear as a variant of the narcissistic attachment to objects. Both psychological states concern a collapse of limits between subject and object, self and other, inside and outside. Incestuous desire, however, introduces the added dimension of erasing culturally rigid demarcations of gender.

The relationship between the writer and Sabina, which precedes the incest fantasy, situates the writing subject in relation to its matrilineal origin. Within the dialectics of similarity and difference in relation to another woman, the I is constituted as subject of desire. The incest fantasy revolves around the differentiation of desire in so far as it involves the recognition of sexual difference. Interpreting Freud, Juliet Mitchell has pointed out that

At first both sexes are identical in the sense that their drives have both active and passive aims . . . With the end of the pre-Oedipal attachment to the mother for the girl and the

end of the Oedipus complex for the boy, the psychological recognition of sexual differences consists of, on the one hand, being 'castrated' and on the other of fearing castration. In order to enter into her Oedipal desire for her father the girl has to salvage what is left of her sexual desire and devote it, most actively, to this passive aim of being loved (132).

The female subject being constituted in difference to the male as sole cultural heir, the social order requires the female to repress the characteristics of the other sex. Enacting a search for the lost brother, the incest fantasy expresses the wish to re-appropriate repressed parts of the self that are generally considered masculine. The woman's failure to locate her masculine double connotes the impossibility of being seen, of having her desire for love, intimacy, relatedness recognized.

For the first time, Anaïs Nin here uses the image of the sealed room that introduces her diaries. It serves to convey the woman's literal and figurative exclusion from organized social space. Intent on penetrating its surface structure in order to discover a position that would allow mutual recognition, the woman's vision is blocked :

she looked up at the facade of the house of incest,
the rusty ore facade of the house of incest, and
there was one window with the blind shut tight and
rusty, one window without light like a dead eye,
choked by the hairy long arm of old ivy (133).

Desire itself is even articulate under the cover of darkness, on the margins of consciousness and rational discourse like dreams, fantasies and madness. However, undifferentiated in terms of sex, it cannot be spoken in its specificity of male or female desire. There is only one desire and words addressed to the other without seeing him/her as like and not-like only provides the possibility

that one might talk in the dark from
room to room without seeing the other's
face (134).

The coincidence between the one as speaking subject and the oneness of desire preceding sexual differentiation present the socialized I as imprisoned in the incestuous relation. Desire being subsumed under the category of the 'one' relates to discourse in so far as multiple, heterogeneous desires remain un verbalized, and hence excluded from any conscious and controllable relation to reality. Suppressed, they are deformed, not partaking in the flow of life :

The words we did not shout, the tears unshed,
the curse we swallowed, the phrase we shortened,
the love we killed, turned into magnetic iron
ore . . . the mineral glow of dead meteors and
exhausted suns in the forest of dead trees and
dead desires (135).

The inner stagnation of the subject gains cosmic dimensions, since its vision from this static enclosure reproduces stasis:

The windows gave out on a static sea, where
immobile fishes had been glued to painted
backgrounds (136).

In Lou Andreas-Salomé's text, it is the frozen expanse of white snow, which relates the homogeneous external surface to the notion of internal homogeneity. Kuno, the writer's name, evokes the number 'one' as well as the one distinctive mark of the male sex. The one who possesses the power of language, he is also the subject and hero of action.

The movement of an anonymous desire directed towards uniting with the father's text produces similar transformations as in Anaïs Nin's text. The absence of 'Weg und Steg' that characterizes the impenetrable cover of snow is displaced by a likeness to 'Silber und Cristall'. Anaïs Nin's text evokes an inorganic realm as representative of petrified desire and muted words. Lou Andreas-Salomé's text reveals that the creation of this lifeless reality is the effect of an imaginary substitution. It betrays a wish to conceal the very nature of reality. Language is used to mystify. It

functions so as to divert attention from the absence of organic life and arrested growth and from a whole dimension of life that does not expose itself to the eye. This illusory reconstruction of reality prefigures the way in which the male logic of representation operates. It suggests that, far from transcribing a real presence it seeks consolation for an absence.

Anaïs Nin's text insists on the writer's refusal to be consoled with a mutilated reality, amputated desires, crippled bodies and impossible actions. Social reality is apprehended as :

a forest of decapitated trees, women carved out of bamboo, flesh slatted like that of slaves in joyless slavery . . . fragments of bodies, bodies armless, handless . . . dead figures inside live trees. A forest animated now with intellectual faces, intellectual contortions. Trees become men and women, two-faced, nostalgic for the shivering of leaves (136).

The effects of this imposition of distorted and reductive forms on the living substance produce not only painful suffering but also hostile impulses. Both reactions are registered by a watchful consciousness :

the forest trembling with bitter rebellions so bitter I heard its wailing within its deep forest consciousness. Wailing the loss of its leaves and the failure of transmutation (137).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's and Anaïs Nin's text both suggest that it is the male dependence on an unchanging image of woman that destroys the possibility of communion and communication. In Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel, the figure of the male subject is split into two brothers. Rudolf, the feminized man, is endowed with a capacity for love, relatedness, caring and compassion. He influences Kuno's rigid framing of women in conventional images by making him see Margherita's real potential. Yet it is not love but a detached bother-sister relationship that Kuno offers Margherita in an attempt to

make good his exploitation of her sexual innocence and cognitive ignorance. It is his failure to acknowledge her body as desiring self that causes Margherita to refuse him and commit suicide .

Their initial encounter was a sexual revelation, where her body and desire awakened his. It is followed by a separation effected by him that, henceforth, constitutes him as different from her. Yet the structure of the event that organizes desire for union and subsequent loss of unity repeats another event, the separation from the mother. But the mother is reduced to an image of goodness, unconditional love and unconscious reproduction. In identification with the father's rational capacity and desire for power, the son posits himself as different from her. It is according to this pattern that, at the age of puberty the original situation is repeated :

in welcher zum ersten Mal aus dem Chaos schwankender, verworrener Regungen und Antriebe und Stimmungen heraus seine eigenste Persönlichkeit geboren und ihr dauernd der Stempel aufgedrückt wird (138).

Any erotic encounter follows the same pattern. From any experience of union, he emerges as a triumphant, self-sufficient I, blind to the woman's desire. What Kuno wants from Margherita is for her to function as object that gratifies his unacknowledged incestuous desire for the mother. Corresponding to Margherita's sense of being denied a body, Jeanne feels

I do not exist. I am not a body (139).

Inversely, she also does not recognize and acknowledge the other as body that is different from her own. So their

love of each other is like one long shadow kissing, without hope of reality (140).

Margherita's suicide resembles Jeanne's complicity in maintaining her enclosure in the brother's image of her. When Jeanne is finally rewarded for her search for the lost brother, she finds him 'asleep among the paintings' (141). She settles for being loved, not for herself but for an idealized static image of herself. Thus she remains cut off from her desiring self

moving in endless circles round the corners
of the dreams, never reaching the end of her
voyage (142).

Neither Margherita nor Jeanne are prepared to step out of their self-alienating reflection of male desire and proceed to work at formulating a self-image that is concordant with their own desire. In Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel, Margherita is offered this possibility. Kuno's brother Rudolf sees her as the one she potentially is. Yet this recognition of her true potential has no effect. Her desire remains attached to the one who denies it and hence results in self-denial.

Anais Nin locates the separation between brother and sister in an indefinite past. Extending it to that between father and daughter, mother and son, she simultaneously emphasizes the persistence of their 'unquenchable desire' (143) for each other. Her biblical allusion to the painting representing Lot and his daughter suggests that culture transmits, even reinforces incestuous wishes, while prohibiting their gratification. Similarly, Juliet Mitchell has pointed out that the mastery of the problem is particularly difficult, because

Nothing is done to assist the prohibition,
on the contrary, all is done to provoke
desire (144).

For

the mother and sister or father and brother
you sensually cannot have also are the only
people you are supposed to love (145).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's and Anaïs Nin's text both enact, through writing, the event of fusion and separation that constitutes the scene of the birth of the genderized subject and the origin of sexualized desire. So writing expresses the desire for origins. More directly than House of Incest, Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel Im Kampf um Gott reveals that the fragmented feminine is

cause, objet, entretient (du désir) du
sujet masculin (146).

The moment when the woman, as the father's perpetual daughter, is not there any more and the presence of her body is replaced by a void, she ceases to fulfill her function as support of male discourse, as matrix where his system of representation originates. Deprived of the matter of her body, he lacks the subject matter that would incite his desire to know and make him assume his power as speaking and writing subject. Writing, he makes the lost object return. In the knowledge of absence, he constitutes the other as object and himself as the one who acknowledges difference. She is inseparable from his discourse

notably in so far as he defines her, and creates
his own identity through her or, correlatively,
through this determination of her being (147).

Language, then, in its capacity to divide and differentiate serves to make cohere and unify the various impulses and aspirations that the repetition of the original fusion and separation from the mother releases. Kuno formulates this project quite clearly and in contrast to the overtly misleading title of the novel. The quest for transcendence and development of a philosophical system is seen as giving an account of the ever-increasing differentiation of one's own individual self. As such it is

weniger die Geschichte davon, wie es ward, als
vielmehr, wie ich [=Kuno] es als mein erkannte (148).

Given the underlying incestuous wishes for the mother or the father's for the daughter, his discourse comes to a close the moment the daughter's suicide breaks the incestuous circle. His system of representation does not develop beyond the incestuous relation that proves fatal to the woman.

The novel reveals that the force of the incest taboo violates the daughter's integrity while simultaneously sustaining the father's respect for himself. In relation to the daughter, the father is introduced in his capacity as teacher who conceals his paternity from his illegitimate daughter. Engaging in his self-imposed task to transfer her selfless absorption in her natural environment into self-conscious absorption of his cultural discourse, he changes her name from Marie to Märchen. Märchen, meaning fairy tale, her subjection under the father's law constitutes her at the same time as his fantasy. Requesting her to yield her own fantasies to him, he appropriates the feminine, replacing it by creating her as a narcissistic mirror of himself.

Upholding his rational discourse against the diffuse and undifferentiated subjectivity expressed in her fantasies protects him simultaneously from her desire for his body as from his own body. For

it is only the law - and not the body - which constitutes him as patriarch (149).

Corresponding to the impenetrable 'facade of the house of incest' (150) in Anaïs Nin's text, Lou Andreas-Salomé makes it explicit that the father's discourse prevents the daughter from knowing her sexual origin. Kept in ignorance of the sexual body of the father as well as that of the mother

pour elle, pas de véritable structure triangulaire où se situer par rapport à son sexe et par rapport à l'autre sexe (151).

At the same time, the father expresses his need to safeguard his identity, which is grounded in his paternal authority :

Ich fürchtete von ihren Gefühlen dasjenige zu verlieren, welches mir, wie es schien, allein noch unumschränkt blieb : ihre Verehrung, den Glauben an meine Vollkommenheit und Unfehlbarkeit, der noch unumstößlich in ihr wurzelte, meine Autorität, ihren verehrenden Aufblick zu mir (152).

The daughter's desire for the father makes her subjection to his law possible . Yet in order for her to take her place as a genderized subject within the cultural order, she is required to suppress her desire for the father's body. However, there is nothing and no one to mediate this transitional process. The task of making the daughter realize the impossibility of her desire is left to a devalued and unsupportive mother figure who expresses her unmediated horror at the daughter's prohibited impulses.

With regard to the father, Lou Andreas-Salomé carefully conceals the transgression of the incest taboo underlying the daughter's introduction into his law. It is only implied through jealousy of his brother to whom he fears to lose her. Acknowledging his desire for her love directly, he would risk unmasking the pretence of indifference of his imposed law. Disclosing his identity as biological father and sexual being, he would reveal himself as human and imperfect, material and desirous, which would dispossess him of his power as law-giver. For the law is supposed to be infallible and free from desire, pure spirit. 'Das verschwiegene Geheimnis' (153), which Märchen takes with her into her death is also his. Her desire for his body corresponds to his for her body, which he never acknowledges directly. Yet as the daughter is the object of his discourse, his unacknowledged desire comes to inhabit his speech, where it covers a mutual seduction. Thus masked, it imposes a single sexual economy as law and confirms his

paternal authority.

The daughter is offered no chance of mastering the separation. Mirror of the father's needs and desires, her enclosure in the feminine role image provides her with the sense of an imaginary plenitude of life. Imprisoned in this image, she cannot tolerate its absence. For the image of mother and wife being whole and coordinated is more powerful than a diffuse subjectivity that has not been allowed to take root in reality. Joining her self-reflection in the lake betrays a narcissistic fantasy of totality, which denies the break indispensable to the advent of the symbolic as an articulate system of differences.

The theme of female self-destruction through selfless love of the father recurs throughout Lou Andreas-Salomé's fiction, revealing that any man may take on the role of father. A woman's love is never associated with 'Macht' but only with 'Gewalt'. Thus the force of irrational impulses is emphasized negatively, never considered as a source of power. The novel suggests that the self-violating effect of desire is due to the woman's entrapment in male fantasies. So Kuno observes :

Ich träumte eben von der Gewalt ihrer Liebe,
die ich systematisch als meines Lebens ver-
zeihenden Segen in ihr großgezogen hatte, als
diese Gewalt sie wie ein zwingender Fluch dem
Tode entgegentreib (154).

Similarly, the artist Adine in Eine Ausschweifung resists her pull towards selfless feminine love, fearing it is

eine Lebenswirklichkeit, eine Lebensgewalt,
die [sie] selber bedrohte (155).

Adine, like the promising intellectual Ruth in Lou Andreas-Salomé's second novel, has been subjected to the cultural order and has learnt to idealize the father surrogate for what he represents. Regarding man-as-father as the epitome

of power and perfection, Ruth rejects the materiality of his body. Separating from the father substitute is mastered by re-directing libidinal energies into intellectual pursuits. These are, however, centred on appropriating the father's order which does not recognize the daughter's desire but defines her as lack.

Anais Nin writes this non-being of woman. She exposes the contradictions resulting from living simultaneously enclosed in an image that reflects her as the embodied feminine and being aware of autonomous desires for love and power. Sigrid Weigel has pointed to the transitional nature of this kind of writing, noting :

Der Weg, diese Erfahrung beschreibend und begreifend auszurücken, ist eine Suche nach dem Schreiben und Leben der Frau als eigentliches Geschlecht - und nicht schon die Möglichkeit/ das Resultat (156, author's italics).

In House of Incest, the doubling of the self through identification with another woman acts as a catalyst. Following Jeanne into the experience of incestuous desires, the writing subject relives her own incestuous fantasies. In doing so, she recognizes her fixation within the confines of a script that makes writing appear

like a prisoner's walking back and forth over the space allotted to him (157).

The text displaces the labyrinthian house of incest by the dreamlike labyrinth of the book. This substitution establishes a correspondence between the woman's problematic search for identity as a sexual being within a given social structure, and her wish to adapt existing social means of self-expression to her purpose. Failing to venture beyond her enclosure in a narcissistic self-image, Jeanne pays for the safety of being

loved with the suppression of her sexuality. The energy of desire flows into private fantasies. The writer perseveres in the search for the lost brother. Self-reflection establishes a preliminary relationship to the masculine double that is registered in terms of seeing and being seen. Yet this mutual recognition connotes problems of perception and distorted vision, as the writer notes :

I drop into darkness, and see a mask which stares at me like the glance of a cross-eyed man (158).

Difficulties in perception are immediately associated with paralyzed creative faculties. The brother is initially characterized by his capacity to objectify his desires in an image. He is now displaced by a paralytic and the

modern Christ who is crucified for his own nerves (159).

The paralytic is engulfed in his passion for living and dreams of an impossible book that would capture the chaotic plenitude of life. In this respect, he resembles Anaïs Nin, the diarist. Creation would mean to master and control the force that strives for expression, accept the division by the symbolic, cut, separate, distinguish the flow of energies within immediate sensations and objectify them in visible form.

Invariably, the formative principle related to visibility is associated with masculine figures. So the allusion to Antonin Artaud contained in 'the modern Christ' introduces the brother on a symbolic level. Identifying with him, the writer points out:

The language of nerves which we both use makes us brothers in writing (160).

However, it is again the reflection of the self in another woman who, by combining the above aspects, results in the

vision of a self-image of woman as private personality and artist. The opposition between enclosure in the immanence of being and private fantasizing is resolved in the figure of the woman dancing

with the music and with the rhythm
of earth's circles (161).

Desire is shaped by physical movement, expressed, contained and recognized. Yet vision of this rhythmical movement in accordance with one's music and desire is undercut by old fears. The sudden blurring of identities, which allows the 'I' of the singing dancer also to refer to the writer, conveys anxiety. Fear is bound up with relinquishing the image of all-encompassing femininity. The final image thus suggests a utopian ideal of writing, which as yet remains un verbalized.

The dancer reappears as the daughter in Winter of Artifice, as the artist Renate in Collages, and as the sensitive and perceptive Djuna in other novels, where she comes to figure as the female counterpart of the male analyst. In Lou Adreas-Salomé's novel, the writer-protagonist Kuno prefigures subsequent representatives of patriarchal authority. Within the German context, the name connotes the valorous exploits of legendary knights, braving typically male adventures. Anaïs Nin's choice of the name Djuna, in contrast, carries bisexual connotations. Sound and spelling associate the feminine form of 'one', thus evoking an autonomous female subject. Yet when directly asked about the origin of the name, Anaïs Nin almost discards female associations. She admits :

My admiration for Djuna Barnes must have
had something to do with it (162).

But, at the same time, she produces a highly conscious explanation to emphasize that Djuna is actually a male name which she picked from an anthology of Welsh names. The implied

reference to the Gaelic tradition of myth, poetry, music and singing associates creativity with maleness. The effect is to minimize the identification with another woman artist. Anaïs Nin's repeated references to Djuna Barnes' failure to acknowledge her admiration for her novel Nightwood makes it likely that Anaïs Nin experienced her silence as a denial of recognition of her own creative efforts. Emphasis on the maleness of the name thus betrays a wish to conceal the painfulness of this experience. At the same time, however, the name which anchors the privileged female protagonist within the socio-symbolic order reveals itself to be more than just a selective reproduction of an already established symbol. Ambivalence revolves around the assertion of autonomous female power and creativity, disclosing the symbol as the site of struggle between opposed forces.

Exposing the nature of this struggle and suggesting possible solutions becomes the main focus in Anaïs Nin's fiction. Lou Andreas-Salomé's one-dimensional naming opposes masculine rationality to the dominated plurality of fragmented female images. It enters subsequent texts in her representation of polarized qualities in terms of dichotomized couples. Invariably one half of the couple is killed off so that the other may live.

This structure contrasts with a quite different insight pertaining to her understanding of woman's essential nature. So she writes in her essay Der Mensch als Weib :

Sie kann viel mehr Widersprüche in sich aufnehmen und organisch verarbeiten, wo der Mann dieselben erst theoretisch ausmerzen muß, um mit sich selber zur Klarheit zu kommen (163).

However, nowhere in her fiction does Lou Andreas-Salomé represent a woman who is able to assimilate contradictions and integrate them 'organically' into her personality. Instead, they proceed in the male way, judicially excluding from their life those claims of the self which conflict with their given or chosen identity. Anaïs Nin, departing from a different concept of identity already emphasizes in her book about

D.H. Lawrence :

Life is a process of 'becoming', a combination of states we have to go through. Where people fail is that they wish to erect a state and remain in it. This is a kind of death (164).

In order to set this process in motion, she seeks to create apertures in the female self-image as reflected in the mirror of patriarchal ideology. Searching for openings, she scrutinizes the mirror image and discovers primarily its resistance to change.

IV. TRAVERSING THE MIRROR IMAGE

L'écriture . . . est toujours encore à lire, à étudier, à chercher, à inventer (1).

Captive, moi aussi du regard où un homme m'a prise. Enlevée à moi-même. Immobilisée dans le reflet qu'il attend de moi. Réduite au visage qu'il me façonne pour s'y regarder. Voyageant au gré de ses rêves et mirages. Arrêtée en une fonction - le maternage (2).

1. Female Psychology and Female Form

From their very first novel onwards the fiction of Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anaïs Nin reveals preoccupations with vision and visibility. Corresponding to Anaïs Nin's persistent use of the image of the sealed room Lou Andreas-Salomé continues to articulate the apprehension of something unnameable in terms of death, lack, absence, darkness, invisibility and undifferentiated, non-signified space. It is contrasted to the light of consciousness embodied in the culturally formed I, the seeing and perceiving eye. Yet the female I is divided within and against itself. Lacking an ideal image of wholeness, the woman endures a fragmented consciousness, constantly engaged in maintaining a precarious balance between warring opposites.

In Eine Ausschweifung the painter Adine describes her emotional polarity as follows :

Es ist, wie wenn ich mich festgenagelt fühlte zwischen der Oberflächlichkeit Mutchens und der hysterischen Romantik der kleinen Verwachsenen, dazu bestimmt, zwischen den beiden Polen des Gefühls hin und her zu pendeln wie zwischen Leichtsinn und Wahnsinn (3)

Adine uses part of her energies to suppress her impulse towards a self-destructive feminine ideal of masochistic love. This allows her the freedom of human self-assertion as artist. But consciously willed suppression of libidinal energies also reduces her simultaneously as woman and artist. In fact, the woman as site of autonomous desire remains a blind spot.

In her novelette Stella Anaïs Nin links the form of masochistic feminine love with Stella's representation of a narcissistic image of woman to which she owes her public success as actress. Stella is torn between her dependence on public approval and being loved on the one hand and her desire for freedom on the other hand. In view of resolving her polarized feelings she engages in a process of self-discovery. Yet, like Adine, she only finds out that she can neither see nor say who she really is.

Overtly, both stories seem to display a traditional female preference for the personal over the professional by focusing primarily on the woman's private life. However, in a culture that assigns the sphere of love to women and that of power to men, the question of how love relates to power unavoidably constitutes a crucial problem for the woman artist. Lou Andreas-Salomé's conscious disposition prompts her invariably to define feminine love either in terms of self-sacrificial nurturance or as an enjoyable blotting out of the conscious self. Eine Ausschweifung , however, offers a comment on these

supposedly natural female characteristics, revealing them as the effect of the woman's social conditioning into the feminine role.

The story equally comments on Lou Andreas-Salomé's assertion about woman's natural incapacity for art. Eine Ausschweifung directly questions this assumption by attributing a woman's limited possibility of artistic self-expression to socially induced effects of her psychological make-up.

Numerous details in Adine's story turning on her persistent idealization of male authority and on an ambivalent relationship with her mother, moreover, suggest identity of heroine with author (4). Hence, it is possible to assume as Gilbert/Gubar have found with respect to 19th century literature by women that

the one plot that seems to be concealed . . . is in some sense a story of the woman writer's quest for her own story: it is the story, in other words, of the woman's quest for self-definition (5).

Speaking about Rainer Maria Rilke's difficulties in formulating what it means to be human, Lou Andreas-Salomé relates his efforts to release creative energies to three attitudes, all of which she considers to be irrelevant with regard to women artists. There is his hostility towards tradition, his concern with the nature of language and his urge

die Liebe zu leisten als die große Aufgabe des Reichtums, den sie aufschließt und löst, und gegen den das Glück des Geliebtwerdens kleinlich ist (6).

If, as her novel Im Kampf um Gott suggests, the law covers a mutual seduction between father and daughter, their relationship to desire is both displaced and present in the linguistic matter of discourse. Lou Andreas-Salomé's fictional women

betray their desire for being loved in their acceptance of conventional role models, their idealization of rationality and their adoption of traditional modes of artistic representation. Assuming responsibility for one's own desire to love would involve a changed attitude towards one's own body, to language, to love itself. As Rilke was apparently well aware this would mean to regard love in its capacity to reveal the world, or as Annie Leclerc has put it :

Amour c'est quand le monde s' est montré, quand la présence s'est révélée, quand la lumière fut touchée et tout s'est mis à balbutier infiniment. Amour, jouissance originelle du naître et du connaître, amour, terre de connaissances non de toi, non de moi, mais des choses du monde . . . Connaissance dont la lettre sera savoir (7).

As early as in her book on D.H. Lawrence, which she used as a means to identify herself as artist in likeness and difference to the male artist, Anaïs Nin articulated her firm conviction:

It matters that the woman now desires (8).

Regretting Lawrence's historical conditioning that does not allow for woman's capacity for transcendence, she concludes :

Of course, if the building of the world, creation, was entrusted to man, and he had his way of communing with the Lord, the woman must commune with the Lord through man. Why it should be thus arranged is difficult for the modern woman to understand. The modern woman desires also to build her own world directly, not through man (9).

However, Stella and Eine Ausschweifung are both concerned with retracing the deflection of a woman's libidinal energies from their creative source. They make it explicit that sexuality as a source of energy is subject to gender restrictions. In doing so, they suggest that the resulting limitation of the woman's energy potential is also responsible for specific forms of her art. Stella addresses itself to the problematic nature of female creativity if the

woman experiences her body as the only available medium for her art

with the result that the distance between the woman artist and her art is . . . radically diminished (10).

The doubling of Stella's enclosure in her screen image representing embodied sensuous, receptive, passive femininity and her confinement to that role in life both reveal the woman as fragmented object of a male fantasy.

In Eine Ausschweifung questions revolving around the form of the woman's art and her psychological limitations equally converge on the notion of imprisonment. Towards the beginning of the text Adine's own artistic production is exemplified in her painting of 'a prisoner's head'. Subsequently, a similar choice of words links the woman's recollected view of the prisoners to the scene of writing. Introducing this image has the effect of *foregrounding a space that escapes the control of the eye*. The narrative, told from Adine's point of view, is set in direct contrast to her painting, promising to reveal what culturally approved forms of representation do not allow her to articulate. In Stella Anaïs Ni equally opposes the woman's enclosure in culturally valued female images, to which she owes her success in art and life, and the woman's sense of herself that has remained unre-presented.

Both texts focus on the woman's effort to gain self-knowledge. Stella and Adine are both engaged in reconstructing a self-image that constitutes them as partial selves and to trace the inception of its pattern. In doing so, Stella aims at unifying her passive body with her desire for freedom. Adine provides her self-representation in the form of the prisoner's head with her desiring body. She traces the origin of her form

of masochistic love that involves

the deliberate self-subordination of a woman
to a man to whom she is not inferior (11)

and a heightening of sensuous passion in the process. Close attention to the text reveals that, despite her rejection of her self-destructive subjection under male dominance she continues to efface herself as woman in her way of naming reality.

Adine's introduction to her subsequent narrative sets up a peculiar contrast between her competence as a female artist (Künstlerin) and her incompetence as a human being (Mensch). However, correlative to the difference Künstler-Mann and to the gender-specifying contrast Künstler-Künstlerin indicated by the text, language would provide Künstlerin-Frau for gender differentiation. Yet it is the generic and sexually neutral signifier Mensch that each time comes to displace Frau (or: Weib, the term in current usage in Lou Andreas-Salomé's time, which is used within the narrative). This is a significant absence. The discourse which the speaking and perceiving female I holds about itself, does not represent her as woman. Sexual difference is repressed. This blind spot is further emphasized when, with regard to the man-woman relationship, Adine refers to herself as a thing (Ding). Describing herself as seen through the man's eyes, the woman perceives herself as a thing, reified, undifferentiated from other objects, animated with life only due to the man's energizing influence but without a vital reservoir of energy of her own. Thus suppression of sexual difference and effacement of the woman's autonomous desire are both reproduced in language. This implies that a specific selection from the linguistic signifying system organizes discourse in such a way as to perpetuate this situation, to challenge or even to change it.

Stella and Eine Ausschweifung, however, present the need for defining the present condition of the self as a first step in the process of self-reflection. So Adine also acknowledges explicitly her incapacity for a full and serious love, saying

daß ich nicht mehr kann, was ich so heiß möchte, -
nicht mehr mit voller Kraft und Hingebung lieben
kann (12).

She also names the reason that has produced this limitation, barring her from access to her vital energies, explaining :

mich hat eine lange Ausschweifung zu ernster
und voller Liebe unfähig gemacht (13).

This psychological limitation is related to her art. She rejects the male spectator's opinion that her art contains her whole self, insisting that the form of her pictures and sketches is determined by what has escaped transformation into reality :

dahinter lag nur eine alte Jugendschwärmerei
die kaum von der Wirklichkeit berührt worden
ist (14).

In contrast to this unequivocal assertion Anaïs Nin takes care in conveying the struggle involved in the construction of meaning. Moreover, Anaïs Nin's distinction between narrator and character brings out a specific relationship between reason and imagination more directly than in Lou Andreas-Salomé's text. Adine is made to enter and tell her own story. Here, the interrelationship between reason striving for self-repression and imagination in the shape of feared passionate drives is discernible on the textual level, in her use of language, evasion of self-reflection and isolation from other women. In Anaïs Nin's text Stella's division between conscious acceptance of a limited lot and a rebellious desire for freedom is reenacted in the relationship between narrator and character.

The fact that Anaïs Nin attributes specific childhood experiences of her own to Stella and explores their repercussions on the latter's adult life suggests that, like Lou Andreas-Salomé, she also uses her story to advance her own self-definition as woman artist. Philip K. Jason has pointed out :

At one time or another, Nin's major female characters all seem to be given the same problematic father. In 'Winter of Artifice' Djuna had already resolved the father dilemma (15).

The problem that confronts each of her fictional women derives from Anaïs Nin's own experience that the father's rejection leaves her with the belief that she is found wanting. How the resulting sense of lack inscribes itself into a woman's life and art is at the centre of Stella. Anaïs Nin thus expands on Djuna's dependence on paternal recognition and her attempt to dissolve it. Linking psychological and literary problems this text, moreover, insists throughout that identity construction occurs through language.

Mutual identifications between character, narrator and author become explicit, when at a crucial moment of revelation and definition the pronoun 'she' changes first into 'we' and then into 'one'. Suppression is exercised by the conscious I, the one able to name, to see and will freedom or enslavement. The fear of destroying a present subject position by re-naming adequately what has hitherto been called love unites narrator, character and writer :

Some word had sought all day to pierce through like an arrow the formless, inchoate mass of incidents of her life. The geological layers of experience, the accumulated faces, scenes, words and dreams. One word was being churned to the surface of all this torment. It was as if she were going to name her greatest enemy. But she was struggling with the fear we have of naming that enemy. For what crystallized simultaneously with the name of the enemy was an emotion of helplessness against him ! What good was naming it if one could not destroy it and free one's self ? This feeling, stronger

than the desire to see the face of the enemy, almost drowned the insistent word into oblivion (16).

Contrary to Adine's acceptance of her delimiting self-definition, Anaïs Nin here articulates a suspicion of ready-made definitions. Subsuming the character's behavioural pattern under the psychological category of 'masochism' is feared to be a dead end. Naming sets a limit :

She could go no further into her exploration of the confused pattern of her life and detect the origin of the suffering. She could not, alone, catch the inception of the pattern, and therefore gain power over the enemy (17).

Yet after retracing her personal history and discovering 'the inception of the pattern' responsible for her masochistic impulses, Adine reaches an almost similar conclusion. Questioning the value of self-knowledge itself, she asks directly :

Aber was hilft mir diese Erkenntnis ? (18)

However, at the beginning of the text it is suggested that it is the emerging urge to write itself that contains the possibility of a challenge to the present situation of the subject. Eine Ausschweifung and Stella both start by focusing on a rupture. The resulting confusion for the female self implies that consciousness of a new place is demanded, a re-directing of libidinal energies to enable the subject to take a new position.

2. The Splitting of the Subject

Eine Ausschweifung self-consciously draws attention to itself as a particular kind of discourse. It also reflects the moment of grasping the pen in its destabilizing effect on the subject.

The woman, central character and narrator of her own story, is introduced as split, defining herself in creating art and through her relationship with man. Writing itself is not presented as an art and opposed to her work as a painter. The woman writes for private purposes, striving to gain insight into herself and to clarify her identity as woman. She narrates significant incidents of her life with a view to tracing the vicissitudes of her psycho-sexual development. Thus a link is established between the formation of sexuality and the composition of the text.

The woman starts writing on the brink of the break-up of a love relationship. Writing thus takes place in this intermediate space between the past not yet finished and the future not yet there. The rift which opens within the male-female relationship is also located within the female subject. Amazed at being transfixed to her desk, Adine wonders :

und ich anstatt in fröhlicher Arbeit vor meiner Staffelei zu stehen, warum sitze ich hier am Tisch gebückt, und schreibe und schreibe, in allen Nerven gebannt vom Rückblick in meine Vergangenheit ? (19)

Michèle Montrelay has characterized this writing compulsion as the writing of the hysteric, saying :

Etre hystérique: être à la fois dans la raison et dans la folie; être là présente, vigilante, pourtant quelque part possédée. Une femme écrit ainsi: constatant qu'un égarement la saisit, qui ne concerne pas ses mots seulement mais son être, puisque ni l'un ni l'autre ne sont séparés.

L'égarement n'implique pas le romanesque ou le surnaturel. Il se produit de lui-même, quand le texte se met à exister (ça pourrait être aussi un film, un tableau) (20).

The prologue establishes a distinct movement from the stable to the unstable. A controlled stance of upright assertiveness gives way to multiple identifications with various parts of the self. Bending down over the past simultaneously means to

bend a solid form and the rigid stability of the subject. Any attribution of a single meaning to define the rift that has opened up between the woman's conscious self and its unconscious counterpart has become impossible. Contradictions cannot be dissolved. They are exposed instead, like

aber das ist es nicht,
und dennoch ist es so (21).

Duality is foregrounded in various ways. Adjectives, verbs, nouns are either literally repeated or made to stand out as a two-fold term, either varying the other. This dual structure suggests a play of differences that foregrounds similarity. It is, however, undercut by another dual pattern resting on binary oppositions. The pairs male-female, love-art, life-art, artistic work-writing, standing-sitting are valorized in terms of superiority and inferiority. This dominance-submission pattern is associated with gender difference. The man, as lover, is assumed to embrace the fullness of life. He is endowed with a rich reservoir of energy flowing into the object and inspiring it with life. In full possession and control of his energies he is capable of enjoying and creating for himself a full life. The woman feels lacking in that capacity. Her relation to the man, as object of her love, encounters a boundary. All her energy flows into her work as artist. But, in this respect, too, the woman judges her capacity to enjoy and create as only approximating the man's 'a little'.

However, assumptions of inferiority are worded rather evasively. It 'appears' to be so to the subject speaking. There is no superior instance to assure the truth of any statement. This I advances explanations only reluctantly in view of understanding the rift between the woman's desire for love and her feeling 'as if' drained of all erotic energy.

The force that initiates the writing process is beyond the conscious control of the subject. It is a backward look that operates as agent, associating the drive to see with the

function of memory and the urge to write :

was doch in [ihrem] individuellen Bewußtsein
kaum existiert und was [ihr] immer schattenhaft
und undeutlich geblieben ist (22).

The body as other of the conscious I imposes its presence, forcing the woman to transcribe its memories. Submitting to the up-welling energy charge, the speaking I pursues the course of its desire and thus becomes the scribe of its body. Writing is experienced as an extension of the body. Language itself is not seen as a problem, which may account for eliminating the notion of work from the act of writing. Adine takes language as a 'natural' means for gaining self-knowledge. She remains unaware of the fact that she herself contributes to keeping herself enclosed within limits, which she in vain desires to transgress. Her exclusion of the term 'woman' from a whole set of differences thus appears, like her self-representation in the shape of a prisoner's head, as a sublimated form of masochism.

Anais Nin's Stella thematizes the infantilizing relationship between masochism and the woman's narcissistic preoccupation with her own image. The story does not so much, as Sharon Spencer believes

explore the failure of connection between
the artist's personal life and her work (23)

but their very interdependence. Stella's way of using her body for her art resembles Adine's writing. Both ways of female self-expression reveal the woman's body as enclosed in an alienating but culturally approved script. Stella is the first of the three novelettes contained in the collection, entitled Winter of Artifice. All three stories develop from an image, similar to the one that in House of Incest symbolizes the woman's enclosure in the incestuous relation. They are mainly concerned with tracing inner obstacles that obstruct the woman's recognition of her own desire for love and power.

In Stella a small dark room is the external equivalent of the woman's arrested psychological growth, which reduces her to a 'child woman' (24). It allows her only restricted communion with the outside world and hardly any expression and communication of her real needs and desires. Contrary to Jeanne's failure to risk confrontation with her reified self in House of Incest, Stella faces her publicly approved image - and discovers a stranger. Her introduction as an actress evokes the twofold nature of role-playing. In House of Incest and Winter of Artifice theatrical metaphors serve primarily to suggest the presence of an invisible script that guides the character's actions. Similarly, Stella watches her double

moving in the light, and she did not recognize her. She almost hated her. Her first reaction was one of revolt, of rejection. This image was not she. She repudiated it. It was a work of artifice, of lighting, of stage setting (25).

At the same time, however, the actor's role-playing suggests the possibility of vicariously living out desires that internal censorship prevents from being acted out directly. The text makes it explicit that

the figure of which she had been so instantaneously jealous, was the free Stella (26).

Yet the quality of this freedom harbours a disturbing element. Anaïs Nin's description combines the two feminine stereotypes which, in Im Kampf um Gott, Lou Andreas-Salomé articulates through Kuno's vision of the lovable woman. Instructing Margherita about her feminine destiny, he declares :

Wisse, es giebt zwei Reize am Weibe: daß es zart und kindlich in seiner Reinheit oder aber, daß es eine verführerische Meisterin in allen coquetten Künsten sei (27).

Both Kuno's dreams are oriented towards accommodating male desire. Childlike innocence corresponds in Anaïs Nin's description to an image of woman as formless and powerless, who projects

an air of the unformed, waiting to be formed (28)

Denial and suppression of the woman's own body in the image of the coquette become explicit in Anaïs Nin's rendering of Stella's screen image. Formlessness is seductive and

calls for an imprint, a carving, this essence of the feminine on which men could impose any desire, which awaited fecundation, which invited, lured, appealed, drew, ensorcelled by its seeming incompleteness, its hazy mysteries, its rounded shapes (29).

The text focuses on Stella's longing to fuse with her double. It thus enhances the utopian quality of a self-ideal that, by enclosing the woman in the immanence of her body, seemingly endows her with power.

Lou Andreas-Salomé offers a comment on the woman's narcissistic wish to be loved. Through Kuno she exposes Margherita's reliance on her external appearance as a misplaced and disoriented desire for power. He realizes that it is his rejection of Margherita's desire for love that, perceived as a blow to her self-love generates a new self-image. It transforms :

die unbestimmten Träume von einer freieren und größeren Zukunft zu einem schillernden Märchen voll lockenden Glanzes , in welchem sie Meisterin sein konnte im Gebrauch ihrer Kräfte, ihrer Schönheit (30).

The integrity of the woman's body being conceived as her social value, Margherita's desire for life is turned away from any object outside herself as soon as she damages that value. Henceforth she takes her body as object and all her energy and creativity are directed towards covering the stain.

In Stella the screen image functions in two ways. It conveys a capacity for joy, love, relatedness and the feeling of being at ease with one's body. At the same time, it also equates power with physical attraction and external self-representation and suggests the notion of effortless achievement. Stella's idealization of this image is blind to the woman's passive enclosure in the immanence of her body. Her relationship to Bruno, however, reveals that her identification with herself as beautiful object is destined to court love. She presents herself as mere space into which the man can freely project his own dreams. So Bruno, even without having seen her on stage

loved instantly a woman without fear, without doubt, and his nature, which had never taken flight could now do so with her (31).

Yet doubt and fear are the reverse side of the woman's having turned herself into an object. Lacking self-confidence as woman prompts her to exalt the stage personality in order to keep her dream of joy and power alive. Yet locating power in external appearance she continues to conceal herself as much from herself as from her lover :

He saw her in reality; yet he did not see Stella but the dream of Stella (32).

Moreover, her strained efforts to satisfy the man's dream enhance fears of lacking self-worth, since no external assurance can ever be enough to fill the emptiness at the core. Self-denial also extends to her work. The narrator comments :

This willingness to sacrifice external achievements or success to love was typically feminine but she expected Bruno to behave in the same manner (33).

However, in their pursuit of satisfying their hunger for life, they both take roles in a fantasy of totality. It makes him the subject that confines her in a place at the

margin of his life, in which she establishes herself as object. The text concentrates mainly on describing his joy of self-expansion :

outside the known, the familiar, and built only of intensity, the present, with the great exalted beauty of the changing, the fluctuating, the dangerous and unmoored (34).

Anais Nin here uses the house image again to evoke man as creator of a specific social order that frames his life. Within this law, the couple of adulterous lovers are set up in contradiction to the legitimate, married couple :

The stately house of permanency and continuity was his home, built around his role in the world, built on peace and faith, with the smile of his wife which had become for him the smile of his mother - this edifice made out of the other components of his nature, his need for a haven, for children who were as his brothers had been . He could not throw over all these creations and possessions of his day for a night's dream, and Stella was that night's dream, all impermanency, vanishing and returning only with the night (35).

This description hints at the consequences of the incest taboo that organizes the relation of the legitimate couple. At the same time it fragments the image of woman, dividing her into the desexualized mother and the woman defined solely by her sexuality. The male subject's identification with his social role as father allows him to possess a woman like his father did before him. Psychically he thus also chooses his mother, which the incest taboo, however, forbids him to desire. Marriage thus becomes a compromise. It legitimizes the sexual relation. At the same time, the son-as-father abandons his desire and suppresses attendant wishes of totality characteristic of the narcissistic phase of mother attachment. Constituting himself as father, he becomes all

that the mother is not, thus suppressing the feminine part of himself. Yet the suppressed feminine returns to disrupt the law. Interpersonally it asserts itself in search for union with the loved object, which promises re-possession of 'the lost shadow of the bisexual, narcissistic self' (36). So also Bruno

by respecting the established, felt free of guilt. He was paying his debt of honour and he was free, free to adore her, free to dream her (37).

Similarly, in Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel Im Kampf um Gott Rudolf believes he can find in Margherita the embodiment of his own lost female half:

Er sucht nach einer freien Seele, die den Muth hatte glücklich zu sein und die darum ungebrochen, frei, schön, in furchtloser, dem Leben abgezwungener Entfaltung ihrer selbst, Kraft und Glück verkörpert (38).

Lou Andreas-Salomé metaphorizes Margherita's hunger for life before her sexual encounter with Kuno in terms of a yearning for other spaces and other languages with reference to the sea. In relation to the father's order, the woman imagines a symbolic alternative :

der einzige Reiz des engen Ladens ihres Vaters bestand in dem Verkehr mit den fremden Nationen und Zungen in ihm, welche ihr stets neue Anregungen zu neuen Träumen brachten (39).

Yet Kuno, the representative of the law, clarifies that the woman's fantasies only function as an imaginary alternative, suggesting that it is

set up by the law precisely as its own ludic space (40).

He notes :

der einzige Reiz ihres kleinen Stübchens bestand in dem weiten Blick in die wechselnde, lockende Meeresferne, die mit ihren Eindrücken gleichsam die tägliche Illustration zu ihren Phantasien bot (41).

Anaïs Nin also uses the image of the sea to evoke a yearning for oneness. At the same time, she also reveals that the woman's selfless dependence on love actually covers a passionate desire for self-expansion, joyful experience of the heterogeneous complexity of life and union with the lost part of the self. The affirming or denying male eyes closed, Stella slips momentarily away into her own space, returning to the embrace of the sea, that feminine territory from which she finds herself exiled. Swimming she feels at one with

this great moving body of feeling undulating with her which made of her emotions an illimitable symphonic joy (42).

Experiencing her body as limitless reservoir of heterogeneous pleasure

she had the marvellous sensation of being part of a vaster world and moving with it because of moving in rhythm with another being (43).

Yet her joy only lasts as long as he is asleep, not there where she is, not at her place :

The joy of this was so intense that when she saw him she ran towards him wildly, joyously . . . and he, frightened by her vehemence, and fearing that she would crash against him, instinctively became absolutely rigid, and she felt herself embracing a statue. Without hurt to her body, but with unmeasurable hurt to her feelings (44).

As soon as they meet it is the quality of his desire that dominates, rejects and suffocates hers. Anaïs Nin here introduces an element that is lacking in Kuno's interpretation of the erotic encounter with Margherita. He puts Margherita's desire for him down to her over-estimation of male superiority, consisting in his superior capacity for symbolization. Anaïs Nin foregrounds the fear underlying the male compulsion to expel the presence

of the woman's desire instead of preparing to receive it. This would require him to accept, on the one hand, that his desire is not the only one there when she is with him and, on the other, to accept that she locates herself in a feminine system. The result may be, as Marcelle Marini has pointed out with reference to a similar situation in Marguerite Duras' novel Le Vice-Consul that

Chaque partenaire éprouverait ainsi son propre manque et le manque de l'autre à différents niveaux. L'amant est appelé à être aimé aussi pour être 'la femme' qu'il n'est pas, support d'un 'Féminin' mis en jeu dans la relation érotique au même titre que le phallus s'y trouve mis en jeu (45).

Stella's experience of joy in the sea echoes the joy of loving and relatedness she acts out on the screen and in her temporary encounters with Bruno. Yet she deals with herself in the same ways as the man does. She confines her joy to the stage personality and to the closed room that delimits the immanence of the couple.

The framed enclosure which attracts the woman, due to its promise of offering freedom from emotional constraints functions like the woman's day-dream in Lou Andreas-Salomé's stories. They are not introduced as a preliminary creative stage, leading towards changes in reality, in identity. They invariably function as a narcissistic compensation for an absence, revealing a lack but refusing to name it. As woman, the subject remains passive and mute. She may see what is absent from reality but does not recognize herself in her fantasy. So when Edith's fantasy in Vor dem Erwachen conjures up the image of the invisible sea, the text subsequently reveals it as anticipating the awakening of the woman's sexual desire. Yet Edith herself does not relate external and internal reality :

Etwas Gewaltiges , mit unwiderstehlicher Kraft
Daherbrausendes sieht sie in ihrer Phantasie
hinzu, - sieht, wie es von fernher dies Stück-
chen Landschaft und Winter umbrandet.
Und eben dies, was nicht da ist, nicht sichtbar
gegenwärtig ist, erscheint ihr als das Schönste
am Bilde,- als das Notwendigste und Ergreifendste (46).

Just as the image and feeling it arouses do not incite reflection about her emotional situation, she also remains half asleep during the subsequent erotic encounter. She remains passive and mute, absorbed in her own emotions. Unable to assume responsibility for her own desire, she is unable to establish any kind of intimate contact with the man. He only figures as the wishful part of herself and is only important in his capacity to arouse hitherto dormant feelings. Thus cut off from herself and also from the other, she wakes as from a dream, intent on exploring its meaning. But instead of pursuing her desire for self-knowledge, she prefers the pleasurable ease of sleep.

The body with its full capacity for pleasure is the other, of which the woman is ignorant (Edith, Esther), afraid, (Adine), or which she condemns also for moral reasons (Fenitschka). Adherence to the social norm as wife and mother or defiance of it as artist and intellectual show the same result. The woman is unable to imagine that her experience of pleasure might be the source for inventing a different form of life. Desire for love and desire for power, sensuality and rationality remain irreconcilable opposites. The woman does not confront her own desire to fuse passion and spirit in order to invent forms that would be able to accommodate her desire.

Significantly Fenitschka and Adine , the intellectual and the artist, both construct a male confessor. He functions so as to confirm the woman's enclosure in a rigid identity that seeks to exclude the dangers of emotional life. In this way, the woman constitutes herself in female opposition to the conventional set of values he embodies and does not

embrace his ideal of selfless femininity. However, in either case she simultaneously renounces her body.

Throughout her fiction Lou Andreas-Salomé reiterates her message of survival, directed at those women who are haunted by dreams of personal achievement and freedom. Margherita's venture to leave the security of traditional certainties entraps her in the consequences of feminine upbringing. Underdeveloped will-power and unstructured rational thought, combined with the upsurge of suppressed emotional needs, she is easily seduced into directing her self-centered energies into self-alienating relationships with men. Her inner strength being wasted in the tangles of emotional life, she looks back on an impossible dream of wifedom and motherhood :

Ich sehe, wie die große Rolle und Bedeutung, welche ich in thörichten Träumen ersehnte, diejenige des innersten Centrums und belebenden Mittelpunkts hätte sein können, den die Gattin, die Mutter für die ihren bildet. Ich sehe, welch' einen unabsehbaren Werth für mich, mit meinem phantastischen Umherschweifen der Wünsche, Sitte und Pflicht in einer sympathischen Häuslichkeit daheim gehabt hätten; wie sie mich mit ihren Grenzen verhindert hätten, mich ins planlos Unbegrenzte zu verlieren (47).

In Ein Todesfall Esther will, at last, joyfully and consciously accept this subordinate feminine role, before her later novels Ma and Das Haus revolve around the familial function of the mother.

However, contrary to Lou Andreas-Salomé's theoretical glorification of traditional femininity and to its positive representation in those two novels, Margherita's reflections reveal that her acceptance of the feminine role is an effect of the woman's powerlessness and of fears bound up with her disordered subjectivity. Corresponding to Margherita's proposition to supplant the woman's body by covering it with preconceived ideals, Stella articulates her helpless

enslavement by such ideals. As a result,

She felt her separation from human beings
and believed the lover alone could destroy it (48)

In contrast to Margherita's resignation, Adine and Stella attempt to locate the event responsible for the woman's failure to operate the transition and use her self-centered desire to create her own meaning.

3. Writing - a Question of Reading

Implicating two different kinds of cultural practice, Eine Ausschweifung differentiates between the woman as painter and as writer. But considering the fact that painting also leaves traces on paper and that 'drawing sketches' may equally denote painting or writing, it is possible to speak of two different forms of writing.

Connotations revolving around Adine's painting as well as around Stella's screen image evoke ideas of a unified, coherent whole that appears to mirror a real object. Functioning as sign the image conceals the ideological operations that inform the process of signification. Taken as discursive form, it thus emphasizes the referential function of language that serves the individual to express itself and communicate with others familiar with the same socio-symbolic code. However, both texts reveal that conventional forms of representation convey only deficient images of reality. Eine Ausschweifung attributes this deficiency directly to male modes of perception. So Adine, opposing the male view that her painting reflects her whole self, uses her writing to supplement what is lacking in

culturally valorized representations. Writing thus also implies a different reading. A reading which is not confined to its overt theme or takes the central character and her story as a direct reflection of reality.

Transforming her experience into consciousness, Adine's narrative delineates the history of a drive with its continual displacement of energy. Her remembered self is in constant motion, changing towns, streets, rooms, positions, being alternately driven or halted. Writing, the woman pursues the traces engraved in her body, along which energy has come to flow so as to structure her needs and desires. Producing her own text, she lingers on multiple forms of writing, literally spelling out their scripts. They emerge at determining points within her narrative, thus marking its main course. In this way, attention is drawn to the self as an archive of texts, the effects of which determine the conscious and unconscious make-up of the subject. In verbal or non-verbal form they highlight various aspects of a certain form of female sexuality.

Anaïs Nin's text Stella foregrounds her character's reflections in mirrors. It serves her to translate the woman's enclosure in self-alienating role images transmitted through a literary tradition. The woman's search for a new self-image that transcends her fragmented consciousness is related to her quest for a new script. Stella's screen image denies her the status of subject by enclosing her in the sensuous passivity of her body. Lou Andreas-Salomé's introduction of Klinger's painting foregrounds the cultural pattern of male dominance and female submission. Both images indicate that

the image constructs a specific set of signifiers (49).

Moreover, both images suggest that

In an address to male spectators, the body of women is constructed as a spectacle and the 'mise en scène' of representations of women's bodies coded in various ways as both to be looked at by the spectator and, in the same process, to evoke sexual arousal in him (50).

Adine's and Stella's concern with female deprivation in life and unease with their artistic achievement may be read as reflecting their authors' own troubled attitude towards traditional art forms. Both texts focus on the background of culturally valued forms of representation. Thus they not only communicate the need to reveal truths which convention does not express, but in doing so they also insist that, as an invisible presence, the un-represented also informs the structure of the represented. Hence the author's concentration on dealing with crucial female experiences from a specifically female perspective contributes to unveiling

the mystification involved in the naturalisation of operations of signification by the surface appearance of transparency of meaning (51).

At the same time, however, Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anaïs Nin foreground their characters'

self-division, their desire both to accept the structures of patriarchal society and to reject them (52).

That this conflict is also the writer's own becomes apparent in their ways of translating their concern

with assaulting and revising, deconstructing and reconstructing those images of women inherited from male literature (53).

In Eine Ausschweifung, the initial image which marks the beginning of the woman's narrative is characterized by leaving a 'literal' mark imprinted on another woman's body :

An einem heißen Sommertag, weit hinten an der deutsch-galizischen Grenze, wo mein Vater damals in Garnison stand, saß ich einst als kleines Mädchen auf dem Arm meiner früheren Amme und sah zu, wie sie von ihrem Mann über den Nacken geschlagen wurde, während ihre Augen in verliebter Demut an ihm hingen. Der kraftvolle gebräunte Nacken, den sie der Hitze wegen offen trug, behielt einen tiefroten Striemen, doch als ich im Schrecken darüber zu weinen anfing, da lachte meine galizische Amme mir so glücklich ins Gesicht, daß mein Kinderherz meinen mußte, dieser brutale Schlag gehörte zweifellos zu den besonderen Annehmlichkeiten ihres Lebens (54, my underlining).

The context links this image of social interaction to the existence of a language, which predates the female subject and articulates the woman's voluntary submission to male power. The above situation shows this language at work. It highlights the effects of a specific discourse, which posits the male as subject and assigns to the woman the place of object. Social interaction emerges as an intercourse of signs, here embodied in gestures, which is grounded in sexual difference. The mark left on the woman's neck is a trace left by male discourse. Besides focusing on male activity and female passivity, male activity is also qualified as a brutally aggressive act that violates the integrity of the woman's body. It equally emphasizes the component of female complicity in the act. The woman does not only silently endure the experience of pain but actively suppresses it. Seemingly her response converts male aggression into an act of loving attention, thus making the experience of pain an integral part of sexual pleasure. Imbued with unresolved contradictions, the force of the emotional charge engraves a trace on the child's memory. Surpassing the child's understanding, the formation of the trace is beyond conscious control. It structures the body by channelling energy charges along specific lines, thus creating the specificity of individual needs and desires.

In her novelette Winter of Artifice Anaïs Nin also explores the effects which such enslaving primary inscriptions have on female subject formation. There the daughter, involved in a problematic relationship with her father, is made to realize :

There seemed to be a deeper memory than the usual one, a memory in the tissues and cells of the body on which we tattoo certain scenes which give shape to one's soul and life habits (55).

Marking a limit, the creation of this form is also a beginning which sets in motion the history of a drive , defining the female subject in sexual terms. It delineates for Adine the masochistic ways of interaction within an eroticized relationship. But the preverbal inception of the image also operates as a blue-print, which allows the recognition of cultural forms constructed on the same lines. Contact with this pattern reactivates the primary inscription. So Adine's look is suddenly arrested by Klinger's engraving, which portrays a

gepanzerten Jüngling . . . der eherne Allmacht
im Antlitz, dem vor ihm niedergeworfenen Weibe
erbarmungslos mit dem Fuß in die Lende trat (56).

The cultural construct is shown to accommodate the emotional projection of the subject, as it arouses

eine lang, lang vergessene , eine
tote Sensation (57).

Adine sees the uncontrollable force that drives her into suicidal self-surrender as the very reality of her being.

The cultural script also makes her intelligible to herself as artifact, traversed by male inscriptions. So she reads Klinger's engraving as Warnung und Symbol zugleich (59). Recognizing her own obsessional fascination with this

self-destructive pattern of feminine love is of shattering impact. As a result, the perceiving I blinds itself to studying the image in more detail. Confronted with a separate image of herself or finding herself in danger of living it out arouses in Adine the same immense fear. It also elicits a similar gesture - she averts her eyes or blocks her vision.

Meeting Benno, her former fiancé, after six years of separation, during which she consolidated her identity as artist, she is confronted with her past feminine self. The latter's docile self-surrender resulted in her mental and physical breakdown. Unable to defend herself through language against Benno's renewed sexual advances, she has recourse to a gesture which bars their mutual vision of one another. Its description implies that the woman sees herself as being constructed by the power of the man's gaze, when she records:

Da streckte ich angstvoll meine Hand gegen ihn aus, sie mit einer unsichern Bewegung zwischen seine und meine Augen schiebend, als müßte sie ihm meinen Blick verstecken und mich seinem Blick entziehen, wie einer unkontrollierbaren Macht, die noch einmal mich mir selber rauben könnte (60).

Motivated by fear, this gesture is not only destined to save herself from yielding to being possessed by and enclosed in his vision of her again but she also tries to prevent the man from reading her pleasure in a text which her conscious I rejects. However, this effort to suppress the old text has ambiguous repercussions. The woman's inability to admit and name her fear creates another imaginary relationship. On a different level from before, it leads again to her fulfilling the old pattern, resulting in the woman's self-degrading submission under the man's image of her.

In Anaïs Nin's text Stella it is the narrator's attitude that largely corresponds to Adine's evasion of self-reflection. Initially introduced as an omniscient voice,

the narrator emphasizes the function of seeing and memory. Implying a correspondence between progressive awareness in life and in writing, the narrator asserts :

Seeing has to do with awareness, the clarity of the senses is linked to the spiritual vision, to understanding. One can look upon a certain scene of life and see only a part of the truth Later, a deeper insight, a deeper experience will add the missing aspects to the past scene, to the lost character only partially seen and felt. Still later another will appear. So that with time, and with awareness only, the scene and the person become complete, fully heard and fully seen (61).

The narrator opposes a vision of wholeness against the character's decomposition in fragmentary self-alienating images. This yearning for a total image echoes Stella's search for a play that allows her

to walk into her own self, truly present, truly revealed (62).

Yet the very search for an author that provides her with a ready-made image and text which would give her an identity deflects her energies from engaging in creating her own image. Thus it reveals her ultimate inability to constitute herself as an autonomous person. In the absence of a self-image her refusal to act out externally imposed aspects of herself results in her discovery that the mirror remains empty. The narrator's silence at this point corresponds to her censorious suppression of Stella's desire for freedom and self-expansion in her love relationship.

The text merges the quest for female identity as a psychological and as a literary problem. Its method is clearly stated in terms of the intentional activation of memory in order to trace the origin of a self-destructive pattern :

the beginning of a pattern, the beginning of a form, a destiny, a character We catch a glimpse of it, like this, through the turmoil of the blood which remembers the seismographic shocks (63).

Thus Anaïs Nin's text makes explicit what Lou Andreas-Salomé projects as involuntary acts, bound up with writing as

unmediated expression of the body.

Similar to Adine's retrospective account of her life, Anaïs Nin's text proceeds to describe experiences and memories that disclose various aspects of the woman's self-loss. References to childhood preceding the girl's insertion into the genderized feminine role evoke a notion of wholeness. The use of pronouns alternating between 'it', 'she' and 'he' suggest bisexuality. Yet this image of wholeness is lost to memory:

Stella could not remember that what she saw in the mirror as a child. Perhaps a child never looks at the mirror. Perhaps a child, like a cat, is so much inside of itself it does not see itself in the mirror. She sees a child. The child does not remember what he looks like (64).

In her discussion of female narcissism Simone de Beauvoir suggests another reason for this absence of an ideal image of wholeness. She writes :

Comme sujet, elle se sent frustrée; petite fille, elle a été privée de cet alter ego qu'est pour le garçon un pénis; plus tard, sa sexualité agressive est demeurée insatisfaite. Et ce qui est beaucoup plus important, les activités viriles lui sont défendues. Elle s'occupe, mais elle ne fait rien; à travers ses fonctions d'épouse, mère, ménagère, elle n'est pas reconnue dans sa singularité. La vérité de l'homme est dans les maisons qu'il construit, les forêts qu'il défriche, les malades qu'il guérit: ne pouvant s'accomplir à travers des projets et des buts, la femme s'efforcera de se saisir dans l'immanence de sa personne (65).

Anaïs Nin's text establishes the father as the agent responsible for depriving the daughter of her sense of wholeness and self-worth. His abandonment of the family breaks up the paradise of childhood, delivering her

to her poverty, to the oppression of creditors, to the anxieties, the humiliation, the corroding pain of everyday want (66).

However, it is also precisely at this point in the text

that there occurs a change in the omniscient narrator's voice. Judgemental assertions and psychological explanations give way to indirectness, muting any overt confrontation with the father. At the same time, the text refrains from establishing direct links between the mother's and daughter's attitudes by offering a detached description of childhood experiences.

Unlike Lou Andreas-Salomé's text, Nin's refrains from thematizing the formative character of prepubescent experiences. It presents Stella's access to that period as blocked. Until the age of eleven she remembers

No image. No reflection. But feeling. In the mirror there never appeared a child (67)

Then, at fourteen

No Stella, but a disguised actress multiplied into many personages (68).

Finally,

the first spotlight, actually, the first aureole of lighting, bringing her into relief, but in a state of humiliation (69).

The humiliation is felt to derive from the absolute discrepancy between public recognition of the girl's acting talent and her poor-looking external appearance. It shapes her so that

she will often wear again this mood, this feeling of being misrepresented, misunderstood, of a false appearance, of an ugly disguise (70).

This emphasis on the external to the detriment of the girl's acceptance of her talent, achievement and desire for power reflects an uneasiness with the female body. Self-worth is firmly located in the sense of sight, which alone decides whether one has beautiful

things that adequately represent the inner self. Not having any visible paraphernalia to reflect the self reduces it to nothing. Any effort will henceforth be directed to stepping

out of this image, this dress, this humiliation by becoming someone else. She becomes Melisande, Sarah Bernhardt, Faust's Marguerite, La Dame Aux Camélias, Thais. She is decomposed before the mirror into a hundred personages and recomposed into paleness, immobility, and silence (71).

Stella's interior monologue is indistinguishable from the omniscient narrator's voice of authority. The character's fixation in her role as beautiful object contaminates the narrator's perception of her. Vice versa, speaking from a position of authority, the narrator's psychological conclusions reinforce Stella's stagnation. The effect of merging results in hollowing out the narrator's stance of omniscience. So the narrator comes to acknowledge :

Inside of the being there is a defective mirror, a mirror distorted by the fog of solitude, of shyness, by the climate inside of this particular being. It is a personal mirror, lodged in every subjective, interiorized form of life (72).

Imprisoned in her dependence on external approval, Stella's vision of the outside world remains distorted, seen through

the window of the solitary cell
of the neurotic (73).

The world and the other are only perceived in their capacity to procure a feeling of totality and completeness, reminiscent of the undifferentiated bisexual paradise of childhood. Identity remains elusive because

she is lost herself. All that she says about herself is false. She is misleading and misled (74).

As a result, she obeys a fatally repetitious pattern. The horror initially generated on perceiving her self-loss is finally displaced by her resigned acceptance of her own

death as autonomous self.

Adine, in contrast, is literally spurred on by an unexpected letter, a reminder of the old relational structure, to re-trace its very texture. The text primarily draws attention to the formal properties of the letter, emphasizing its existence as an ensemble of characteristic traces. The uncanny impression produced by the form of the man's handwriting hits a distinctive trace within herself. It seduces her imaginative capacity so as to channel all libidinal energy into a single direction. It leads back to the first imprint that marked the beginning of her woman's history, the mark on the other woman's neck. Ideas and images revolving around her feeling of having been crushed by the man she loved become attracted to the flow of energy and are swept along its predetermined course, until they reach their emotional limit. It is noteworthy that Klinger's engraving of the knight treading on the woman's body only gains personal significance at this moment, when it is perceived in the light of Adine's re-awakened sensations associated with her masochistic drive.

The context here suggests a difference between two kinds of reading, depending on a different understanding of the artist's work. There is, on the one hand, an expert but personally detached reading of the work as product. The title given to Klinger's engraving 'Die Zeit den Ruhm vernichtend' implies that the reading is framed. Seemingly, it focuses on an abstract truth, common to all mankind. The title signals a single meaning. In this view, the artist appears as sovereign creator who takes his themes from the storehouse of tradition and makes use of them according to his subjective understanding, sensitive and technical capacities. Moreover, thus oriented to search for a neutral and objective representation of truth, the reader may easily overlook that this 'truth' is constructed in terms of a power structure that is based on sexual difference. Adine, on the other hand, experiences the developing character

of the work, because she is personally affected. She sides with the unconscious of the text/image and reflects on its significance.

It is hardly coincidental that the text assembles three different kinds of writing - handwriting, painting, beating - each of which exposes the man as in the position of power to mark the woman in destructive ways. Thus the rounded letters of the male inscription suggest the woman's firm enclosure within a closed circle. Lived forms of interaction between sexualized subjects are continually reaffirmed by other forms of cultural practice. Personal experience, collective imagery and societal discourse appear but as repetitions-with-a-variation of the same self-perpetuating socializing process which produces and reinforces in the body of the subject the inscriptions of the socio-symbolic code underlying its social formation.

Another critical evaluation of collective reading habits emerges with reference to E. Marlitt's sentimentally romanticizing novels. They had a wide reading public in the 19th century and propagated the feminine ideal of self-effacing womanhood. Adine's reference to Marlitt emphasizes

den rasenden Gefühlsverbrauch, die erschlaffende Gefühlsausschweifung in den jugendlichem romantischen Marlittiaden (75).

It highlights a certain equivalence between literature and life. For Adine here speaks of her own wasteful dissipation of libidinal energies in relation to her yearning efforts to fashion herself into a feminine heroine, which ultimately resulted in her physical breakdown. The derogatory term Marlittiaden links literature and life, stressing the concept of femininity as an artificial construct, which in turn produces woman as artifact. Anaïs Nin's reference to literary role models foregrounds the woman's predicament in terms of

mental and physical suffering and premature death.

For the daughter in Winter of Artifice, the only means of dissolving the conflict between her desire for independence and her tendency towards self-effacement before male authority consists in 'reading the letter she feared to read' (76). As in Eine Ausschweifung, it is suggested that a certain incident has been mis-read. A re-reading of it would therefore divest it of its obsessional power by naming it correctly. Both stories revolve around the problem of distorted vision due to an initial misinterpretation of perceived reality. Caught up again in the pattern of her masochistic drive, Adine recognizes its lack of reality :

Und dennoch war diese ganze Situation kein wirkliches, kein wahrhaftes Erleben, sondern sie war von ihr nur geschaffen, von Benno nur geglaubt, - sie war nur ein Schein, ein Bild, ein Traumerleben, - ein Nichts (77).

In Winter of Artifice the daughter similarly concludes :

The scene which she acted out best and felt the best was that of abandon. She felt impelled to act it over and over again. She knew all the phrases. She was familiar with the emotions aroused. It came so easily to her, even she knew all the time that, except for the moment when he left them years ago, she had never really experienced abandon except by way of her imagination, except through her fear of it, through her misinterpretation of reality (78).

Both texts, however, reveal a marked difference with regard to the woman's response following her insight into the illusory character of her vision and construction of reality. Anaïs Nin's text concentrates on the woman's effort to explore her tendency to idealize the father and her compulsion to surrender her own perceptions in his presence. For the first time she allows herself aggressive feelings against him. She begins to define the boundaries of her own self and to constitute herself as separate from the father.

Adine shuns away from looking at her need for illusion. She creates the man's superiority, in full knowledge of the fact that it sustains his wrong assumptions about her moral inferiority. Whereas the woman in Anaïs Nin's text finally gathers courage to confront the father, Adine consciously abstains from telling the truth. Thus the first enters a conflict, which the latter avoids taking.

However, as soon as Anaïs Nin re-locates the father-daughter conflict by concentrating on the woman's attitude to herself, Stella's self-effacement before male love and public approval resembles Adine's response. The final part of Stella sets out a scene that implies Stella's unconscious identification with her father's two self-effacing wives. It also records the second wife's rebellion against the husband's heedless exploitation of the woman's selfless love. Yet the daughter is unable to recognize herself in another woman. Her hostility towards the father is *repressed and internalized in terms of self-denial*.

This final part of the text contains hardly disguised diary entries revolving around Anaïs Nin's own ambivalent feelings about her father. It suggests that the actual perception of another woman's problems serves her as a point of departure to re-work her own conflicts. In her efforts to come to terms with her neurotic disposition she suspects that the obsessive dwelling on 'the frustrating aspects of one's life' hides a 'desire for unlimited power' (79). Yet she does not reflect this insight with regard to her fictional character. Nor does she relate Stella's incapacity for delighting in experiences of joy and pleasure to her suppression of aggressive impulses.

About herself, Anaïs Nin wondered almost at the same time :

Is it destruction which I do not carry out
in life which expresses itself in self-
destruction ? (80).

Her conscious dependence on the traditionally feminine values of self-sacrificial love shines through in the omniscient narrator's voice that morally condemns Stella's urge to free herself from male imposed limitations on her desire for love. This closeness between the woman writer's life and her art reveals a fundamental problem bound up with Anaïs Nin's insistence on the woman artist's need

to descend into the real womb and expose its secrets and labyrinths (81).

Susan Gubar has pointed out that a model of creativity that merely substitutes 'the womb for the penis' carries specific dangers. She emphasizes that

such a mother-goddess myth was compensatory and that - unless freed from any biological imperative - it could entrap women in destructive stereotypes (82).

Anaïs Nin's story Stella is a portrayal of female powerlessness and its final acceptance. As such it echoes the image of enclosure that she uses to express her own suppression of anger, noting that

this source of energy installs itself inside my heart like some gnawing animal I am trying to keep locked inside and who tears at me (83).

It is only in the course of her therapeutic sessions with the Jungian analyst Martha Jaeger that she began to realize in how far her feminine conditioning imposed limitations on her art. She questioned in particular the need for closeness between art and life. Recognizing the delimiting effects it had on her imagination, she noted in her diary:

writing the novel about other women there were still so many things I could not give to them. I found that none of the composite characters could contain all my experiences or awareness. That to stay with them meant a shrinking of horizons and perceptions, a restricted consciousness. I felt tight moulds. I found that none of my invented characters could contain my obsessions with a limitless, expanded life, its completion (84).

She equally realized as fallacious her efforts to escape the reduced form of a given female character by endowing her with her own experience, concluding :

 this was a misconception. You do not
 get rid of the self by giving it away,
 by annihilation (85).

Temporarily she settled for a compromise that resembled Lou Andreas-Salomé's predilection for telling children's stories. Circumventing her sense of 'guilt about exposing the father' (86), Anaïs Nin took refuge in what she came to call 'adult fairy tales ' (87). In retrospect, she defended the poetic technique employed in her stories collected under the title Under a Glass Bell. Situating them in a pre-war context, she explained in her diary:

 Because the outer reality was monstrous,
 the poet turned to the construction of a
 fantasy world (88).

Yet this escape into imaginary realms also reflects her own powerlessness to liberate herself from the sense of being herself the script which she is unable to decipher. Her faith in the sovereign power of the imagination to enlarge the limits of a constricting reality is constantly undercut by images of painful enclosure.

V. SILENCES

A censurer le corps on censure
du même coup le souffle , la
parole (1).

The other half, the one locked away, was
the only one that could live; I was the
wrong half, detached, terminal, I was
nothing but a head, or no, something
minor like a severed thumb; numb (2).

Eine Ausschweifung and Stella reveal a specific contradiction revolving around the woman's access to language. Both texts draw explicit attention to language as a means of self-recognition. At the same time, however, they expose the woman's lack of speech in situations that implicate her as a sexualized being. Similarly, the desire to know that motivates the text is held in check by delimiting self-definitions. The most significant gap in both texts, moreover, concerns the rupture which breaks the androgynous paradise of childhood to insert the girl into the feminine role. Its abrupt change from uninhibited self-assertion to feminine self-surrender is associated with particular difficulties in acknowledging the daughter's involuntary identification with her mother. Both texts also display a certain resistance to questioning the need for idealized male images. This is connected with the woman's reluctance to articulate her own desires and perceptions. However, as a result of these absences on the explicit level of the text, each story exhibits tensions constituted by its exclusive focus on feminine self-effacement and transgressive desires that appear in disguised or displaced form.

Both stories illustrate that woman's psycho-sexual formation in patriarchal society predisposes her to receiving the projections of others and to returning them in response to others' wants and needs. The simultaneous suppression of aggressive impulses seriously impedes self-perception and leads to evading confrontation and conflict. Yet it appears to over-simplify the question of societal pressures restricting the possibility of female self-expression, when Uta Treder concludes with regard to Adine's self-division as woman and artist :

Als Malerin findet Adine die Autonomie, die ihr als Frau verweigert wird . . . Der weibliche Künstler - dieses Einbürgerungsmodell wird von der patriarchalischen Realität akzeptiert. Die Frau im Künstler aber erhält darin keinen Platz (3).

Neither Lou Andreas-Salomé nor Anaïs Nin presents the woman merely as a passive object to whom an anonymous society refuses autonomy. Stella's impulse towards emancipation is thwarted on two levels. The public definition of woman enforces limits on the form of female self-expression. She

only wanted to transform and enlarge herself and wanted to act only what she felt she was, or could be. And Hollywood would not let her. Hollywood had its sizes and standards of characters. One could not transgress certain limited standard sizes (4).

However, at the same time, she feels unable to produce her own self-definition :

She cannot tell them. She is lost herself.
All that she says about herself is false.
She is misleading and misled (5).

Yet throughout the text the narrator's reference to the falsity of Stella's articulate self-expression remains an unproven assertion. Stella is hardly given any space to act directly as a speaking subject. Her story is filtered

through the consciousness of the narrator who subordinates her to the role of beautiful object.

In The Voice, the last of the three stories contained in the same collection Winter of Artifice, Anaïs Nin makes an attempt to explore the voice of authority assumed by the narrator. The title refers to a psychoanalyst and indicates his central role in the story. However, as Franklin/Schneider have pointed out :

Nin pursues it to only a limited degree, letting his story lie under the surface, to be inferred by the reader rather than developing it as a primary element (6).

This evasive attitude with regard to exploring the construction of reality through male rationality has repercussions on her use of literary forms. Despite Anaïs Nin's constant claim of formal innovations Stella , for instance , exhibits a fairly conventional plot. Traditionally, the plot proceeds to unveil fixed relations in order to thus delineate and delimit them all the more clearly. Its closure, resolving the disturbed equilibrium of the beginning, normally coincides with the hero's insertion into a predetermined order. Linearity as the dominant order of arranging experience, places emphasis on human actions and functions, while relegating experiences of a different order to a secondary status or suppressing them (7).

In Stella unresolved ambivalences associated with the idealized image of the woman's passive receptiveness are almost immediately centred on her lack of a sense of self-worth. The body's active and aggressive energy potential is discarded whenever it emerges into view. Subsequently, the emptiness of the mirror is not exploited for its possibility of enabling character and narrator alike to imagine and construct alternative self-images (8). Instead, narrative closure returns the woman to her publicly constructed narcissistic self-image.

Lou Andreas-Salomé approaches the question of self-alienation through cultural forms of discourse directly in her story Fenitschka, written only two years before Eine Ausschweifung. A male friend questions Fenitschka's blind faith in the liberating effects of intellectual development and the acquisition of abstract knowledge, declaring :

Die Wissenschaft führt an der Wirklichkeit des Lebens mit allen seinen Farben und seiner Fülle, seiner widerspruchsvollen Mannigfaltigkeit völlig vorbei (9).

Fenitschka, however, insists on the woman's need to expand her rational capacities as a means of acquiring control over her own life. She asserts the primacy of rationality, maintaining :

Wir treten ja damit nun gerade mitten in den Kampf hinein, - um unsere Freiheit, um unsere Rechte,- mitten hinein in das Leben! Wer von uns sich dem Studium hingibt, tut es nicht nur mit dem Kopf, mit der Intelligenz, sondern mit dem ganzen Willen, dem ganzen Menschen ! Er erobert nicht nur Wissen, sondern ein Stück Leben voll von Gemüthsbewegungen (10).

Similar to Simone de Beauvoir, Lou Andreas-Salomé's

emphasis on the mind, on rational structured thought seems to be powered by a fierce determination to escape from the primitive chaos and disordered subjectivity of the world of women (11).

However, replacing undifferentiated nature by structured culture is, of course, problematic if the ways in which it organizes reality remain unquestioned. Contrary to Lou Andreas-Salomé's habitual dismissal of the importance of language in relation to women's creation, Eine Ausschweifung reveals an effort to understand its functioning.

Contemplating her development, Adine makes an attempt to locate her persistent impulse towards self-surrender outside the responsibility of the subject. Suggesting three possibilities, two of which refer to language, one to chance,

she wonders :

Sind es aber nicht tausendfach Zufälle, die unser verborgenstes Leben mit heimlicher Gewalttätigkeit durch das prägen, was sie früh, ganz früh durch unsere Nerven und durch unsere Träume hindurchzittern lassen? Oder liegt es vielleicht noch weiter zurück, und zwitschert uns, schon während wir noch in der Wiege schlummern, ein Vögelchen in unsern Schlaf hinein, was wir werden müssen, und woran wir leiden sollen? Ich weiß es nicht - vielleicht ist es auch weder eines Zufalls noch eines Wundervögelchens Stimme, die es uns zuraunt, sondern längst vergangener Jahrhunderte Gewohnheiten, längst verstorbener Frauen Sklavenseligkeiten raunen und flüstern dabei in uns selber nach : in einer Sprache, die nicht mehr die unsere ist und die wir nur in einem Traum, einem Schauer, einem Nervenzittern noch verstehen -. (12)

Adine's implicit reliance on commonly-held beliefs about the pre-determined nature of individual character is counterpointed by a self-defeating groping for knowledge beyond established certainties. Tentatively and evasively she hints at the magic capacity of language to transmit invisible patterns that determine an individual fate. With equal uncertainty she refers to the persistence of a language within the female subject that conveys inherited and out-dated patterns of male-female interaction. Adine intuits that language makes the self subject to laws that constitute its subjectivity. Yet placed at the centre of her musings is a confession to her own ignorance. It operates as a barrier to prevent any serious reflection that inversely might also consider language in its capacity to create change.

Adine's aborted concern with language has consequences for her naming of reality. She reveals herself particularly misleading in her representation of facts. Towards the end of her narrative, she retrospectively qualifies her meeting with her former lover Benno as an Aussprache, thus characterizing it as a mutual self-confession. Yet, ironically, she represents

it as its very opposite. Their encounter is dominated by the man's mistaking the projection of his desires and fears into his image of her as reality. Adine, unable to explain herself, remains mute and subsequently shows a pronounced unwillingness to speak the truth about herself for fear of hurting him. So she ultimately confirms his false image of her, with her silence turning into a lie. Yet the lie also appears to be a disguised form of wielding power over the other. Adine manipulates the man's perception of her by deciding in isolation and authoritatively what he is to believe. Conceived as a protective measure of control to secure her freedom, her silence, however, backfires, providing her with the masochistic pleasure of self-humiliation. So Adine's shrinking away from articulating her sex-related fears perpetuates what she experiences as the co-existence of two mutually contradictory languages, namely the unresolved duality between her conscious desire for self-assertion and her irrational drive towards self-effacement. Resisting confrontation

She does not say, I was afraid, since this would open the question of other ways of handling her fear. It would open the question of what is actually feared (13, author's italics).

Adine appears to be very certain of what she fears : her own self-destructive drive. However, her clinging to this certainty is constructed as a deterministic organization of experience that precludes any re-examination of once given definitions. It equally makes any possibility of change appear self-delusory so that

Feelings take the aspect of error and faith the aspect of illusion (14).

Adine condemns her hope for change involving the freeing of her energy potential as a wishful fantasy, insisting

wenn ich das seitdem je geglaubt habe, so erwies es sich sofort als ein Trugschluß (15).

Discussing the relevance of deterministic ideas for the construction of the self through plot, Gillian Beer has pointed out :

all such assertions of apparently other perceptions - the indeterminate, the reversible, the reality of that which might have been, the multiplicity of the future, the moment broken away from relations, fear without object, lack without object - is seen as second-order experience, doomed and negative (16).

Similar to the narrator's censorship of Stella's erotic desires, Adine also discards a more unconventional attitude in favour of an ideal concept of love. The text presents the girl Mutchen as a possible alternative to Adine's adolescent self-abnegation. The girl's name, associated with the notion of courage, indicates that it takes courage to transgress the feminine ideal of chastity and live out erotic desires. However, Adine's evaluation of Mutchen's behaviour suppresses the idea of courage altogether. Her isolated reveries on the negative effects of self-indulgence conjure up an image of the other that is never checked by reality. Significantly, the transition from fantasizing to Adine's moralizing about Mutchen's erotic activities is marked off by a change from individualizing names into the gender-neutral man . Within the framework of collective morals Adine is only able to imagine Mutchen as squandering her emotions in superficial pleasures. The latter's moral qualities inevitably must fall short, compared with Adine's own dream of a serious and fully dedicated love. She considers the other girl as the embodiment of her own emotional attitude, which she sees as superficial and irresponsible. So Adine also passes moral judgement on her own limited capacity for love that does not measure up to her fantasized ideal. Frozen into an attitude, where she remains obsessed with her own inadequacy, she never develops a sense of self-worth. The taboo resting

on Adine's imaginative and cognitive faculties proves to be so strong that it does not allow the woman to see her own self clearly, nor to explore or know it, least of all to dream it. The uncertainties that prevail in her isolated fantasizing are consistently dismissed and supplanted by fixed patterns structured in accordance with idealization of the male and denigration of the female.

Both texts relate this opposition to that of paternal dominance and maternal submission. In Stella, the father embodies sexual self-assertion, creative work and the quest for adventure. His inconsiderate egocentricity, reducing mother and daughter to material poverty and emotional misery, makes the daughter's identification with him problematic. The wife's rebellion against the husband's posture as ideal being is linked to his death. Confrontation with the father or lover thus contains the threat of annihilating the male double that, in projection, represents the daughter's own desire for love and transcendence. Stella's self-alienation in a male double corresponds to Adine's habit of rationalizing fears and desires along genderized stereotypes. It prevents them both from facing their lack of courage to confront their own independent desires.

In Anais Nin's fiction, the separation between narrator and character frequently serves to charge the narrator with pursuing her character's suppressed desires for freedom and happiness. In her stories The Mouse and Under a Glass Bell the narrator is, moreover, assigned the task of interfering in person and help her character towards self-realization. Yet as Franklin/Schneider have pointed out :

the narrator is fairly typical in that she never quite succeeds in her quest to bring relief to those in need (17).

So, like Stella , both stories also bring about the closure of the text by foregrounding the woman's powerlessness to establish a satisfactory relationship to the world.

All three stories suggest that the narrator's failure in realizing her urge to free her characters from constricting role stereotypes derives from her lack of possessing a different attitude and view of her own. This is particularly obvious in The Mouse. The narrator's descriptions of the woman's sense of fear, worthlessness and self-doubt function so as to frame her as a nameless, powerless being. Offering no alternative, she can only reproduce and thus confirm the other woman's alienated self-image.

The Mouse anticipates a motif that becomes central in Anais Nin's novel The Four-Chambered Heart. The ambiguous relationship between power and passivity, which characterizes the affinity between narrator and character in The Mouse, is not integrated into the central consciousness.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's text Eine Ausschweifung addresses itself to the problem of perspective at the very beginning. Recurrent emphasis is placed on the invalidity of constructing a single meaning that may be located in the painter-writer or the viewer-reader. This mode of perception is equated with a male viewpoint. Ironically, however, the writing woman adopts the same stance by proposing to explore an already present self-definition and conditioning the reader's response to identify with her central perspective. The text is conceived from a viewpoint which presents the woman, as she sees herself reflected in the man's perception of her.

The Four-Chambered Heart, in contrast, emphasizes Djuna's fearless clairvoyance :

Djuna was intrepid in awareness, in painful exposures of the self, and dared more than most in matter of emotional surgery, but she had a fear of violence (18).

The reference is to her fear of physical violence. It veils the fact that, in suppressing her perceptions or not being understood by her lover Rango, her power to see and know has no effect in reality.

Like Eine Ausschweifung, Anaïs Nin's novel also illustrates the woman's difficulties in perceiving that her suppression of aggressive impulses is associated with her resistance to abandoning her fantasized ideal image of the male. The relationship between Djuna and Zora in The Four-Chambered Heart, moreover, brings out that self-suppression conveys an illusory sense of power which remains concealed behind the conventional ideal of feminine 'goodness'.

The novel deals with a triangular relationship between Djuna, her lover Rango and his wife Zora. Zora's cultivation of her hysterical illnesses serves ultimately the same end as Djuna's self-enforced suppression of her own needs by attending to the needs of Rango and Zora. Both women aim at making the man dependent on them. Zora achieves control by arousing his pity and feelings of guilt, Djuna by posing as a perfect being with unlimited resources of energy. The tension between performing a role devoted to compulsive self-surrender and her desire for life and joy produces hysterical pains, not unlike Zora's multiple illnesses. As for Adine, so also for Djuna love and self-destruction appear inescapably intertwined :

she was doomed to be devoted to a cause she did not believe in. Zora would never get well, Rango would never be free. She suffered from pains which were like cramps, because in all these unnatural positions she took, these contortions of giving, of surrender, there was a strain from the knowledge that she could never, as long as she loved Rango, ever be free and herself again (19)

Djuna's mental and physical exhaustion resembles Adine's in the course of her adolescent self-surrender to her prospective husband. However, Djuna is also given an insight that is lacking in Adine's as well as Stella's search for self-knowledge. She is able to locate the origin of her ideal of goodness in the child's response to parental pressures.

Despite an explicit reference to both parents, it is, however, only the girl's mother who is presented as the agent responsible for inculcating feminine self-abnegation.

The mother is rendered particularly repulsive as she reinforces the daughter's suppression of her body, silencing unacceptable emotions, curbing the girl's imaginative activity and delimiting her activity by enacting the daughter's punishment in cases of disobedience. Her playful disappearances instil an intense sense of danger of being left alone in the universe. Djuna recognizes that

the good self was formed by these threats: an artificial bloom. In this incubator of fear, her goodness bloomed merely as the only way to hold and attract love (20).

Djuna and Adine both associate the father with the sense of freedom, the promise of multiple possibility, and the correspondence between desire and expression, body and form. In their description and memories of the androgynous pre-pubescent state of childhood, they convey a degree of intimacy with the father that makes the daughter appear as his extension. As innocent, 'little' girl Adine captivates the father's interest by her artistic capacity and benefits from his attention like a son. Adine's careful explanation of their physical resemblance as well as their mental and temperamental similarity suggests a 'natural' closeness that makes father and daughter allies against the mother. The obvious contrast between Adine's extensive reflections about her father's personality and their apparent identity with simultaneous near elimination of the mother implies that she may also be rejecting what the mother represents. Throughout her narrative Adine casts the mother as insignificant owing to her selfless love, helpless passivity and powerless dependency on male authority. Yet none of her reflections addresses itself to exploring the problem of her involuntary identification with her mother, which remains centred on

generalizations about women's ancient consciousness.

This gap in Adine's psychologically oriented search for self-knowledge correlates with another one that involves a dramatic change in the father-daughter relationship. The transition from androgynous childhood to genderized adolescence is marked by a change of place. It contains the promise of the daughter's entering on her desired artistic career. Yet the future is abruptly cut off by the father's diminishing strength which results in his untimely death. Lou Andreas-Salomé here conveys the daughter's sense of powerlessness on facing increasing withdrawal of the father's love and support because of his terminal illness. It has the effect of preserving the daughter's idealized image of the father that henceforth withstands any confrontation with reality. Adine remains silent about her emotional reaction to the loss of father and artistic career alike. Instead, and in a seemingly seamless transition, the adolescent girl replaces previous dreams of power, self-assertion and self-expression by the pursuit of selfless feminine love.

The fact that the father himself designates his successor and hands mother and daughter over into the prospective husband's care counterpoints Adine's belief in her autonomous action. Her self-humiliating conquest of Benno's love appears to be rather an effect of the father's decree. Yet the idealized father image remains unquestioned throughout the text. On the textual level, however, the father figures within a series of displacements which includes Benno, the wet nurse's brutal husband, private and public scripts. Thus, and in contradiction to Adine's exclusively positive memories, he becomes discernible as part of the woman's masochistic history.

Similar to Adine's tentative efforts to locate her compulsive drive towards self-surrender beyond the confines of her

individual history, Djuna wonders vaguely at the impact of

Memory, or race memories, or the influence
of tales, fairy tales, legends and ballads
heard in childhood (21).

Yet Djuna goes further than Adine, implying also a link
between cultural scripts and the father. Set in contrast
to the girl's suffering from a despotic mother is the child's
experience of freedom and oneness with herself as she nestles

under a library table covered to the ground
by a red cloth with fringes, which was her
house, in which she read forbidden books
from her father's vast library (22).

Isolation and solitude become a shelter for a passionate
fantasy life that begins to structure the girl's relation
to the world. Fantasy, untested by reality, provides

an extension of the body, with many delicate
affinities establishing themselves between
her and the doors and passageways, the lights
and shadows of her outward abode until she was
incorporated into it in the entire expressiveness
of what is outward as related to the inner
significance, until there was no more distinction
between outward and inward at all (23).

Judith Okely, commenting on a similar situation described
in Simone de Beauvoir's memoirs, points out what is also
missing in Djuna's memories. She

does not observe that nestling under Papa's
desk is more than mere isolation, The space
contains a fantasy of intimacy with Papa (24).

This incestuous fantasy is associated with tales about the
conquest of love and the hero's quest for adventure. Djuna's
failure to acknowledge the father's invisible presence pre-
vents her from raising questions about her reductive
identification with the role of the 'waiting maiden'. The
part of the quester defying parental prohibitions to achieve
his goal of uniting with the desired object is firmly
attributed to the male. She perceives reality through this

fictitious pattern of romantic love, in which 'the subject of the passion is the man' (25). Djuna emphasizes the sense of familiarity she feels at her lover's presence and imagines him in terms of myth :

To visit the girl he had loved, he had to travel all night on horseback, he had leaped walls and risked her mother's fury and possible death at the hand of her father. It was all written in the Romancero (26).

Making the mother the culprit does not fully explain why out of multiple possibilities of identification contained in the secluded 'spirit house' of her fantasy it is the moral ideal of goodness that should emerge as the only viable possibility. For

There were other selves which interested her more but which she learned to conceal or to stifle : her inventive, fantasy-weaving self who loved tales, her high-tempered self who flared like heat lightning, her stormy self, the lies which were not lies but an improvement on reality (27).

The contradiction between being allowed privileged access to the father's possessions and simultaneously being forbidden to relate to them constitutes a double-bind that charges the experience of self-indulgent pleasure and the fantasy of autonomous achievement with guilt. But Djuna is only aware of self-reproaches that are related to her inadequacies of fulfilling her ideal of goodness. The text, however, evokes a different sense of guilt almost at the very beginning. It is associated with her assertion of sexuality and her need for self-indulgence. Yet this sense of guilt is externalized and projected onto a policeman, a watchman and her ailing father whom she intermittently abandons in her pursuit of pleasure.

With reference to her artistic career, Adine's narrative foregrounds a similar moment of choice between self-indulgence and self-suppression. The text suggests that it is

ultimately the indisputable authority of the father's changing wants and needs, reflected in his illness, that has the power to direct and delimit the daughter's development. For self-expression is blocked

weil er zu kränkeln anfing, so daß keine Rede mehr davon sein konnte, ihn zu verlassen (28).

Neither Lou Andreas-Salomé's nor Anaïs Nin's text allows the central figure to explore her needs for idealizing the male in relation to her compulsive drive towards self-surrender. In fact, with Adine as with Djuna, increasing resistance to their conditioning into feminine selflessness brings about an equally strong insistence on wanting to preserve an idealized male image. So Djuna realizes that through her exaggerated goodness she conforms with Rango's image of her. Yet as compulsively as Adine she confirms it. However, this confirmation is achieved by making the unidentified, omniscient narrator interfere to delimit the character's reflections :

He thinks it's natural that I should dispossess myself for a woman obsessed with the desire to arouse pity.

But as this incident threatened her faith in Rango, she soon closed her eyes again (29).

Djuna's refusal to integrate perceived reality into her consciousness is similar to Adine's fear to return her lover's gaze and to open a dialogue with him. Both women continue to see the man as subject and themselves as object in the man's consciousness. However, as Rosa Mayreder has observed :

Solange das Weib bloßes Objekt des Mannes ist und sich als solches im eigenen Bewußtsein findet, besitzt es keine Sprache (30).

Adine is more concerned with arranging the man's perception of her in accordance with his presumed values than expressing

her own feelings. Similarly, Djuna concentrates on understanding and solving the man's problems instead of seeking to liberate and articulate her trapped desire for freedom.

Stefanie A. Demetrakopoulos overlooks the absences that structure the text in her praise of The Four-Chambered Heart as Anaïs Nin's most successful attempt to exorcise her maternal compulsion. Concentrating mainly on the central character of Djuna, while implicitly identifying her with Anaïs Nin herself, she asserts :

She releases herself from the monomaniacal mother within and the need to idealize the male in order to sacrifice self-hood for him. Freed, she will realize many sides of herself; she has exorcised the Devouring Mother (31).

Yet the blurred distinction between character and narrator accentuates a repressive impulse that continues to operate in the conscious self to counteract all efforts at liberation. So the text does not really allow the relationship between Djuna and Zora to surface and confront it directly. As a result, there is no direct questioning of Djuna's polarized view about Zora's destructiveness and her own creativeness. Nor is she able to see the self-destructive link between her own dislocated desire for power and her passivity. Yet this gap works

in conjunction with displaced or disguised representations of whatever it is that is not explicitly spoken in the text (32).

Persistent ideological stereotyping along the pattern of male superiority and female inferiority is discernible on the discursive level that makes Rango the grammatical subject of the woman's reflections :

He was caught between a woman who wanted to die, and one who wanted to live! He had hoped to amalgamate the women, so he would not feel the

tension between his two selves. He had thought only of his own emotional comfort. He had overlooked Zora's egoistic ferocity, Djuna's clairvoyance. The alliance was a failure (33).

This positioning of women as relative to the male also informs the end of the novel, where it undermines the overt representation of Djuna's insights and actions. As in Eine Ausschweifung the woman's change from self-surrender to self-assertion does not result from acting upon her own insights and strength of will. Djuna depends on the man's confirmation of her intuitions and perceptions to believe in them and on his active interference to rescue her from ultimately surrendering her life.

Contrary to the resigned ending of Stella and The Mouse , The Four-Chambered Heart finishes like Winter of Artifice on a reassuring note. Both texts emphasize that the woman's insight into her self-destructive pattern will make her immune to succumbing to it again. However, Anaïs Nin's repeated formulation of similar themes contradicts this proposed reading. Eine Ausschweifung also stresses the failure of rational control by articulating the instability of a subject position characterized by repeated suppression of alternative possibilities.

Winter of Artifice and The Four-Chambered Heart betray an insistence on closure that silences all possible questions set up by the text. This emphasis on certainty is particularly obvious in Winter of Artifice. Here, a self-conscious use of imagery and its rational interpretation serves to reinforce the message that the pursuit of self-knowledge is rewarded by self-control. The memory image of a still-birth is evoked to illustrate the daughter's achieved independence from a godlike father figure, endowed with all-powerful capacities of seeing, leading and loving. The omniscient, unidentified narrator asserts that ' with the little girl died the need

of a father' (34).

However, this absolute certainty is undermined by an unsolved question, which keeps insisting throughout the text. If

this ghost of her potential father tormented her like a hunger for something she knew had been invented or created solely by herself (35)

what lack does this imaginary creation represent ? The end of the story reduces the father to human dimensions. She realizes that her idealization of the father figure is a narcissistic fantasy. Yet this newly gained self-knowledge does not solve the underlying problem revolving around the daughter's own lack of vision and a certain incapacity for self-guided action. Narrative closure blocks off any questions turning on god as transcendent father and the relation to this, or indeed any other image of totality.

However, those suppressed questions return to demand a hearing in subsequent texts. So, Stella brings into view not only the absence but also the impossibility of recovering a totalizing self-image that may be played out against her sense of fragmentation. The Mouse suggests a 'transcendental father' in terms of societal norms and values that are aggressively directed against recognizing the full humanity of woman. But it entirely disregards the question that, through her position of authority vis-a-vis the servant girl, the narrator participates in internalized social structures. The Four-Chambered-Heart finally correlates the psychological and linguistic level by subordinating opposed aspects of the female self to the male subject. Simultaneously, however, the text insists on tentatively moving towards bringing into view the internal relatedness between fragmented female selves. Its focus on aggression and sexuality is rendered each time in terms of the woman's rejection of male categorizations. Objecting to Rango's denial of her rightful anger, Djuna refutes the male splitting of woman

into polarized opposites, insisting on their affinity :

It isn't true. I have often wished Zora's death, but I only had the courage to wish it ... She was being more courageous, more honest, when she attacked me (36).

Sabina's introduction into the text serves to counterpoint Djuna's increasing sexual suppression in her nurturing role. Yet recognition of their passionate and sensuous natures remains, as with Zora, on the level of fantasy. Djuna's insistence on taking responsibility for her fantasies excludes a consideration of their possible realization through action as she defends Sabina against Rango's mockery:

Sabina cannot be made alone responsible for acting the dreams of many women, just because the others sit back and participate with a secret part of their selves. Through secret and small vibrations of the flesh they admit being silent accomplices to Sabina's acts. At night we have all tossed with fever and desire for strangers. During the day we deride Sabina, and revile her. You're angry at Sabina because she lives out all her wishes overtly as you have done (37).

Transgression is cast in terms of the woman's adoption of a male role. This implies restrictive assumptions about the woman's 'proper place'. They contaminate the attitude towards fantasy so as not to enact the relationship between Djuna and Sabina on the narrative level. Zora and Sabina are both cast as projections of the central character embodied in Djuna. Yet the narrator's didactic generalizations about the complexity of human character leads away from exploring more than the 'good self' in Djuna. The text presents her, similar to Adine, as remaining locked up in the narcissistic operation

whereby the subject negates itself and burdens/ accuses/attacks (charger) the other (38).

Eine Ausschweifung and The Four-Chambered Heart both present the striving of a woman to realize the ideal of selfless feminine goodness as a suicidal mode of being. Anaïs Nin

depicts Djuna's decision to kill herself as an act of despair. Admission and acceptance of her ideal as a fantasy result in her causing a leak to the houseboat, where she lives with her lodger Rango. Yet this abandoning of her single-minded ideal proves to be an opening that allows her access to vaster resources of energy. A gap in the collective mirror image of femininity, it breaks open the unified surface of a definite meaning and allows other meanings to emerge. Condemning her obsessive fixation on a romantic ideal of love and perfection as an impediment to self-expansion and psychic growth, her perceptions of herself, Rango and Zora gradually begin to change :

In the face of death Rango seemed less violent,
Zora less tyrannical, and Djuna less wise (39).

The end of the novel resembles that of Winter of Artifice, as a foregrounding of theatrical metaphors finishes on a reassuring image. Like the evocation of a still-birth previously, it is to emphasize the expulsion of a non-viable attitude. Here

It was a doll who had committed
suicide during the night (40).

Like Winter of Artifice, the text insists that she has overcome her compulsive self-suppression. This attribution of a single meaning to the image of the stillbirth and the doll's suicide conveys the illusion of a solved problem. A reassuring closure of meaning veils the fact that, like Eine Ausschweifung, this text produces the woman as absence. It echoes the end of Anaïs Nin's story Stella, where the woman's search for a totalizing female self-image comes up against the emptiness of the mirror. Djuna's experience of god reflects a similar yearning for wholeness :

she felt the presence of god again, as she had felt him as a child, or still at another time when she had been close to death.

She felt this god again, whoever he was, taking

her tenderly, holding her, putting her to sleep. She felt protected, her nerves unknotted, she felt peace. She fell asleep, all her anxieties dissolved. How she needed him, whoever he was, how she needed god the father (41).

Not only does this association of childhood, death and sleep convey a collapse of limits into undifferentiated space before genderized distinctions. But it also closes meaning by making this indeterminate space of unlimited love, understanding and protection the property of a male god. Lou Andreas-Salomé, in contrast, associates at the end of Eine Ausschweifung a similar longing to escape the confusion of self-contradictory female images on Adine's part with the mother. If Anaïs Nin's reference to the father eliminates the mother's powerfully positive potential from view, Lou Andreas-Salomé articulates it only to reject it in the name of the concept of linear development. Yet in doing so, they also highlight an indeterminate expanse of desire and its indefinite presence within the female subject. It is the feminine that is thus represented as excess, an excess that cannot be contained within the confines of a text which conceives the woman as reflected through male eyes.

Many of Lou Andreas-Salomé's texts reveal like Anaïs Nin's a persistent concern

with the question of freedom, psychic and social, and the nature of its revelations about freedom's limitations for women (42).

The text embodies these limitations on the level of discourse. It appears that an internalized conflictual image of the mother plays a crucial role in barring access to thinking of a specifically female consciousness in relation to language. Simultaneous idealization of the mother in her nurturing role and her devaluation as an independent human being informs Lou Andreas-Salomé's earlier texts especially. Her dealing with the maternal image shows a certain progression from ignoring the

mother, via exploring and rejecting the maternal attitude of selfless nurturance to recuperating woman to her socially assigned place. From Ein Todesfall onwards, she concentrates on re-evaluating traditional maternal attitudes in positive terms, endowing the mother with power. However, it is this focus on female orientation towards the selfless care of others that also diverts attention from the specificity of the maternal body.

Julia Kristeva, for instance, has suggested that the fact of pregnancy may offer a suitable point of departure for reflecting on the process of female creation. For

Pregnancy seems to be experienced as the radical splitting of the subject: redoubling up of the body, separation and coexistence of the self and of an other, of nature and consciousness, of physiology and speech (43).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's disregard of women's actual physical experience and her recourse to the vegetable metaphor of the tree to explain the organic closeness between a woman's art and her life has the effect of excluding notions of consciousness and speech. Yet the prototypical Self-Other relationship inherent in pregnancy may also provide an awareness of language that opposes the attribution of single meanings. For in pregnancy

There is always the child to be taken into account - the child in the sentence, the hidden meaning (44).

Eine Ausschweifung and Ein Todesfall both introduce instances showing the daughter's wholehearted rejection of the mother's attempt to question the daughter's single vision. This refusal to deal with contradictory perceptions is associated with the daughter's binary opposition between the unified images of the mother as socially dependent and culturally powerless, on the one hand, and the father as autonomous and capable of transcending his being, on the

other hand. Articulating other perceptions only to suppress them immediately is a consistent feature in Adine's narrative.

The memory image involving the wet-nurse, her husband and Adine as infant displays a distribution of gender roles that informs Adine's later interpretations of new experiences. Yet Adine's one-sided concentration on her involuntary identification with female passivity also suggests a possibility of viewing reality differently. Pursuing the elaboration of the concept of fantasy through the works of Freud and Lacan, Elizabeth Cowie foregrounds the form of fantasy as a structure :

as the mise-en-scène of desire, the putting into a scene, a staging, of desire (45).

The novel as a public form of fantasy visualizes

the subject in the scene, and in presenting a varying of subject position so that the subject takes up more than one position and is not fixed (46).

Lou Andreas-Salomé does not allow Adine to take the position of the male aggressor in her musings about the impact of the memory image. This exclusion of aggressive impulses from female consciousness is re-enacted in the way the text conceives Adine's entry into her career as painter. Elaine Showalter has pointed out that

The problem of obedience and resistance that women had to solve in their own lives before they could begin to write crops up in their novels as the heroine's moral crisis (47).

Concealing the fact that self-assertion as artist implies transgression of the normative female role, Lou Andreas-Salomé does not allow her heroine any awareness of conflict or sense of crisis that demand a personal decision. Disobedience of male orders is cast in terms of an ultimate act of male aggression.

Anais Nin, on the contrary, attributes responsibility directly to the daughter in Winter of Artifice and to Djuna

in The Four-Chambered Heart. However, the possibility of the woman ~~to~~ progress^{ing} and allow aggressive impulses to be directed outward is effectively blocked. In The Four-Chambered Heart, the narrator voices the unequivocal assertion:

Man turned his telescope outward and far ...
Woman turned her telescope to the near and the
warm (48).

Polarizing genderized activity with reference to the woman's private and the man's public sphere betrays the persistence of internalized traditional norms.

Inevitably, Anaïs Nin's own dependence on genderized stereotypes conflicts with her concern of using language as a means of destroying fixed and single meanings. Her image of the stillbirth at the end of Winter of Artifice, for instance, brings into play two different modes of feminine being. Primarily, it suggests a state of mother containment prior to gender differentiation. Yet the central consciousness of the text rationalizes this state of total intersubjectivity and interdependent senses exclusively in relation to the father. Thus the mother, as creative matrix is ignored and with her a dimension of otherness independent of the father. One-sided emphasis on the father-daughter relationship eliminates any notion of the 'little girl's' death as premature. However, the image of the stillbirth is also suggestive of the splitting of the subject as an act of violence directed against the integrity of the woman's self. It implies that an organic development towards a vision of woman as double, as self and other is abruptly broken off before reaching the level of consciousness and becoming embodied in life and symbolic form.

The Sealed Room thematizes again, as previously Stella had, a woman's frustrated yearning for otherness and the very inaccessibility of other selves and spaces. A Lacanian reading

would take the constitution of the mirror image

as the model of the ego function itself, the category which enables the subject to operate as 'I' . . . The 'I' with which we speak stands for our identity as subjects in language (49).

In this view, the emptiness of the mirror, explicit in Stella and implicit in other texts, is coterminous with the impossibility of the female self to name itself. It implies that the speaking subject is not located in an order outside itself, in which as 'I' it speaks the loss of an object and simultaneously verbally identifies the object it desires. In her continuous novel Cities of the Interior, Anaïs Nin identifies two aspects of this loss : aggressive impulses and sexual desire. It is finally Lillian, the maternal woman, who is the only one to be granted the exhilarating vision of a different future self. It appears that this remembering of the positive maternal aspects of woman has a salutary function for Anaïs Nin as writer. For, in her next and last novel, her imagination is free to leave the mould of the purely personal and exclusive focus on her characters' inner lives. She explores the insatiable hunger for life and its embodiment in a variety of forms in relation to the different lives of various characters, including that of the artist.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's shift of focus to idealizing the traditionally female image as mother also prompts a different change in her literary production. The stories collected in Die Stunde ohne Gott und andere Kindergeschichten use the child's relation to the world as a starting point to release the free play of the imagination . It appears that, for a woman who so firmly subscribes to the conventional ideal of femininity, allying herself with the child within herself opens up resources of energy which otherwise may have remained completely sealed. This leads up to her production of the play Der Teufel und seine Großmutter . In the imaginative freedom it displays in dealing with highly serious content, it stands as much as a work apart from her previous work as does Anaïs Nin's last novel Collages.

VI. THE DOMESTICATED IMAGINATION

Sich-Erinnern ist gegen den Strom schwimmen, wie schreiben - gegen den scheinbar natürlichen Strom des Vergessens anstrengende Bewegung (1).

And when it is the turn of the past to emerge unexpectedly, to raise its dripping mermaid's head into the light of the present and look at me with delusive eyes long hidden in the depths, I clutch at it all the more fiercely. Besides the person I once was, it reveals to me the one I would have liked to be (2).

1. Idealization and Sublimation

In Lou Andreas-Salomé's as well as in Anaïs Nin's fiction, conflicts between love and power, feminine selflessness and female self-assertion are part of a more fundamental issue. It concerns the human quest for identity as a process, in which the individual learns to reconcile opposing desires for fusion and separation, recognition and differentiation. Implicit in the desire for fusion is the relationship between mother and daughter in terms of recovering a space of illimitable pleasure. Yet the presence of desire itself also testifies to the effect of the symbolic on the body which is 'marqué de l'insigne du père' (3). For man and woman alike,

language is the locus of desire, where it can be spoken and becomes accessible to consciousness. However, Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anaïs Nin's fiction reveals an almost obsessional focus on that moment in the daughter's development, where the interference of the father or father substitute breaks the girl's flow of desire and silences it.

Lou Andreas-Salomé usually excludes considerations of gender, whenever she exposes her views on the dual orientation of narcissistic desire. She firmly believes that human life is grounded in two basic desires : the desire for conscious self-assertion as a separate individual and the longing for union with a boundless cosmos. Narcissistic desire is seen to operate in the service of the conscious individual. In her Freud diary, she writes :

Sicher ist, daß der Mensch ständig in einem Doppelstreben befindlich ist : einerseits sich allem zu einen und alles sich zu einen (wie es nach Freud dem unmittelbaren Lustprinzip entspräche) und andererseits das auf dem 'Umweg' erlernte Sondern, Gliedern, Differenzieren seiner selbst sowie das damit geschaffene Draußen immer weiter zu treiben (4).

The beginning of her autobiographical record Lebensrückblick revolves around the same duality. Here, the aborted yearning for the mother that informs the end of Adine's narrative in Eine Ausschweifung, reappears in positive form. Without any explicit reference to the mother, the child's biological separation from her is described as the human being's inevitable fall

aus seiner Allfülle . . . wie in - zunächst beraubende - Leere (5).

This biologically based opposition gives way to a psychological contrast. Lou Andreas-Salomé affirms the surviving memory of this pre-natal and pre-verbal state of total being

throughout the individual's conscious life in terms of

eine gewaltige Mär von unverlierbarer
Teilhabschaft an Allmacht (6).

Fantasy is assigned the task of bridging the gap between
a finite consciousness and the simultaneous longing for
self-expansion. Yet imaginative power is restricted, as

diese die Modelle ihrer göttlichen Korrekturen
auch eben dieser mehr oder minder wahrgenom-
menen Außenwelt angleichen muß (7).

However, Lou Andreas-Salomé does not stop to consider in
which way properties of the external object or the meaning
it is conventionally assigned may influence the cognitive
process. Discovery of the self, the you and the world are
held to be identical . So she also argues consistently against
Freud's opposition between nature and culture, and claims

Was "Sublimation" genannt wird, ist seinem Wesen
nach Realisation unserer selbst . . . es ist die
lebendige Benutzung des Naturgegebenen für dessen
eigene Zwecke (8).

Ignoring the suicidal implications contained in the Narcissus
myth, she constructs the mythological hero as the proto-
typical self-knower and asserts :

Erst der Mensch, der sich prometheisch in der
Kultur das Menschendasein noch einmal, zur zweiten
Wirklichkeit, schuf, ist auch der voll zur Ent-
faltung gekommene Narziß vor seinem Ebenbilde:
sich schaut er darin an (9, author's italics).

Juliet Mitchell, however, has pointed out :

Narcissus never believed that what he saw in the
pond's mirror was himself, and because there was
no one to tell him where he got off, he died in
love with himself as though he were another person.
. . . what eluded him was himself: the mirror did
not give him himself, because the only one in the
world he had to tell him where he was, was Echo,

the absolute other, to whom none could get attached because she would not listen and who did no more than repeat the words of Narcissus' own self-fascination (10).

Similarly, Lou Andreas-Salomé values the object only for its capacity to generate that passion in which being is transformed into consciousness and a new reality is created. Writing about narcissistic love as the best form of love, she points out that,

obgleich wir von ihm [dem Partner] sehr erfüllt zu sein scheinen, sind wir es doch namentlich von unserem eigenen Zustand, der uns als ein typisch berauschter, gar nicht recht fähig macht, uns, mit was es auch sei, sachlich zu befassen. Nur erregender Anlaß ist der geliebte Gegenstand dabei (11).

Anaïs Nin equally emphasizes the creative potency inherent in the experience of fusion between self and other. In The Four-Chambered Heart, she inserts an authorial comment on the transformative power of love, writing :

Some seed is always carried and opened in the soil of passion . . . Memories of experience are transmitted by the same cells which repeated the design of a nose, a hand, the tone of a voice, the color of an eye. . . . No man or woman knows that which will be born in the darkness of their intermingling; so much besides children, so many invisible births, exchanges of soul and character, blossoming of unknown selves, liberation of hidden treasures, buried fantasies... (12).

Anaïs Nin's imagery of conception, fertilization and birth resembles Lou Andreas-Salomé's thinking of creative power in erotic terms. The latter's ultimate image for any significant human activity is that of a

vermählende Befruchtung und Empfängnis (13).

With both writers, these passionately heightened moments of life are celebrated as providing an increased

consciousness of living. According to Lou Andreas-Salomé, it is this joy of living that results in over-estimating the loved object and sets in motion the drive towards idealization. Hence, the interrelationship between 'Schaffen, Anbetung, Freude' (14) is seen to be the fundamental constituent of creative activity. She believes idealization to be

sozusagen ein primärer Schöpfungsakt der Geschöpfe, etwas von ihrer allerersten, selbständigen Wiederholung, Fortsetzung allen Lebens (15).

This emphasis on erotic passion as a means of access to building self and world anew as from a primeval unity is close to the psycho-analytic concept of sexuality. Juliet Mitchell has stressed that it is always understood as

psycho-sexuality, a system of conscious and unconscious human fantasies involving a range of excitations and activities that produce pleasure beyond the satisfaction of any basic psychological need. It arises from various sources, seeks satisfaction in many different ways and makes use of many diverse objects for its aim of achieving pleasure (16).

However, Lou Andreas-Salomé's as well as Anaïs Nin's comments on that issue reveal a limited focus . They are primarily concerned with instants of fusion in male-female relationships. As a result, they both reduce the range of objects available for recovering that excess of joy which generates the creative act. The artist's rapture at the sight of the object is seen in analogy to the lover's intoxication with the loved person. Yet Anaïs Nin's reflections about the mutually transformative process of love discloses distinctly different effects, depending on whether the subject involved is a man or a woman. So she writes in The Four-Chambered Heart :

The fumes of desire are the womb of man's birth and often in drunkenness of caresses History is made, and science and philosophy. . . . a woman as she sews, cooks, embraces, loves, covers, warms,

also dreams that the man taking her will be more than a man, will be the mythological figure of her dream, the hero, the discoverer, the builder (17).

The difference between cultural creations of man and private fantasies of woman turning on the male involves the difference between sublimation and idealization. Following Freud, Juliet Mitchell has defined that difference as follows :

Unlike sublimation which consists of a redirection of libidinal drives ('not', as is often popularly thought, a repression of them) into what are officially non-sexual pursuits (involving therefore a change of aim), idealization does not in itself involve this diversion from sexuality; it engages, rather, in an over-estimation of the object such as happens in romantic love or in increased demands on the ego to be as perfect as the subject would like to be (18).

In The Four-Chambered Heart, Anaïs Nin depicts Djuna's self-repressive acts through which she converts herself into an instrument of masculine self-love. She thus comes to mirror and magnify his self-image. Yet the beginning of the novel foregrounds her free-floating desire that need not necessarily and exclusively attach itself to the man. Her reaction to Rango's music generates in her a diffuse yearning for

this unattainable island of joy which she pursued, which she had glimpsed at the party which she had never attended but watched from her window as a girl. And like some lost voyager in a desert she leaned more and more eagerly towards this musical mirage of pleasure never known to her, the pleasure of freedom (19).

Rango, in contrast,

had recaptured his early self before his disintegration, since he had recaptured his first ideal of woman (20).

The text implies that Rango's love and musical activity as much as his subsequent political involvement are all active

means to fuse various aspects of the self. Inversely, it is Djuna's dependence on the traditional female image with its exclusive focus on love and human relationships that makes her a passive spectator of life and keeps her in ignorance of her own potential. Her yielding response to the man's idealization of her as a selflessly nurturing vessel of transformation reveals not only her incapacity to redirect libidinal drives into non-sexual aims but also betrays her ignorance about objects and activities available to her on which to focus her energies. She mistakes Rango's enthusiastic engagement in political action for a mere escape from problematic relationships. It may, however, also be understood as an effort to re-unify the destructive and creative facets of his personality that otherwise remain projected onto different woman. The fact that Djuna can only experience herself in relation to man causes her to strive for perfecting a male-imposed self-ideal. For

He insisted that she retain this image of himself created in his talks of night, the image of his intentions and aspirations (21).

The male-female relationship functions on the basis of his denial of her difference from him. So he dismisses her independent thinking as 'mystic nonsense' (22) and asks her to destroy her books

which revealed to Rango too blatantly the difference between their two minds. To fuse them, it was, at least for Rango, necessary to destroy the differences (23).

Yet as she depends on his recognition of her as nurturing helpmate, she remains obsessed with his presence and need of her and also cannot allow the man any independent thinking or activity. It may be argued that the didacticism of the novel, similarly, derives from Anaïs Nin's own misplaced desire for power. It resembles Djuna's obsession with others' welfare that cannot do without convincing an imaginary other

of her good intentions.

Anaïs Nin renders the experience of union through erotic passion

in which to create a world together
from the beginning (24)

in terms of a return to adolescence. Adolescence appears as a utopia of infinite possibilities inhabited by 'innocent, unpossessed selves' (25). The course of the novel, however, reveals that childhood and adolescence are the time in which the girl is also most susceptible to parental commands and to the absorption of cultural patterns transmitted through books. In this way, all libidinal energies are channelled into proper forms of feminine behaviour. Contrary to her later warning not to submerge their personalities in that of their man, she here exalts the girl's dream of love that he would take and

marry the girl and keep her jealously to himself
like an Arab husband, and she would never be seen
or known to the world (26).

The narrator's failure to draw any conclusions from an ideal of love that clamours for utter dependence on the male, desires a confined existence as man's property, reduces the woman to interiority and alienates her from the world is counterpointed by the course of the novel. It ultimately establishes the inherent destructiveness of this ideal. This opposition between celebrating an inherited form and proving its inviability is reflected in Anaïs Nin's ambivalence about female role expectations. She conforms with conventionally female preoccupations by making love the almost exclusive focus of her fiction while simultaneously asserting its failure to open up the world.

Lou Andreas-Salomé adopts the opposite attitude. As much as Anaïs Nin concerned with woman's creation of herself, she

takes up inherited ideals to fill them with life. So in her first novel Im Kampf um Gott, she conveys sexual difference in terms of the girl's and the boy's different attitude towards nature. Lou Andreas-Salomé's focus on adolescence makes it explicit that at this period female potential is already securely restricted, as delimiting gender roles are firmly established and internalized.

The boy Kuno experiences the boundless, powerful nature of the towering mountains as a mirror of his own aspirations and capacities. Rapt in total union with the outer world, he is driven on

mit sehnsüchtiger Energie an den Höhen
hinaufzuklettern(27).

This independent activity represents a transgression of the father's order not to risk the self outside familiar boundaries. However, identifying with the son, the father ultimately condones his strenuous conquest of the heights. Both experience this moment of rapturous union between inner and outer world as a quasi religious communion with God. It is achieved through the son's persistent self-damaging labour. At the peak of the mountain, it is the power of his look that establishes his relation to the world in terms of his sense of unlimited freedom over it.

For the girl Jane, nature also operates as a support which mirrors her innermost drives and needs. Yet these are limited by her respect of the father's prohibition. She makes no attempts to rise beyond her dependent condition as a child and to brave the unknown. Her union with nature is a passive fusion with nature's benevolent profusion of multiple gifts. Its psychological equivalent is that of selflessly nurturing and comforting love. Kuno's retrospective description of Jane's character brings out that, as a result, the woman's desire for transcendence resolves itself through her identification with male ideals. He writes :

Gleich einer alten, frommen Kindermelodie durchklang es noch die Neigung des gereiften Weibes, stets war ihre Liebe gleichsam durch meine, in ihrer Entwicklung wechselnde, Persönlichkeit hindurch, dem Gegenstande meiner eigenen höchsten Verehrung zugewandt, - und dies blieb auf immer Jane's Religion (28).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's story Ein Todesfall equally illustrates that creative activity is subject to gender constraints. Esther's deep emotional experience when confronted with the male artist's self-portrait contains the possibility that she may become conscious of her own creative powers. Yet the course of the narrative does not allow her to recognize her affinity with the male artist. The knowledge she gains of herself is shaped along genderized stereotypes. It is the father who is assigned the signifying function. The daughter perceives reality through his eyes. Neither father nor daughter recognize the son as self. This suggests that they are both caught up in a cultural discourse which operates on the basis of mutually exclusive oppositions. Or as Héléne Cixous has emphasized in La Jeune Née :

le mouvement par lequel chaque opposition
se constitue pour faire sens est le mouve-
ment par lequel le couple se détruit . . .
La mort est toujours à l'œuvre (29).

In her story Wolga, Lou Andreas-Salomé pursues the process that results in the girl's acceptance of

a positioning that is inherently antithetical
to subjectivity and autonomy (30).

The course of the narrative highlights significant incidents that organize an initially diffuse female sexuality in such a way as to reduce it to the woman's dream of love. However, all these incidents also suggest that the daughter slips neither naturally nor easily into her role as woman.

As in Wolga, life on the river also provides the setting for

Anais Nin's story Houseboat and her novel The Four-Chambered Heart. The opposition between the liquid and the solid serves to render an apparent contrast between the woman's fluid inner life and her fixed social identity. Houseboat foregrounds the failure of identity. Taking refuge in a life ruled by the pleasure of imaginative freedom is seen as an act of disobedience. It offers relief from the pressures of delimiting definitions. The female narrator states :

As I was inside the houseboat, I no longer knew the name of the river or the city. . . . I felt the snapping of cords, this lifting of anchor, this fever of departure. Once inside the houseboat, all the voyages began (31).

Yet this withdrawal into inner space proves to offer only an illusory freedom. The image of the newspapers cast into the river illustrates that cultural discourse and public speech are part of all private imaginative activity. Her desire being focused on the dream of love, it diminishes the woman's capacity for interaction with the outside world. She admits :

I await the phantom lover -the one who haunts all women, the one I dream of, who stands behind every man, with a finger and head shaking - 'Not him, he is not the one.' Forbidding me each time to love (32)

About ten years before writing Wolga, Lou Andreas-Salomé published a book on Henrik Ibsens Frauen-Gestalten. It deals primarily with diverse female responses to the sense of feeling imprisoned within the strictures of bourgeois life. In many ways her analysis of Ellida anticipates her own representation of Ljubow's problems of realizing creative energies through action in Wolga. Lou Andreas-Salomé's view of Ellida's passionate fascination with an alien male adventurer also elucidates a meaning of the 'phantom lover' that remains obscured in Anais Nin's text. Seeing Ellida's problem in terms of a conflict between an intensely passionate

imagination and an undeveloped will to act, Lou Andreas-Salomé writes :

Was sich in Ellida an halbverstandenen Trieben dem Leben verlangend entgegendrängt, das wird von der sie beherrschenden Einbildungskraft personifiziert in dem dämonischen Zwang des fremden Mannes (33).

In Wolga, Ljubow reacts to her encounter with the widely travelled doctor Valdevenen like Ellida :

Sie liebt ihn wie ein fleischgewordenes Symbol, wie das Leben selbst in seiner verhüllten Freiheit und Gewalt, - wie den Blick in das Schrankenlose, Unbegrenzte und Unbestimmte (34).

Why life should be symbolized as male remains unexplained in Lou Andreas-Salomé's analysis as in Nin's text. Lou Andreas-Salomé's suggestion that love

tritt an Ellidas harrende Passivität . . . als ein Zwang heran, als ein dämonischer, jede freie Wahl ausschließender Willenszwang (35)

evades the question why the conflict between desire and will, imagination and reason should take the form of a love conflict.

About four years after writing Houseboat, Anaïs Nin notes in her diary:

the houseboat was more than a houseboat, it had a meaning, it represented the quest for independence . . . the need to imagine one's self travelling, moving in experience (36).

However, it eludes her that this hunger for life and independence is confined to the longing for love. In The Four-Chambered Heart, she presents the realization of this dream, yet with nearly suicidal consequences. The Houseboat story renders the woman's self-destructive passivity in symbolic terms. Her yearning for life ends in a boat cemetery.

Instead of the dreamed phantom lover, there comes a letter from the river police that orders the boat out of public sight. Social convention demands that the woman should comply with what is viewed to be proper procedure at the visit of

a foreign king. Powerless in relation to the king's authority and prestige, the woman has to lead her boat into exile. In Lou Andreas-Salomé's story Wolga it is the father who is assigned the king's role. He is origin and goal of the daughter's journey. Near the end of her voyage, she is similarly exiled from a space in which, initially, she only existed for herself.

Anaïs Nin's text emphasizes that the actual absence and invisibility of authority does not cancel the orders made in its favour. The narrator states :

Meanwhile the King of England had returned home, but no law was made to permit our return (37).

So all previous longing for life remains cut off from action and enclosed in a static grove. Her text The Sealed Room elaborates on this imagery of enclosure and explores the woman's limited possibilities for pleasure.

In Wolga the daughter's alienation from her autonomous desire for action is linked to the emergence of a certain concept of time. Once her goal is defined as love, the future is only meaningful in terms of a return journey in unison with her father and his substitute. Progression towards a goal thus becomes regression to the state of daughterly dependence.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's text accentuates the daughter's desire for power and self-control. Anaïs Nin's text foregrounds the experience of fluid inner movement. This difference points to what Julia Kristeva has called the two extremes in women's writing experience :

the first tends to valorize phallic dominance, associated with the privileged father-daughter relationship, which gives rise to the tendency towards mastery . . . On the other hand, we flee everything considered 'phallic' to find refuge in the valorization of a silent under-water body, thus abdicating any entry into history (38).

2. A Reduced Field of Vision

Wolga and The Sealed Room both present a motherless girl whose sexual awakening exposes her to the controlling look of a father substitute. In either case, this encounter gives rise to a female self-image which, in turn, limits her possibilities of identification to her body. The metaphor of the journey on the river Wolga serves Lou Andreas-Salomé to convey the progressive transformation of the girl's pleasure in looking into the pleasure that comes from identifying with herself as object of the male gaze. This process is associated with images that focus on the decreasing visibility of the outer world and suggest a gradual narrowing down of the woman's field of vision.

Both writers are much more ambiguous about the girl's attitude towards her objectivation than psychoanalytical theory would have it, when it assumes that

If she is to have sexual pleasure it can only be constructed around her objectivation, it cannot be a pleasure that comes from desire for the other (a subject position) - that is her desire is to be desired (39)..

Either text foregrounds the girl's uneasiness as she dimly apprehends that for the male her

female body is sexuality providing the erotic object for the male spectator (40, author's italics).

Her resistance to female identity formation remains un-
verbalized. However, in Lou Andreas-Salomé's case the woman
writer's own protest makes itself felt on the level of plot.
The "happy ending" that traditionally marks the daughter's
insertion into her social role through marriage is indefinitely
postponed. Anais Nin's text foregrounds feelings of pain,
sorrow and latent hostility. Her central character Djuna
is fixed at that place where Lou Andreas-Salomé abandons hers.

The Sealed Room projects an image of woman that also emerges from Freud's account of the female socialization process

which quite explicitly describes the process of, becoming 'feminine' as 'injury' or 'catastrophe' for the complexity of her earlier psychic and sexual life ('injury' as its price)(41, author's italics).

Before her fall into gender Lou Andreas-Salomé endows the girl Ljubow with passionate aspirations towards growth, self-expansion, knowledge and significant action. Looking at the boundless beauty of nature incites in her the same urge to act as in Kuno. Like him she feels :

auf die Berge mußte man steigen, - dahinter
blicken, - sehen, was dahinter war : immer
wieder ein neues Stück von der Welt (42).

However, her desire for self-expression and self-assertive action remains a fantasy.

She suffers from the sense of powerless imprisonment within the restricted space of the ship which condemns her to being a passive spectator of life. It bears her along a pre-determined course in which she has no say. The goal of the journey is to re-unite the daughter with her father. Any notion of choice is eliminated by placing the decision to embark on this voyage outside the narrative. At the same time it suggests the daughter's natural desire for intimacy with her father.

Yet in her story Ein Todesfall Lou Andreas-Salomé is more precise about this close relationship between father and daughter. The text suppresses biological implications so as to foreground the father's symbolic function of introducing the daughter into reality. Presenting Esther as an orphan the story enacts a fantasy of being without origins. A Jewish girl living in a Christian household she is cut off from her own cultural inheritance. Over-compensating for the loss she embraces the father's truths all the more firmly. The foster-mother who functions only as a support for husband and son fails to act as spiritual guide for the daughter. Wolga also

foregrounds the mother's insufficiency. Ljubow is entrusted to a maternal guardian who has made the confines of the ship her home and is closely associated with the unconscious life of nature and the river. Yet the need for maternal guidance and its regrettable absence is emphasized in a significant situation. While trying to understand her confused erotic feelings awakened through her encounter with Valdevenen, Ljubow remembers her dead mother with sadness. In Anaïs Nin's text the girl is deprived of both parents and confined to an orphan asylum. Parental functions are displaced into two figures of authority, the Directress of the orphanage and her lover. The girls call him the Watchman. Issues of power are raised with respect to the sexual relation of the couple. Sexuality in woman is perceived to have an overpowering and subordinating effect. The Directress abdicates her power and authority when confronted with the male gaze.

Both texts contain an implied question that is similar to the one Michèle Montrelay has found in many contemporary texts written by women :

où est-elle la femme-mère libre généreuse,
qui enfante puissamment?(43)

In Wolga the father figures only as a word, a name invested with the power to fulfil the daughter's need for recognition of her impulses towards independence and self-expression. Michèle Montrelay notes the same correlation between the mother's absence and the daughter's intensified longing for the father in women's texts, saying :

On cherche le père. Le sage médiateur est absent.
Pas plus dans les livres que dans la vie; avec
sa propre jouissance, ce père attise plutôt le
foyer (44).

In Anaïs Nin's text the father substitute appears similarly as ' the arbiter, the connoisseur, the bestower of decorations' (45). A direct link is established between the

power of the male gaze to control female desire and the father-daughter relationship. With no mother to guide and support her, the orphaned Djuna is entirely at the Watchman's mercy. Her awakening erotic desires drive her to leave the confines of the orphanage to meet the object of her love, a boy her own age. Yet in order to have her desire recognized she is forced to accept a position that makes her

the recipient of male desire, the passive recipient of his gaze (46).

The text emphasizes that

In this barter there was no question of rebellion. The Watchman stood, demanded, gestured, was all part of a will she did not even question, a continuation of the will of the father (47).

As a result of this concession to authority there occurs a splitting of love into sensuous pleasure and passionate desire. Sexual desire being experienced as corrupting the individual will, all desire for self-assertion comes to be seen as negative. Djuna suppresses her own desire for power. She denies her personal ambitions as a talented dancer, her desire for public recognition and sexual pleasure.

John Berger has pointed out that

It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world with words, but words can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it. The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled (48).

He also emphasizes that cultural conditioning structures vision to the extent that 'we only see what we look at' (49). Anaïs Nin's text foregrounds the distortion of individual vision as an effect of social experience. Djuna's dichotomized views of power in terms of paternal aggression and self-surrendering love as a positive experience of life corresponds to Lou Andreas-Salomé's opposition between male activity

and female passivity. In Wolga Ljubow's progressive acceptance of her powerlessness and passivity is underlined by a complex use of visual images.

In Im Kampf um Gott the boy's immediate realization of his urge for self-expression culminates in his sense of communion with the glowing sun on the mountain peak. The time of the summer solstice serves to locate the space between childhood and adolescence in Wolga. Evocation of the rising sun suggests the promise that the vision of nature as an amorphous mass of heterogeneous elements will be transformed into a differentiated view of reality. However, the girl's diffuse yearnings for life, knowledge and self-assertive expression are associated with night imagery. Cut off from any possibility for action, she peers into the lustreless summer night and apprehends the external world like a boundless realm of infinite, yet undisclosed, meaning :

Die helle Nacht stand draußen unverändert, gleichmäßig und glanzlos, wie eine Sonne, die von den Dingen völlig aufgetrunken ist und nun in ihnen wohnt (50).

Whereas the boy Kuno becomes aware of his identity by objectifying his aspirations through his adventurous quest of the mountain, Ljubow's energies are driven inward. She locates her identity in a passive body which she fantasizes as boundless and powerful as nature. Simone de Beauvoir has described this development of female narcissism as a process of self-alienation. She insists :

C'est parce qu'elles ne sont rien que quantité de femmes limitent farouchement leurs intérêts à leur seul moi qu'elles l'hypertrophient de manière à le confondre avec le Tout. . . . Un homme qui agit nécessairement se confronte. Inefficace, séparée, la femme ne peut ni se situer ni prendre sa mesure; elle se donne une souveraine importance parce qu'aucun objet important ne lui est accessible (51).

Referring to the need of the other to mirror the self, she also emphasizes :

En vérité, il n'est pas possible d'être pour soi positivement autre, et de se saisir dans la lumière de la conscience comme objet. Le dédoublement est seulement rêvé (52)

Similarly, Lou Andreas-Salomé conveys the transformation of the girl's pleasure in desiring the unknown other into exalting her body in terms of self-loss. Accepting her passivity, her desire for exploring the complex diversity of nature undergoes a change. Initially, the external world is endowed with the possibility of self-objectivation. Now objects lose their capacity to attract desire and meaning that inhabits them like a sleeping sun becomes forever veiled. The text associates the girl's repression of multiple active desires with a change in perception. It now foregrounds the powerlessness of the look to grasp the meaning of external objects :

Über allem nach wie vor die ergreifende Weiße der glanzlosen Nachthelle, in die ohne Macht, ein entthronter Herrscher, wie ein erblindetes Auge der Mond niederstarrt (53).

Speaking about Ibsen's *Ellida* Lou Andreas-Salomé describes the girl's intense longing for life and freedom as

das Drängen und Sehnen einer Natur, die keiner über das Leben aufklärt, und der keiner darin ihren Platz und ihre Aufgabe zuweist (54).

The underlying and unquestioned assumption in this analysis is that woman has no place and identity but the one assigned to her by man and in relation to man. Ljubow is spared *Ellida*'s nervous depression because her encounter with doctor Valdevenen offers her an introduction into reality and provides her with a focus for her diffuse hunger for life. Yet his equation of woman and sexuality encloses her

within the immancence of her body.

Whereas Ljubow is given no means of self-expression , Djuna discovers dancing as a way of acting out suppressed desires. In retrospect she remembers :

The flow of images set to music had descended from her head to her feet and she ceased to feel as one who had been split into two pieces by some great invisible saber cut (55).

What the text works out with regard to dancing is also revelatory of the woman's writing experience. It shows her struggle to come to terms with

cette passion de la division féminine entre jouissance et désir, division qui écartèle et qu'on ne peut pas réconcilier (56).

Anais Nin's splitting of the paternal function into the sexually oriented Watchman and the faceless dancing master has a twofold effect. On the one hand, their different relationship to the woman suggests

qu'un réservoir de jouissance, où vie et mort sont entremêlées, demeure, non sexualisé (57).

Djuna's dancing implies that the fact of embodying desire, or what amounts to the same, enacting the body's division by the symbolic precedes

toute saisie possible du sujet dans son image et celle de l'autre (58).

In this view, Djuna's preference for living out non-sexual pleasures as an adult woman betrays as much her resistance to the genderized female role as her lack of an autonomous self-image as woman.

On the other hand, seeing the symbolizing function as male reveals specific problems. Djuna experiences her ballet master as a magician who is in full control of her body. She knows that

The dance gained in perfection, a perfection
born of an accord between their gestures;
born of her submission and his domination (59).

Learning to be aware of her body, to control and shape its energy potential she becomes aware of the fact that she can be powerful. But she does not learn from her male master how to live and assert herself out of such power. Exhilaration and fear are self-defeatingly intertwined. Djuna rejects the man's invitation to tour the world as dancers. She explains her refusal through personal lack of strength caused by her persisting inner break. In Collages Renate's abandonment of her wish to pursue a career as actress is directly linked to her sense of guilt at wanting to step out of her culturally defined place. Reminiscing on her decision, Renate realizes that self-exposure to the public world would mean to reveal her demand that the father recognize her sexual desire. However, her life, body and also her desire are conditioned to submit to the father's desire and thus to secure his love and approval. Renate also perceives that his insistence on maintaining her dependence as a child hides his own sexual desire. The evocation of the incest prohibition in this context serves to apportion blame to the woman who dares to question and oppose male dominance. With Djuna, Anais Nin foregrounds the aspect of fear. Djuna suspects that her internal division between the desire for power and the desire for being loved drains her of energies. As a result she feels inept at taking a position inside male territory and making for herself a place within it.

Speaking of women's writing, Jane Miller has suggested that

One way of looking at women's fear is as an immigrant's fear, the disorientation of anyone who leaves the place where they were born, its people and its language, to enter a foreign country alone. . . . An exhilarated discovery of power must strenuously resist its undermining by feelings of loss, damage and danger. Without conscious and vigilant resistance the immigrant is particularly prey to the myths and pieties of the host community (60).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's text Wolga betrays a compromise between confronting cultural assumptions of gender and reproducing them. In her portrayal of Ljubow's insertion into her female role, she establishes the same link as Anaïs Nin between the male advocacy of an image of woman as dependent child and the man's hidden sexual desire. Similar to the Watchman in Anaïs Nin's text, in Wolga the man is also set up as the viewing subject. The text makes it explicit that the man does not simply look at the girl but that his gaze is selective. Valdevenen's pronounced wish to keep the girl confined to a space of perpetual childhood and innocent fantasies is contradicted by his look that silently eroticizes and objectifies her. Ljubow not only senses this discrepancy in his approach but, like Djuna, she also feels trapped in his gaze. Framed as a sexual being,

Ljubow fühlte sich wie isoliert in der Gefangenschaft des Blicks, den ihre steigende Beklommenheit zu entzünden schien. Sie hätte nicht gewagt aufzustehen, oder gar fortzugehen, nicht einmal sich zu regen wagte sie, gleich der armen, kleinen Maus, die mit der leisesten Bewegung fürchten muß, eine auf dem Sprung stehende Katze zu reizen. Sie starrte Valdevenen in die Augen. Und ihr Traum entstand in ihr - - . (61).

It is implied that the girl's passivity activates the man's desire for power and that his sexualization of the girl aims at controlling her autonomous aspirations. She is reduced to her social role, which destines her for

Brautschaft, Frauenschaft, Mutterschaft (62).

Yet it is also the impact of the male gaze that makes Ljubow apprehend her body as desirable. As a result

her own sense of being in herself
is supplanted by a sense of being
appreciated as herself by another (63).

Henceforth, when turning herself into an object of vision
or reflecting upon herself

Il arrive que, dans le plaisir solitaire, la
femme se dédouble en un object mâle et
un objet femelle (64).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's text foregrounds this internalized male look in a situation that carries similar religious overtones as Kuno's laborious quest of the mountains in Im Kampf um Gott. Ljubow craves visual stimulation and activity, possibilities for exploring and understanding life. Valdevenen offers her an outlet for her restless energies by taking her ashore. However, he leads her into the empty and entirely bare enclosure of a temple and thus denies her desire for contact with real life. The text enacts a 'rite de passage'. Ljubow is reluctant to cross the threshold into a void that excludes the outer world from sight and puts it out of her grasp. Not only is there nothing to see but also nothing to look at. The temple offers

Nichts, was zu den Sinnen und zur Phantasie die leiseste Äußerung tat, was dem frommen Gefühl beeinflussend entgegenkam, es zu erregen, zu bereichern, zu sättigen, nichts als leerer Raum, als nacktes Obdach für den Inhalt, den der Mensch aus seinem betenden Gemüt hineinstellen mochte (65).

Under the man's watchful gaze the girl's energies are transformed

von strotzender Kraftungeduld
zu passiv träumender Hingabe (66).

The girl is deprived of any possibility of using her own faculties of discrimination and ordering. Reduced to elaborating muted inner space, she only has the choice to project herself into the empty space around her and thus to create a fantasized relation to the world. Any refusal or failure to establish a relationship at all would prove suicidal, leaving self and other both

kalt und tot wie eine starre Hülle,
ein leeres Gefäß (67).

Male guidance leaves the girl only the choice between madness and an infantilizing narcissism. Accepting her confinement to inner space compensates for actual powerlessness.

The girl's initial reluctance to enter the void may be seen to express a resistance towards the denial of her full human potential, a desire not to be female. However, Lou Andreas-Salomé avoids elaborating on the conflict between active desires for self-assertion and the girl's retreat into inner space. Instead, the text continues to focus on the girl's entrance into the depth of the self as a necessary preliminary stage towards individuation. At the same time, however, it foregrounds her powerlessness to exert control over the direction her development is to take. Dispossessed by the very means of self-affirmation, she is possessed by what cultural conditioning has left inscribed in her body. Thus

récrée à chaque nouvelle rencontre, la femme n'a pas même la liberté d'inventer sa propre image d'elle-même, cette image qui projette dans le futur et qui donne un but à la vie: son image est toute faite, c'est celle que l'homme a dessiné, conforme à ses jouissances et à sa paix, une image qui fige. Il faut toujours ressembler à celle qui a été aimée ou acceptée (68).

Ljubow's insertion into her female role is completed as soon as her initially diffuse energies and desires are channelled into her desire for love and centred on the man. As a result, the girl's awareness of herself as a separate being coincides with her fixation in a state of perpetual waiting for her lover. Blind to the world around her and unaware of the passing of time and life, she remains preoccupied with what happens within her. Yet, as Rachel Brownstein has pointed out, being self-preoccupied is not synonymous with being self-aware. Enclosed in the restricted space of the ship

no serious action is available to her
. . . the sole significant movement
that so much concerns her is something
over which she has no control (69).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's text comments on this ordeal of

solitary waiting for release from passivity. The girl's frustrated desire for action culminates in her senseless circular movement

stets um denselben Punkt herum, gebannt in stets die gleiche Enge, während der Strom weiterströmte, stetig und unaufhaltsam weiter (70).

In The Sealed Room Djuna exteriorizes her preoccupations with her moods and feelings by adorning and beautifying the interior of her house. She resembles the traditional fictional heroine who is identified with interiority and the domestic sphere. Patiently waiting to find her importance reflected by the lover's approval

She was like a perpetual bride preparing a trousseau. As other women sew and embroider, or curl their hair, she embellished her cities of the interior, painted, decorated, prepared a great mise-en-scène for a great love (71).

Djuna appears to be compelled to do what she does. She does not choose to do it. Choice would imply the recognition of alternative behaviour and of alternative goals. Yet her self-display has only one goal, to make herself lovable in order to be loved.

Djuna's efforts to transform reality reveal her wish to become special and unique, to want to change and be changed, to have a separate identity. Yet her attempts at self-realization and her longing for transformation are hollowed out by her opposed strivings to stay the same, and to stay at the same place. She confines herself within the solitary enclosure of her house. The text establishes the house directly as a metaphor of the integral self, organized, located and defined, whose main purpose is to have a function for others. Significance is not concentrated in action and achievement but in a fixed image of the self, an idea of beauty and perfection.

The story about Djuna revolves around an unresolved contradiction between the self and an image of the self. A part

of the mind, evoked by the presence of the 'sealed room', is inaccessible to the creative active self. What is more, this denied part of the self makes another part its victim. Concerned only with the creation of effects in order to control her surroundings and manipulate others, Djuna continuously frustrates her own desire to establish contact with other people. Instead

she was charming them in such a manner that the human being in her, the warm and simple human being, remained secure from invasion. She constructed a subtle obstacle to invasion at the same time as she constructed an appealing scene (72).

Djuna's interior decoration and obsessive introspection fabricates a space that turns the real into an aesthetic artifice. Passively waiting for external approval, her only reason for being is to make herself into the perfect object representing the lover's objective. As with Ljubow in the end, there is no question of risking the self through confrontation and conflict in pursuit of a chosen goal. Yet contrary to Ljubow's acceptance of her fate, Djuna continues to suffer from her self-alienation which her own self-doubts and lack of self-confidence help to maintain. The sense of smallness and worthlessness has established 'one shuttered window' (73). within herself so that the world does not come into view as a means of testing and asserting the self.

However, as often happens at the end of Lou Andreas-Salomé's texts, a different voice emerges again that defies the traditional closure of the text. It calls into question the woman's predicament to experience herself only in relation to man. The narrator's intrusion opens up the field of vision again. The girl is offered the possibility of a second look :

Vielleicht kam das kleine Menschenkind einmal wieder, . . . - dann würde es um sich schauen und nachholen, was es heute versäumt (74).

Leonie Müller-Loreck also notes the contrast between narrative voices at the end of the text. She understands the narrator's suggestion in terms of the girl's attendant wish for union with all of life's phenomena which is intermittently sustained by her self-awareness as a separate, independent individual (75). Yet the text expresses this duality much more ambiguously. It does not represent the discovery of female identity as an ongoing process of differentiation of self and other. Instead, it highlights the increasing suppression of female subjectivity and the increasing blindness of the seeing eye. The narrator's suggestion, in contrast, associates implicit criticism of female self-absorption with the need to activate the look. This focus on the look as 'l'image visible du désir' (76) brings into play two different qualities of desire.

Earlier in the story, the text foregrounds a genderized difference that revolves around the boy's and the girl's dealing with limited possibilities for action during childhood. A boy of Ljubow's age watches the distant beauty of nature through an opera glass. He thus finds a way of appropriating the world that still escapes his reach. Ljubow rejects this attitude in favour of her irrational communion with nature. Yet at the same time she suffers from being condemned to passivity and from her inability to bridge the gap between self and world. During an off-shore excursion she accepts the boy as guide into regions that feminine propriety normally forbids her to enter. This selective attitude on the girl's part suggests that

there is no stability of sexual identity, no position for women (or for men) which is ever simply achieved (77).

In Wolga the narrator's reference to regarding the world with 'offenem Blick' (78) also hints at the possibility that the girl may use her look differently. Her indiscriminate

looking is throughout associated with affective values and immediate consumption. Yet the boy's inquiring look manifests his certainty :

Le monde est ma visée, mon intention, mon projet, mon désir (79).

His

regard tend à s'appropriier et à réduire au sein de la conscience le monde qu'il écarte, la jouissance qu'il diffère, la mainmise qu'il retarde (80).

The narrator's emphasis on the look with reference to the girl disturbs this genderized polarity. It brings simultaneously the female and the male attitude towards time and space into play. In doing so it implies that both functions are accessible to either sex. With regard to woman this may mean, as Sigrid Weigel has stressed, that

Statt auf den Blick zu verzichten wird die Frau ihr Auge schärfen müssen - nicht die Brille des Mannes aufsetzen, aber sie wird ihren eigenen Blick, einen aktiven, nicht-voyeuristischen Blick entwickeln müssen (81, author's italics).

A similar contrast between a woman's state of fixation in timeless being together with her blindness to the surrounding world and the need to direct energies outward and activate the look informs the end of Anaïs Nin's text The Sealed Room . The central character Djuna encounters a woman, named Matilda. For twenty years Matilda has come every day to sit on the same bench in the centre of Paris. Like Ljubow, waiting for the lover's return she is

anaesthetized by a great loss into immobility and timelessness (82).

Her passive look into the void is described as bearing

this glazed expression of those who watch the crowd passing by and never recognize a face (83).

Matilda's literal obedience to obey the lover's command to wait for him illustrates the extreme consequence of female positioning within the dominant male order. Her passivity links her to all the women in Anaïs Nin's fiction who are haunted by a 'phantom lover' and to the daughter in Winter of Artifice, whose longing for the father, that symbol of divine power and knowledge, is finally fulfilled after twenty years of separation. Matilda, deprived of the lover's presence on whose gaze she depends to assume an identity, is reduced to a lifeless object. She is unable to relate to herself as to others.

Much less explicit than Anaïs Nin in locating the gaze of others, Lou Andreas-Salomé personifies nature, writing

Aus großen , ruhigen Augen schaute die Landschaft dem Menschenkinde auf dem Schiffchen zu (84).

Yet this gaze also suggests the possibility of a non-voyeuristic look which is devoid of sexual desire. It is this possibility that Anaïs Nin exploits in having Djuna recognize her similarity with Matilda. In doing so, she anticipates what Sigrid Weigel has claimed to be indispensable, if a woman wants to learn to relate to herself. Expanding on Elisabeth Lenk's views, she insists :

Die sich selbst verdoppelnde Frau, der die Frau zum lebendigen Spiegel wird (Lenk), braucht m.E. ein wachsames Auge, um die Sprache der anderen Frau, die Beredsamkeit ihres Körpers, ihres Schweigens und ihrer Gesten zu verstehen (85).

However, Elisabeth Lenk has also emphasized that

the relationship of woman with herself which will emerge from this is so new that it cannot be defined yet (86).

Anaïs Nin's way of establishing the relationship between Matilda and Djuna offers a comment on the self-alienating character of female narcissism. In fact, Matilda's petrified

body and unseeing gaze supports Elisabeth Lenk's view that

The woman who attracted everyone's gaze was only apparently narcissistic. In reality she did not exist for herself but only for others. And what was even sadder and left the fairest of all women so empty was that others did not exist for her. This woman was purely passive, an object only. She was loved, but she herself did not love; she was seen, but she herself did not see (87).

What distinguishes Djuna and Ljubow from Matilda is that they are both endowed with a strategy of psychic survival. Ljubow identifies with a male vision of the world. Aggressive impulses are used in the service of self-repression and converted into understanding male views of the world. With her withdrawal into inner space Djuna represents a similar traditional image of woman. Yet as in Houseboat, the text focuses primarily on the failure of identity. At the same time, it reveals the difficulties of transforming the self once subjectivity is constructed in terms of genderized opposites based on female submission and male dominance.

Djuna's reading of Matilda's paralyzed sense of time activates a memory trace. It makes her relive the pain when

there had been a momentous break in the flow,
a change of activity (88).

Yet it also makes her aware of her fear to be again over-powered by paternal authority,

as if the entire situation would be reenacted inevitably: possession, love, desertion, replacing her on a bench like Matilda, awaiting a denouement (89).

As a result of what she felt as the father's rejection of her very being

she had allied herself with the son
against the father (90).

However, as in Lou Andreas-Salomé's text the possible alliance between daughter and son is only evoked to

highlight the daughter's refusal to confront the father. In Paul, Djuna chooses a lover who parallels her own fear of self-assertion. Both mutilated in their potential for self-expression their association consists in

leaps into the air to avoid obstacles (91).

The suppression of aggressive impulses in this relationship corresponds to Ljubow's rejection of the son's way of appropriating and dominating the world of fascinating objects by the power of his look. Similarly, Djuna refrains from developing her dancing talent as a means of self-expression and discards her 'secret desires for pleasure' (92) and public recognition. Instead, all passion is directed into the dream of love with the result that passion is restricted to sexuality. Yet both texts show that female sexuality is constructed in such a way as to repress autonomous libidinal drives and aggressive impulses. Differentiating between the sublimation of sexual impulses and their repression Margarete Mitscherlich writes :

Sublimierte Impulse sollten von solchen unbewußt wirkenden Abwehrmechanismen unterschieden werden, die dem Ich dauernden Energieaufwand abverlangen, um durch die sogenannte 'Gegenbesetzung' die Verdrängung aufrechtzuerhalten und die Wiederkehr des Verdrängten zu verhindern. . . . Solche Gegenbesetzungen wie etwa auch Unterwürfigkeit anstelle aggressiver Gelüste binden oder blockieren viel ursprünglichen Schwung und seelische Regsamkeit, während die Sublimierung einen neuen, weiterführenden Weg weist (93).

The image of the sealed room serves Anaïs Nin primarily to metaphorize repressed content as a space that houses uncontrolled aggressive impulses. Encountering Matilda's exclusion from real life, power and history enables Djuna to reflect on her own situation :

She could see clearly all the cells of her being, like the rooms of her house which had blossomed, enriched, developed and stretched far and beyond all experiences, but she could see also the cell of her being like the walled-in room of her house in which was lodged violence as having been shut and condemned within her out of fear and disaster (94).

Anais Nin's diary entries around the time of writing The Sealed Room reveal an increasing concern with clarifying her own negative view of power as destructively aggressive. Analyzing her relationship to the reputed critic Edmund Wilson, she writes :

My first experience depersonalized MAN and made him a symbol of someone who misuses his power. A full-powered man was one who misused his power, to dominate woman. . . . My neurotic vision would pick out the dangerous elements . . . I only saw a man whose will would bend mine, ignore my aspirations, beliefs, deprive me of my liberty, threaten my development. By his very achievement he was doomed (95).

It is the same evasion of conflict that perpetuates Djuna's dependence on the internalized image of woman as passive and powerless. At the same time, however, suppressed active impulses are converted into diffuse feelings of hostility. The narrator comments :

There was a little cell of her being in which she still existed as a child, which only activated with a subtle anger in the presence of the father, for in relation to him she lost her acquired power, her assurance, she was rendered small again and returned to her former state of helplessness and dependence (96).

Djuna suffers from her inability to deal with aggressive impulses in a constructive way. Her compensatory emphasis on 'barring violence from the world of love' (97) encases her, like Ljubow, in a numbed body. Erotic passion, far from being a joyously creative source, survives as 'a reprieve from death and loss' (98). Passion is intensified by being indefinitely deferred as a result of the father's powerful control over the daughter's desires. Ecstasy operates as a dissolvent of identity, allowing contact with deeper layers of the self and momentary fusion of conflicting selves. Yet this submersion into the closed world of delicate emotions

and subtle states of feeling is as much a flight from sexuality as from the physical world.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's enclosed room of solitary female pleasure under the watchful male gaze reappears in Anaïs Nin's text with similar connotations of silence. Her description of Djuna's discovery of her predicament may also be taken to characterize the writer's exclusive focus on inner space. Music, in its capacity to arouse the whole body, serves Anaïs Nin frequently to crystallize a significant experience in an ecstatic moment of self-surrender. With regard to her way of working she writes :

By giving impressions of feelings and sensations, such as you might give through music, by enrichment of the sensibilities, I seek to approximate the sensory, emotional way we receive experience (99).

In The Sealed Room it is César Franck's Symphony in D Minor that makes Djuna understand her own meaning. The literal influence of structured, yet unverballed male inner space activates a memory trace. The disturbance of her body makes the text exist:

Over and over again in the musical ascensions of emotion the stairway of fever was climbed and deserted before one reached explosion. An ob-
sessional return to minor themes, creating an
endless tranquillity . . . a passion without
the storms of destruction . . .
Listening to the symphony flowing and yet not
flowing (for there was a static groove in which
it remained imprisoned, so similar to the walled-
in room of her house, containing a mystery of
stillness), Djuna saw the Obelisk in the Place de
la Concorde . . . One pointed dart of stone to
pierce the night, the fog, the rain, the sun,
aiming faultlessly into the clouds (100).

Both Ljubow and Djuna discover that their meaning consists in the artful elaboration of inner space. Lou Andreas-Salomé's text, however, implies that the woman is free to realize herself within the externally imposed confines of her identity. Anaïs Nin's text , in contrast, suggests that female

aspirations are doomed to attain that clouded amorphous chaos which mirrors the diffuse mass of her muted desires. Moreover, the woman recognizes herself through a male conceived text which creates her as enigma and silence.

Anais Nin writes on behalf of memory to make the silence exist as well as to trace the construction of the sealed room. This focus on the past resembles Lou Andreas-Salomé's preoccupation with exploring and understanding how woman's positioning within patriarchal order takes place. Their frequent re-writing of their own story in more or less disguise betrays their sense of feeling possessed by hidden material of which they desperately try to rid themselves. Yet repeated displacements into different constellations of character and situations also suggest the presence of an over-determined text of which they ultimately fail to get free. Julia Kristeva has pointed out that

Women generally write in order to tell their own family story (father, mother and/or their substitutes). When a woman novelist does not reproduce a real 'family' of her own, she creates an imaginary story through which she constitutes an identity: narcissism is safe, the ego becomes eclipsed after freeing itself, purging itself of reminiscences. Freud's statement "the hysteric suffers from reminiscences" sums up the majority of novels produced by women (101).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's use of the tree image to metaphorize woman's mode of creation as natural and effortless suggests that guarding this closeness between life and literature is the only way in which a woman can and ought to be creative. Anais Nin also uses the image of the tree in relation to female creation, but with a significant modification. The description of Djuna's home and garden in The Sealed Room relies largely on diary entries. They depict Anais Nin's own home in Louveciennes, near Paris, where she settled down, full of determination to become a writer. In the diary, house and tree become explicit images for the self. She notes :

I chose the house for many reasons. Because it sprouted out of the earth like a tree, so deeply grooved it was within the old garden. . . . I could take root here, feel at one with the house and garden, take nourishment from them like plants (102).

No actual tree is mentioned here. But about fifteen years later, it is singled out for symbolic purposes in The Sealed Room where it offers a comment on Djuna's as well as Anais Nin's mode of creation. In Djuna's garden

There was a huge tree of which she did not know the name, but which she named the Ink Tree for its black and poisonous berries (103).

The image is set in a context that focuses on Djuna's efforts to activate her energies and use them creatively. That is, she engages in re-constructing her own image through a mode of external self-display. Yet this expression of her creativity within the confines of domesticity with its emphasis on sensibilities and inner space bears poisonous fruit. Fixing her self in beautiful objects and images, while keeping 'very still and mute' (104), Djuna remains a woman who

is always and only "becoming"- that is, she is beautiful but she is also always imagining some future identity that she is unable to realize by herself (105).

The text constantly blurs the dividing line between narrator and character, writer and subject, suggesting equivalent female experiences. So firmly internalized is a cultural self-image of woman as beautiful passive object that neither the one, nor the other know why they contribute to perpetuating their own self-alienation and are unable to name what they apprehend as lack. So Djuna can only ask herself what it was

that was weeping inside of her costume and house, something smaller and simpler than the edifice of spells (106).

Despite Anais Nin's emphasis on her writing as a means of achieving personal freedom, the tree image rather betrays a different intuition. It is closer to Sarah Kofman's view

of Freud's therapeutic method of curing the hysteric woman, which she sees as rather

a pseudo-cure, a poison-remedy, a 'solution' which could only be pernicious since it allows women to speak only in order to align their speech with that of men, only in order to silence their 'demands' (1o7).

About twenty years after writing The Sealed Room Anaïs Nin often emphasizes the need to use anger as an energizing source and to convert undirected hostility into creation. Speaking out against female passivity, she insists on

the sublimation of anger, anger converted into energy and creation (1o8).

Yet at the same time gender role conditioning interferes so as to make her restrict the scope of female activities. So creation remains linked to an entirely negative attitude towards power. She admits :

Being a woman still means to me preserving and loving life more than power, with which men have demonstrated too tragic an obsession. All history is a struggle for power (1o9).

In The Sealed Room Djuna makes no effort to gain access to her desires for sexual fulfillment or to master the fear of a dominant father. Similarly, Anaïs Nin's insistence on representing the fluid life of sensuous experience seeks to avoid issues of power and involvement in history. Especially in this text, her writing creates an impression that is not unlike Lillian's piano playing, which she describes in This Hunger as 'a sensual cry, heavy with unspent forces ...' (11o).

3. Veiled Apertures

Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anaïs Nin frequently render the relationship between the female self and society in terms of juxtaposing the house and the room. The attic as significant space provides the central metaphor in Lou Andreas-Salomé's book on female characters in Ibsen's plays . It appears in the fairy-tale that anticipates in symbolic form the subsequent psychological analysis of male texts. The doubling of space and discourse points to the possibility of taking different positions within the act of speaking which are linked to different modes of expression.

In Ibsen's plays the woman's conflict is invariably worked out within the intimacy of a male-female relationship. This is mirrored by Lou Andreas-Salomé's rational discourse. The fairy-tale, however, avoids gender restrictions. It highlights the conflict between a socially defined self and its simultaneous existence as a desiring being, whose yearnings cannot be accommodated within predetermined structures, as a fundamentally human problem. Yet once woman is understood as being subject to the same conflicts as man, the image of woman as, by nature, finding her destiny in her socially defined role is implicitly questioned. It is this simultaneous articulation of what is humanly possible for women and its veiled expression that becomes a pervasive feature throughout Lou Andreas-Salomé's fiction.

The position of the attic at the edge of a larger social structure provides it with an opening and a view 'in das Unbekannte, das Unermeßliche' (111). Lou Andreas-Salomé consistently foregrounds the involuntary motivation of the creative act and suggests that access to the other space is immediately available. Emphasis is placed on the event

itself, the impact of which disrupts a hitherto coherent, closed, visible structure . So she refers to the seasons

wo Stürme an den Dachluken rütteln,
ja wo sie ein Windstoß mit jäher
Gewalt aufreißt (112).

From the position of the conscious self the disorganizing force is experienced as being dissociated from the self and outside of it. Its effect on the subject is to induce what is simultaneously 'Erinnern und Erkennen' (113). Lou Andreas-Salomé here formulates early ideas that later became part of her view about the dual orientation of narcissistic desire. What is seen outside reflects what is inside, normally not incorporated into life but repressed and housed in that other space which, in Das Haus, is called

Das Haus ohne Fenster - das Vorgrab (114).

Similar to Freud, she believes

Daß alle Kunst veranlaßt scheint durch
ein Manifestwerden verdrängter Komplexe (115).

Hence the experience which motivates the creative act, namely that,

wo für uns irgendein Stück zufälliger Wirklichkeit verabseitigt, "umrahmt" ist (etwa durch ein Fenster, durch das wir blicken, oder einen Spiegel), es uns gleich so scheint, als müßten wir es durch immer intensiveres Hineinschauen ganz auffassen (116).

Her fiction concentrates on exploring the relationship of the I to the external world of visible phenomena. It revolves

around difficulties of perception and knowledge: the question of vision and the control of the 'eye'/I of the subject (117).

Anais Nin is concerned with piercing the surface of the externally visible, elucidating unconscious desires that structure relationships between self and other and acceding to the desire for self-realization concealed behind its various distortions.

In her story The All-Seeing she foregrounds this entry into the unconscious, into a hidden realm that takes the eye into an unfamiliar world. In contrast to Lou Andreas-Salomé, she emphasizes the presence of a closed door which divides two separate spaces. This door does not open by itself. The possibility of a new vision depends on the conscious creation of an opening. It is bound up with the I's demand for access and the decision to activate invisible content. At the beginning of the story the narrator says :

When I rang the bell I could hear the parting of the beaded curtains of his room, and I knew he could see me through a little glass eye in his door through which I could not see him (118).

Not only is the other space here imagined as belonging to a man. But also the one who decides to use her look apprehends herself first as the object of a male gaze, yet unable to see its owner. In Lou Andreas-Salomé's story Ein Todesfall the woman's suppressed creative potential is equally imagined as male space. As in Anais Nin's story, Esther's vision is framed. She is never directly confronted with the male artist's achievement. His self-portrait 'Einsame Fahrt', which sets in motion her quest for meaning, reaches her through the description in a newspaper so that her reading of its meaning is mediated by public discourse. It is finally the father's sculpture of the son that clarifies the artist's personality for her. Anais Nin's text hints at the woman's ignorance about the implications of the frame that determines her view. Imaginative power, because it testifies to the creativity of the individual self, is valued for its own

sake. In Ein Todesfall Esther takes public speech at its face value. Yet she identifies with the father's attribution of meaning while rejecting the mother's alternative views.

For the woman writer, imagining the other as male appears to serve two purposes in this context. On the one hand, it allows her to see the world through man's eyes and thus transgress the limits of her socially defined personal sphere. On the other hand, she can explore the woman's desire for a vaster world and its relationship to her enclosure in a female identity in relation to male views about women. Both stories interrogate the nature of creativity. Anais Nin is concerned with the pro-creative stage of private dreams and the blockage of wider-ranging forms of cultural self-expression. Lou Andreas-Salomé focuses on the process that brings the culturally valued work into existence. The figure of the artist Eberhart is modelled on her friend Rainer Maria Rilke. Anais Nin's story is built around her friend Jean Carteret.

In a diary entry Anais Nin recalls Jean Carteret's advice not to let herself be crystallized into a role by the demands others make on her but to keep herself open to the manifold complexity of life. She concludes :

Woman has to be constantly reminded of the vaster, mythical and cosmic worlds. That is where man finds his strength (119).

In her story she likens male vision to 'the eye of the universe' (120). The man's eyes are compared to

the roving gaze of the mariner who never attaches himself to what he sees, whose very glance is roving, floating, sailing on, and who looks at every object and every person with a sense of the enormous space around them, with a sense of the distance one can put between one's self and one's desires, the sense of the enormousness of the world, and of the tides and currents that carry us onward (121).

Desire is not fixed but asserts itself within this gap between the subject and a multitude of objects. At the same time, however, vision is scarred. Everything has meaning only in relation to the subject. Distinctions between self and world, I and you collapse. He is driven by an obsession to 'bring the entire universe into his room' (122) in order to undo a primeval deprivation. In this universe woman does not exist :

Her silence permitted the unfolding of all his inventions. In death alone could love grow to such an absolute. One of the lovers must be dead for the absolute to flourish, this impossible, unattainable flower of the infinite. In death alone there is no betrayal and no loss. So Jean gave his infinite love to the drowned Unknown Woman of the Seine (123).

Anais Nin introduced the dead 'Unknown Woman of the Seine' already in Houseboat. Yielding to an aggressive impulse the narrator shoots into the river. The fantasy of killing a dead eternal feminine beauty arouses the sense of committing a crime. In The All-Seeing there is no question of breaking the silence of a woman who does not know herself. Glorified as a mute vessel of transformation, she is

the good and the beautiful, spiritual perfection in palpable form (124).

He sees her as his own unattainable self

as the perfect mirror without flaws which gives the reflection of the future self (125).

Subverting any re-presentation of a unified identity and reality the text establishes strangeness, accentuating the collapse of opposites, differences and limits. Yet far from being a space of freedom, the other side is made up of the same elements that organizes the visible, social world. Self and other remain interlocked in a structure that imprisons them both in a windowless room. The desire 'to escape to countries and places' which are imagined 'to be light, wall-less, illimitable' (126) is conceived as male. Its realization is

blocked by an internalized feminine ideal of self-effacing maternal nurturance. The text is closed, as the narrator formulates her contentment with fantasies of freedom and defines them both as 'prisoners of distinction' (127). Deprived of its function to provide a goal and help to shape the future, the dream is only valued as a means of escape from a delimiting identity.

In this respect the narrator resembles Esther in Ein Todesfall. Her traditional self-image as woman allows her only dreams, projections, identifications and momentary instants of fusion with her hidden other self. It makes impossible any active merging that results in scrutinizing the projection and recognizing it as part of the self. Approaching the self from the pole of desire, Anais Nin's text locates the divorce from dreaming and the presence of unresolved contradictions in the unconscious of the subject. Lou Andreas-Salomé's story makes Esther the central consciousness which is subject to the same opposing forces.

It is significant that Esther feels the absence of sense in her life after fulfilling her procreative functions and thus realizing the essence of her feminine role. Filled with restless yearning for significant action she begins to look for an outlet for her creative energies. In search of self-defined productive work that surpasses her biological destiny she remembers women's ancient capacity of transforming the raw materials of the earth by spinning and weaving. She laments the advent of industrialization which has made these practices redundant. Lou Andreas-Salomé here suggests that the woman's exclusion from culturally relevant work is not a natural given but a historically determined fact. Yet having Esther stress the practical use value of these products, she also reiterates the culturally effected genderized divorce between art and craft (128). Adrienne Rich has pointed out that the act of creation involved in traditionally female work, like

spinning, weaving and embroidery engages the imagination and intelligence of the producer and constitutes an act of transformation (129). It is in this sense that Lou Andreas-Salomé uses a young woman's insistence on the significance of her embroidery in her story Das Paradies. As a self-determined activity, externalizing self-defined desires, it arouses the man's aggression. Through her self-centred creation the woman posits herself as subject and thus withstands his repressive attempts to reduce her to the role of object of his own needs and desires. The story ends by evoking the woman's paralyzing conflict between selfless feminine love and self-development. When she finally yields to his suggestion of maternal bliss and surrenders her hand 'über ein Paradies hinweg' (130) the implication is that, by accepting her role as mother and wife, she abandons and represses her desire to actively handle her own self. In Ein Todesfall Esther is unaware of living out the father's myth of femininity. As it comprises her agreeing with the cultural assertion of female inferiority, she has remained profoundly unconscious of herself as a transformer of life.

Anais Nin's texts equally foreground women's misplaced creative energies and their ignorance about their own transformative powers. Within her fiction Sabina is usually cast as the woman with whom other women wish to fuse. They admire her inexhaustible energy potential and her apparent freedom to live out her desires. Yet in A Spy in the House of Love, the novel that makes her its central focus, Anais Nin links her exclusive concern with sexual fulfillment to her entirely external transformation of her body. Sabina squanders her energies and creativity on erasing her inner contradictions and conflicts by redesigning her face. Covering her inner turmoil she presents a unified self-image to the world. Viewing herself in the mirror that reflects a static image of feminine beauty, she herself believes in its reality. However, the narrator comments on the illusory character of this mirror

image, warning that

inner chaos, like those secret volcanoes which suddenly lift the neat furrows of a peacefully ploughed field, awaited behind all disorders of face, hair and costume for a fissure through which to explode (131).

Lou Andreas-Salomé's texts betray the presence of subversive forces that are liable to disrupt a unified self-representation on two levels, that of naming and plot. In Ein Todesfall, for instance, the use of Esther's name hints at a repressed state of being that knows nothing of the father. Patricia Monigham has pointed out that the Book of Esther is the only one in the bible 'in which Jehova's name does not appear' (132). The biblical story depicts a cultural overthrow which owes initiative and efficiency to the co-operation of a male and female cousin who act independent of paternal authority. Lou Andreas-Salomé's story ascribes both, Esther and Eberhart, a desire for otherness. Reinforced by biblical associations, the story thus discloses a will to cultural power which implicates the need to surpass the confining boundaries of the father's authority.

While struggling to develop new forms of self-expression the brother acts as the sister's guide to the male world of cultural achievement. He introduces her into the function of art and makes her see the difference between the real and the symbolic. Her ignorance about how meaning is created has made her mistake the father's focus on the socially dispossessed as a direct appeal to social involvement. The story suggests that her misunderstanding of the father's realistic mode of representation is associated with its effect of conveying the illusion of offering an exact duplicate of the real. Yet Esther's confusion between the real and the symbolic also betrays stunted mental development due to her lack of training in symbolic expression. It is the father's intervention that severed a developing emotional and sexual bond with her male counterpart in order to re-direct libidinal energies into

the social role of nurturing femininity. Female identity thus appears imposed from outside, being a mirror image of the father's views and fantasies about what and how a woman ought to be. Through the figure of Eberhart Lou Andreas-Salomé reflects on the necessary preconditions for artistic achievement. The son differentiates himself from the father to assume his position as subject in his own right. The story presents this process in terms of three successive stages. Initially, the son mimetically reproduces the symbols created by the father. He thus appropriates his symbolic inheritance and actively enters the public realm of male self-representation. Having been trained in the construction of meaning, he is then also able to decipher his inherited signifying practice and to determine whether it corresponds to or fails to express his vision of reality. Defining himself he separates from the father and attempts to create autonomous ways of self-representation.

Regarded as a static image, Esther appears to be a fictional precursor of the traditional image of woman which Lou Andreas-Salomé traces in her essay Der Mensch als Weib. However, it is naming again that makes it explicit that the sense of a coherent identity rests on unconscious contradictions. Lou Andreas-Salomé's introduction likens Esther to a powerful Juno, the goddess who

ruled not only marriage but the entire reproductive life of each woman (133).

Endowed with mythical powers her life-giving inner space is, however, made to serve social ends. Reduced to her biological destiny, her body becomes a nourishing matrix for nurturing children and relationships. Yet this idea of woman's innate control over life and death is undercut by making the mythical figure appear as an art object. As a Juno, she appears only,

wie wenn sie einem unsichtbaren Künstler Modell gestanden hätte (134).

This implies that she is not, by nature, the epitome of femininity but corresponds to an image created by a force external to her. The obvious discrepancy between what she

seems to be and what she is, is further emphasized by endowing her with a dutifully subservient attitude in relation to her husband, an architect. Out of this gap between seeming omnipotence and actual powerlessness emerges a diffuse yearning for significant activity. Thus fiction introduces as absence what Lou Andreas-Salomé's rational discourse writes out as negation.

Yet otherness is located elsewhere, outside her own consciousness. displaced into the male. Eberhart's first autonomous creation echoes her own desire to break the limits of her frustrating social existence. She senses the violent conflict underlying his will towards self-realization which she is spared by having taken refuge in her social role. Unable to recognize his conflict as her own, the force of repressed desire presents itself as the effect of a dream which comes to hollow out the familiar world.

A dim light in the darkness of night her unenlightened consciousness suddenly perceives reality differently. It becomes an alien world, an 'other' reality, inhabited by shadows, peopled by the dead-undead, filled with unsignified desire, a fragmented inchoate mass. Summoned by Esther's longing to dissolve the boundaries of prescribed feminine behaviour, suddenly a ghostly sight emerges :

er selbst erhob sich deutlich vor ihren Gedanken
wie ein Schatten löste er sich aus der dunklen
Ecke neben ihrem Lager ab (135).

Her shadowy double is an imaginary presence, associated with Eberhart, the male artist and foster-brother. Figuring as her own unrealized self, he represents self-willed vocational choice and self-generated meaning, the power of creating one's own image by giving shape to one's own experience of life. It is her long forgotten other side that has been sacrificed for the sake of her cultural identity as mother and wife. Thus, like her restless yearning, he is again forgotten as soon as

she enters the circumscribed sphere of wifely and maternal duties. Yet her latent sense of lack empties the familiar world of meaning. Daily life appears as

ein unmerkliches Weitergleiten des Lebens; es kam ihr vor, wie wenn sie daneben noch ein anderes Leben führe (136).

This gap within the unified cultural self asserts itself as death of the other. Discussing Hélène Cixous' understanding of Freud's concept of the uncanny, Rosemary Jackson emphasizes that 'Death cannot be portrayed directly' (137). So, on the edge of Esther's consciousness her latent death and hidden lack of being first materializes as an insubstantial shadow. Subsequently, her search for a lost part of the self translates as a desire to understand the dead artist.

Not the dead artist, but the one who goes mad appears as a central figure in Anaïs Nin's early fiction. The line that leads from Le plus malade des surréalistes via The All-Seeing to The Eye's Journey reflects her persistent concern to come to terms with her own creative powers. The first two stories introduce the 'male other' as the narrator's twin. In The Eye's Journey twinship is an implicit assumption. The text was obviously inspired by Anaïs Nin's actual visit to the studio of the painter Hans Reichel which she describes in the second volume of her diaries. She was fascinated by his paintings that answered her desire to give formal shape to the secret, fluid underground of the individual's social existence. Affirming her own creative will, she similarly perceived her own role

as the eye, the third eye, the eye of vision (138).

In this visionary world there is no central consciousness. The text asserts a fluid subjectivity against the unified subject. Language approximates the dream :

Eine unsichtbare und daher geisterhafte Substanz sieht, was für menschliche Augen nicht bestimmt ist, hört, was für menschliche Ohren nicht bestimmt

ist und kann daher den verborgenen Mechanismus der Gesellschaft zeigen, der den voreinander und für einander Handelnden verborgen bleibt. Nur die Gegenmacht dieses Zaubers erlaubt es, die Gesellschaft mit ihren Regeln, mit ihren normalen Restriktionen als ein Ganzes darzustellen(139).

As through a looking-glass the artist sees into a region inadmissible to consciousness, effecting a transformation of the familiar into the unfamiliar. Anaïs Nin emphasizes the notion that there is another space behind the visible image with reference to the painter's self-awareness as artist :

Aware it was through the Eye that he had passed to reach this other side of the world, he always painted a small human eye in the corner, the secret door of his escape into the deep regions unknown to the surface of the eyes (140).

Similar to Esther's hallucinatory experience, vision of another space is located on the margin of the visible, on the edge of consciousness. The text foregrounds a chaotic mass of intermingling objects, 'lost fragments of irretrievable worlds'(141). Creation contains the struggle that takes place behind the surface of the self. Yet its objectification reveals enclosure in a space of ultimate transformation and terror.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's story focuses on the impossibility to name what is apprehended as lack and on the failure to achieve the construction of a new self. Anaïs Nin emphasizes the sense of an impending catastrophe threatening to drown all possibilities of transformation. This destructive force, which not only denies change but threatens to destroy desire for it, cannot be named correctly. Anaïs Nin's text evokes irrational forces :

A storm perpetually suspended over this, a storm from no one knew where, so that the miracles of beauty stillborn in the water were constantly threatened by an impending lightning, near explosion (142).

The text establishes a link between the failure to identify the destructive agency and stillborn dreams of freedom. Against this passivity, reality asserts itself. It effects an imperceptible transition which closes off any vision of 'communion, metamorphosis' (143). Yet cut off from the living dreaming self the conscious waking self is equally unreal. Unable to understand the nature of the 'real' the self feels inhabited by secret hostile forces. Anaïs Nin's reference to the great 'Other' recalls Lacanian theory

and the difficult situation of the subject in tension between the imaginary and the symbolic (144).

Paranoia abounds, death is imminent. Filled with the sense of being under constant surveillance and the terror of being robbed of his images, his consciousness disintegrates. The painter is committed to an asylum. Suspended between the imaginary and the symbolic, incapable of re-entering the all-encompassing unity of the first and terrorized by the second which it is impossible to decipher, creation becomes a means of delaying 'the final annihilation' (145). It has a limited therapeutic effect but does not engender self-awareness. The painting fixes the subject's sense of being enclosed in a cage, in which mice are being fed to a snake. He identifies with the powerless passivity of the mouse,

Its fixed terror, its incapacity to run away as the snake began to gaze upon it with its unblinking stare (146).

It is the mirror that in The Sealed Room fulfills the same function for Djuna, namely to relieve the self of an overwhelming sense of powerlessness by fixing it. Mourning an unidentifiable loss and powerless to take her place within the symbolic of social interaction, she is unable to form a self-image and withdraws into imaginary space. In the

mirror her face appears as if 'painted upon black still waters' (147). Seeing herself reflected affords her a preliminary self-image, as the one who mourns a loss and does not know herself.

Like The All-Seeing, The Eye's Journey exposes the danger of passive regression into the imaginary. It is associated with drowning the pain of living in drink. As a result human vision becomes blurred while inducing illusory feelings of omnipotence. The painter now identifies with the phallic snake :

He was the one who watched everything and would begin to devour. Because his Eye was fixed on the world. He could no longer move back and forth through the Eye (148).

The eye/I that seeks to dominate the world exclusively by means of the look is an un-seeing eye, represented by a lifeless glass eye. Divorced from the senses, it is unable to make sense of the world and to judge its own situation. Passion is externalized, located in the world outside. In the midst of a raging fire, the eye/I watches dispassionately. Divorced from the body, consciousness loses its power to appropriate the world. The glass eye is lost in the fire. At the mercy of external forces the human being is reduced to a non-entity.

Among Anaïs Nin's longer texts spectral imagery is most prominent in her novel A Spy in the House of Love. Mirrors and eyes dominate Sabina's relation to the world. The novel explores her struggle to free the self behind the mirror. This conflict is cast in terms of her quest for sexual fulfillment . Anaïs Nin foregrounds the relationship between the organization of female sexuality as childlike dependence on a father substitute and the woman's self-image as small and powerless. This equation of sexuality and silent submission gives rise to what Sabina sees as her pursuit of a man's emotional freedom in sexual matters. That is, she tries to separate feelings from sexual enjoyment.

However, the external public eye is also the internalized eye of conscience. Sabina is unable to confront the sense of guilt at having and living out desires beyond those that are socially acceptable. Her inability to acknowledge her conflict between dependent submission and independent self-assertion causes her to develop strategies to conceal her desires from others as much as from herself. Locked in an unceasing tension between a part of herself that strives for atonement of her guilt and the other who strives for freedom, her passionate experiences remain muted escapes from her dependent status as wife. Dispersing her energies irrationally into multiple selves leaves her with the sense of lacking a self altogether. The narrator comments on this self-alienation:

She had lost herself somewhere along the frontier between her inventions, her stories, her fantasies and her true self. The boundaries had become effaced, the tracks lost; she had walked into pure chaos (149).

The novel is centrally concerned with a woman's incapacity to name her desire. Yet as in The Eye's Journey, it is a male artist who objectifies and fixes the effect of her fantasies of freedom, which he suffers himself. Sabina recognizes herself in his painting :

His figures exploded and constellated into fragments like spilled puzzles, each piece having flown far enough away to seem irretrievable and yet not far enough to be dissociated. One could, with an effort of the imagination, reconstruct a human figure completely from these fragments kept from total annihilation in space by an invisible tension. By one effort of contraction at the core they might still amalgamate to form the body of a woman (150).

The text suggests that male vision can only re-present either the chaos looming behind the social self or logically expose the visible difficulties of coming to terms with it. Anaïs Nin introduces the figure of the lie detector to reveal the mechanical way in which rationality and the effects of conscience operate. The logical chain of psychological causality, or rather the rational attempt at establishing that chain, does

not lead beyond formulating a condition that Sabina hopes to surpass.

The end of the novel evokes a voluntary regression to the Oedipal phase that marks the human being's entry into culture. Within a triangular relationship Djuna figures as the supportive, perceptive and articulate mother, the lie detector as father and individual conscience, Sabina as the daughter who desires to undo her construction as a partial self. Again it is a musical experience that serves Anaïs Nin to convey the subject's self-dissolution and immersion within spiritual energies. The narrator takes over, joining Sabina in the knowledge that

The identity of the couple was not eternal but interchangeable, to protect this exchange of spirits, transmissions of character, and the fecundations of new selves being born, and faithfulness only to the continuity, the extensions and expansions of love achieving their crystallisations into high moments and summits equal to the high moments and summits of art and religion (151).

However, this insight is only asserted and contrasts with the very impossibility of signifying it as a viable option within the plot.

In Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel Das Haus the impossibility for women of creating their own meaning is implicitly related to a tradition of women's writing. Anneliese, the mother and central character of the novel, re-reads her own grandmother's letters, which the text directly classifies as fiction. Her explicit purpose in reading them is to ascertain that the son's passion and sensitivity bear no relation to her grandfather's mental illness. Indirectly, however, she not only makes sure of her own sanity as well but, in acknowledging her matrilineal descent also sanctions her own attitudes. Her function in the novel consists in supporting her son's artistic development against the

father's objections and guiding the daughter into marriage against the girl's resistance. A talented musician herself, she renounced the pursuit of an artistic career in favour of creating domestic harmony. Similar to the letters, music is used for private purposes, as a means to discharge the self of excess energies that find no expression and form within the woman's ordinary life. The fact that the letters are addressed to a dead husband recalls Lou Andreas-Salomé's own way of telling stories first to her self-generated god, then in communion with a lost god, that is as narcissistic extensions of the self. However, what is new about this description of a woman's creative self-expression is her reference to darkness, to which it also owes its power. The narrator comments :

dieser dunkle Unterton unter dem glaubenshellen, hindurchwirkend gegen den Willen der Schreibenden, hatte eine Einfalt und Macht, wie beabsichtigt von einem großen Dichter. Von Dichterblut gewesen war die Frau, die da, was sie lebte, dem Toten schrieb (152).

The powerful effect of the letters derives from an acute awareness of loss and irreversible damage, the sense of disconnection and solitude. They are addressed

an den geistesumnachteten Mann, und die ganze Qual erlitten um ihn, der "nicht mehr verstand", zitterte noch in ihnen; das ganze leidenschaftliche Bemühen auch, ihn sich herauszuretten aus der Wirrniss seiner selbst - seine Spur nicht zu verlieren, die aus glücklichen Tagen heraufführte (153).

She remarries and keeps writing these letters, thus producing a continuous record of a second happy life.

The male-female unity at the basis of the creative process is rendered in terms of a conventional female self and a crippled, inaccessible male spirit. What inspires this woman to write is the pain of not being understood and not being able to reach the other. Yet the more she identifies with her social role, the more awareness of the lost other becomes obscured. Finally forgotten, he inhabits the woman's

mind and writing as an invisible, unacknowledged presence. Claudine Hermann has characterized this lost function, which culture ascribes to the male, as

la fonction discontinue, celle de la découverte, du changement sous toutes ses formes, enfin, la fonction supérieure et différenciée (154).

Yet the text does not only present this function as lost but also as deviant, inaccessible to normal consciousness, hence inferior. The woman's letters reveal her intense effort to retrace and retain an image of the male other, that corresponds to her need for unity and coherence. Her invention of an ideal male image, however, resembles the father's mode of creation in Ein Todesfall. It is

enthoben dem Kampf und Schmerz . . . überzeugend geschaut wie in festem, ruhigen Goldumriß seines wahren Wesens (155).

She is neither concerned with exploring the other for his own sake nor her relationship to him. In the isolation of observing her own reflection

gab sie ihm, der darauf herniedersah, rückhaltlos ihren Herzens Erlebnis her (156).

In Ein Todesfall the father equally subjects all contradictions to a unified image. Ignoring the son's conflictual self-representation in his image 'Einsame Fahrt' he represents him as a fully integrated personality. Creating an ideal is held to be synonymous with mastering the object and realizing its full significance. Formulating his project the father says :

er soll sich selbst ähnlicher werden , wie er es sich selbst nie geworden ist (157).

However, the father's claim to present an objective truth is undercut by the mother's comment, who believes :

er soll darauf nach dem Tode so aussehen, wie der Vater ihn gern haben möchte, damit er ihm Freude macht (158).

Overtly the mother's assumption that art is a direct expression of subjective emotions and ideas is related to the theme of female ignorance about the creation of meaning and the transcending function of art. Yet the inter-textual association of two different modes of relating to the object implies that both, the father's desire to dominate the object as well as the mother's view of symbolization as unmediated self-expression only convey half-truths.

Signification is apparently a matter of letters. After distancing himself from the father's sphere of influence, the son continues to write letters to his foster-sister. This is as indispensable to his creation as reading them is to the father's creation of the son. Eberhart's initial desire to proclaim himself master over the actual woman is displaced into the desire to achieve mastery over his own unconscious self. It is into his letters to Esther that he pours the energy of his aspirations and the force of his conflictual longings. They contain the terms of his struggle to bring confused impulses to consciousness. Discrete elements are assembled, combined, decomposed, and reorganized, differentiated and made visible in the attempt to achieve control over the multiple demands of his being and get his diffuse energies focused. The text establishes a link between the woman's ignorance about language as a signifying practice and her unconsciousness of herself as a transformer of life. Esther's increasing involvement in her social role as wife and mother correlates with her decreasing interest in responding to the son's letters. Ignorant about her own power she comes to function as a selfless, unconscious vessel of transformation for the male artist.

In her search for meaning Esther is offered the possibility of re-reading the letters. Looking at them from a new conscious direction may result in her understanding of the body not only as destiny but also as resource. The process of coming into knowledge about the artist may generate self-knowledge, making her aware of their mutual affinity. However, unlike

the father, the daughter does not know where to look in order to acquire a new kind of knowledge. Convinced of the father's superiority she hands him the son's letters. Thus she relinquishes her power and possibility to create her own meaning. The text suggests that significance comes into existence as the product of a desiring and volitional process that involves the interaction of two energized bodies. The fact that these are projected as male conceals the fact that the woman operates as the mute matrix within the male act of symbol formation.

Ein Todesfall as well as the stories, which in Anaïs Nin's collection Under a Glass Bell revolve around crippled male artists and dreamers show that the quest for new forms of signification and self-realization is not a specifically female problem. In her novel Das Haus Lou Andreas-Salomé elaborates on the figure of Eberhart, endowing the developing artist Balduin with the need to face the conflict between self and other. He suffers from the automatic way he assumes the role the father expects him to take, whenever he encounters the latter's commanding authority. This facility to identify with the father's expectations instils self-hate, which continually blocks his creative impulses and instead produces a variety of physical ailments. His pain gives rise to a fantasy of omnipotence :

Alles müßte man jederzeit wechseln können, allem gerecht, niemandem verbunden - frei ganz frei!
Ja, manchmal da kam ihm der gräßliche Gedanke:
alles, selbst die eigenen Eltern, sie, in deren Blut man lag wie eingeschmiedet, in unzerbrechlichen Schranken - wechseln, umtauschen, fort tun können müßte man sie - als ganz Fremde sie abgeben, ihnen selber ganz fremd. - (159).

Yet not only does he recognize the impossibility of ignoring his inheritance but he also experiences himself as the site where inside and outside meet. The centre of his own life, he feels

als ob er ja unmittelbar teilhabe an allen Dingen und alle Dinge an ihm (16o).

However, like Ein Todesfall the novel Das Haus does not go beyond stating a desire for a new point of signification that itself escapes the artist's reach.

Like Eberhart , Balduin also distances himself from the parental home in order to work out his own form of self-realization. He is assisted by his mother whose continuous understanding and support are indispensable to his ability to cope with his transgressive impulses. At the same time, however, she never encourages the daughter's poetic attempts. The end of the novel foregrounds the link between a feminine ideal of selfless maternal nurturance and biological motherhood and the internalized prohibition on revealing her true thoughts and emotions. In Anaïs Nin's texts the same prohibition is repeatedly related to the mother's destructive influence on the son.

In The All-Seeing Jean's inability to transform diffuse energies into significant action is explained by the mother's insensitivity towards his musical ambitions, which drives all desire for direct self-expression underground. With regard to Jay, the painter who appears throughout Cities of the Interior, the mother is equally blamed for rejecting his emotional needs. He relieves himself of his hatred against her in two ways. His painting is a means of visiting his anger on the whole world, breaking it up into distorted fragments. Yet he also fragments the living woman. In his relationship with Lillian and Djuna he is only concerned with gratifying his own needs,

not allowing reason to enter the passionate
Lillian . . . not allowing passion to enter
Djuna's relationship to him (161).

This Hunger, the first text in Cities of the Interior shows Lillian trapped in the cultural equation of woman and mother. Unaware of this confusion she responds blindly to Jay's

need for maternal nurturance. All other urges and aspirations remain in a state of energized chaos. Failing to assert her own needs, suppressed aggressive impulses are irrationally acted out on other people. There is a profusion of psychological comments and explanations about woman's fatal need to live through man and about her fear of abandoning the fantasy of man as a guiding God. Yet what never directly emerges as a problem, is that Lillian's unacknowledged anger in her restricted maternal role also turns to self-hatred. In Lou Andreas-Salomé's novel Das Haus the mother's self-hatred is displaced into her denial of the daughter's self-centered desires.

Djuna's authoritarian way of speaking the voice of female self-awareness veils a fundamental ambivalence about making woman the centre of her own life. Grammatical structure contradicts overt content. It eliminates the woman as subject at the same time as it strives to articulate her need to assume responsibility for her own self, when Djuna says :

Lillian, no one should be entrusted with one's image to fashion, with one's self-creation (162).

The end of Cities of the Interior betrays the same ambivalence. Like the first text, the last, Seduction of the Minotaur , revolves again around the figure of Lillian. Her positioning evokes the notion of circularity. In her introduction to the continuous novel Sharon Spencer has related textual structure to Anaïs Nin's concept of time, saying :

the five novels of CITIES OF THE INTERIOR are interchangeable in position in the total composition, which can be envisioned as a type of movable - truly mobile - modern sculpture, intersecting and interacting as it moves, not only among its own discrete parts, but also with the surrounding context of life. Nin's idea of continuity is circularity or total immersion in the movement of time (163) .

In her last novel Collages the circular structure of the text is emphasized by ending it with the same sentence with which it begins. However, this concept of circularity is disturbing in more than one way. As in her text Houseboat it evokes the idea of movement without progression and is thus related to all her other texts which focus on figures trapped in solitary dreams. Being directly associated with Lillian it is also linked to her maternal compulsion, as well as to her inability to accept aggressive impulses.

Seduction of the Minotaur deals with Lillian's recognition of her self-alienating image as mother of man. The text contains lengthy passages about Lillian's discovery that her sense of worthlessness is related to her mother's negative image of her. Her symbolic awakening to a broken mirror on New Year's Day reinforces the notion that, having begun to see herself through her own eyes, she has also overcome the impulse to free other prisoners instead of herself.

Her exhilarating sense of beginning a new life is emphasized by evoking the idea of her ascension to a higher plane of consciousness, as the plane takes her home. Yet this is also a flight into the darkness of night. Lillian's reflections about the moon reveal the force of cultural gender stereotyping. She succumbs to conventional polarizations. Scientific thinking, external space and the discovery and exploration of new spaces is left to man, while woman is relegated to inner space and the private, personal sphere, as the narrator foregrounds the contrast :

Much of men's energies were being spent on such questions, Lillian's on the formation of Larry's character. Their minds were fixed on space; hers on the convolutions of Larry's feelings (164).

She does not appropriate the traditionally female symbol of the moon to herself, in the way of seeing its dark side as concealing aspects of herself. Instead, her concern is

with her husband's hidden potential. Fantasizing herself as all-powerful earth mother, she believes :

He was truly born in her warmth and her conviction of his existence (165).

Her previously irrational compulsion, namely to will someone else passionately into being, is now consciously and enthusiastically accepted as her very destiny.

Ironically, Lillian's self-image as spiritual mother of man contradicts Djuna's assertion in This Hunger that

women are moving from one circle to another,
rising towards independence and self-creation (166).

In fact, Lillian's view of herself rests on that confusion of the feminine with the maternal, which she tried to escape and which Lou Andreas-Salomé also glorifies in the maternal figure of Anneliese in Das Haus .

Anaïs Nin's textual form is similar to Jay's painting in as much as her texts also present fragmented bodies, divided selves and isolated experiences which are all in conflict with each other. Jay's explosive fury which shatters any idea of unity and coherence is related to a primeval deprivation due to the absence of maternal nurturance. Lillian, asserting herself in that capacity ignores this destructive potential. Similarly, Anaïs Nin implicitly denies all her efforts to shatter the mirror that contains woman's culturally constructed identity. She gathers the broken pieces together to revert to a regressive fantasy, which Julia Kristeva has called

the belief in the omnipotence of an archaic, full,
total englobing mother with no frustration, no
separation, with no break-producing symbolism (167).

The overwhelming presence of terror and paranoia in her text The Eye's Journey reveals the danger of not being able to

defuse the violences mobilized through the
counter-investment necessary to carry out

this phantasm , unless one challenges precisely this myth of the archaic mother (168).

Throughout the last part of Seduction of the Minotaur one is left wondering about a possible alternative, as Lillian does briefly after Dr Hernandez' death, because

He had something to say, which he had not said,
and he had gone, taking with him his secrets (169).

The text immediately displaces this absence of signification by identifying Lillian's state of being with reference to a pre-determined definition:

According to the definition tropic meant turning
and changing, and with the tropics Lillian turned
and changed, and she swung between the drug of
forgetfulness and the drug of awareness . . .
as the sea swung in its bed
turned
changed (170).

In Lou Andreas-Salomé's story Ein Todesfall Esther's impossible quest for meaning also reveals a gap in the father's signifying system. Similar to Lillian, Esther learns about the death of her male counterpart on the very brink of a significant revelation. For her , he is

gestorben im Moment, wo er ihr plötzlich
deutlich zu werden anfing, gerade als ob
er ihr noch etwas sagen müßte (171).

This absence of meaning is ultimately covered by the same conventional image of woman and clothed in the same imagery as in Anaïs Nin's text. Meditating on the step-brother's and her own experience of the sea, Esther realizes that vision is selective. She interprets this difference in male and female experiences in terms of absolute sex differences. Like Lillian, she feels attuned to the tidal waves of the eternally changing-unchanging sea. Fascinated by this continual movement she identifies with the continuity

of life based on cyclic rhythms. Her intimacy with natural life rhythms aligns her with the mother's enclosure in the immanence of being. However, the beginning of the story associates this condition with her diffuse and troubled awareness of the frustrating absence of being and meaning.

Both Lillian's and Esther's unified views of themselves exclude exactly those aspects which the text exposes as problematic. Lillian is shown to come into her own self through significant relationships of identification, friendship and love. She is presented as the one who unites within herself Jay's capacity for pleasure and Djuna's perceptive insight into relationships. Ignoring Jay's capacity for destruction and Djuna's fear of confronting the father as well as her own desires, she sees them only in a positive light.

The text defines woman's enclosure in the structure of the couple in terms of a genderized dichotomy. The space of feminine being remains circumscribed by masculine doing :

She was on intimate terms with the world.
While he maintained a world in which Lillian
was the only inhabitant, or at least the
reigning one (172).

The end of Ein Todesfall foregrounds a similar opposition. Esther's vision of male experience connects the force of natural will-power with instinctual forward movement inherent in the purposeful flight of the birds. Whereas her slumbering self dissolves into the collective unconscious of the sea,

Sein Wille ist wie der des Sturms: mit ganzer
Kraft hinaus! Auf machtvollen Glügeln! (173).

For him life presents a challenge to assert the self. His vision, will and activity introduce the element of discontinuity. It is related to a measure of time which is

that of linear time, of becoming and history, also of language (174). Yet regarding Eberhart as Esther's double cancels the genderized opposition between two kinds of temporality. It suggests that a practice of signification that differs from the father's would involve the need to re-think the relationship between a concept of time as continuity and as discontinuity and woman's attitude towards language. Lou Andreas-Salomé's division of the female subject into woman and creator locates such problems in the male artist. So it is also his creation that provides a comment on the questions that confront herself as writer of the text, and which she refuses to deal with directly.

Eberhart's self-portrait 'Einsame Fahrt' shows a lonely figure at sea, intent on leaving the homely shores. It illustrates the son's break with his hitherto symbiotic relationship with his father. The image represents this rupture by assembling connotations of conflict over his departure, trust in natural rhythms, acceptance of loneliness going with independence, courage and expectancy to face the unknown and the desire to progress. Yet at the same time the figure appears paralyzed and neither physically nor mentally capable of fully yielding to his desire for otherness. The image suggests fear and uncertainty as to what lies beyond the known and solid territory, outside the familiar certainties of paternal authority. The pressure to yield to desire and reach out for another space conflicts with the fear of empty space, itself produced by the loss of faith in paternal patterns and values. The text emphasizes this conflict in the form of a question :

Ist nicht, wo er das Große glaubt,
vielleicht nur das Grenzenlose ? (175).

The direction of the movement insists on the pull towards non-signified space by making visible

der blassen, schimmernden Unendlichkeit Raum (176).

This introduction of limitless undifferentiated space corresponds to Esther's dream space which is crowded with oscillating shadows. As 'other' space it evokes the possibility of other selves, with different histories. Yet the son's creation does not go beyond thematizing this desire for otherness. His figure remains transfixed in the gesture of leave-taking. Apprehending only

den schimmernden Dunst der Ferne (177)

he cannot radically question the father's logic of representation and value system.

Anaïs Nin's text also insists on a desire for that which has not yet been named and integrated into the symbolic order. Her emphasis on asserting the feminine in terms of continuity, fluidity, rhythm, fragmented selves, interrelationships of people and things has the effect of making visible the culturally suppressed. Yet this insistence on discovering the feminine also and inevitably comprises elements of traditional dependency on male norms. The story Hejda in her collection Under a Glass Bell anticipates in significant ways Anaïs Nin's own ambivalent attitude towards her form of art.

On the one hand, the story about Hejda reflects her belief that

woman possesses her own source of vitality and direct relation to creation without the need to rely indefinitely on man (178).

Hejda becomes an artist after freeing herself of the repressive relationship with her husband, also an artist. However, the story casts her as a negative character. Without restrictive boundaries set up by her husband, and which annihilate her as a sexual being, she regresses to narcissistic fantasies of omnipotence. She over-estimates her body, her sexuality and 'everything that was once secret and bound' (179). The fear of alienating her husband did not

allow her to express her subjectivity. Her newly-found sense of freedom and power is coupled with ignorance as to what constitutes art. Autobiographical details are magnified beyond all proportions. Her attempts to appropriate and expand her space make

the canvasses grow larger without
their content growing more important (180).

The text reflects on this danger in its introductory sentences, emphasizing that

The unveiling of women is a delicate matter.
It will not happen overnight. We are all
afraid of what we shall find (181).

Despite her increasing self-confidence in her own creative powers, Hejda continues to define herself primarily in relation to the male artist, whom she wishes to surpass. Anaïs Nin's foregrounding of imaginary space suggests a belief in her power to accede to hidden female desires. Yet this hope is undermined by her constant identification of female desire with sexual desire within male-female relationships, where sexuality is structured along dominance - submission patterns.

Similar to Hejda's self-display and her defensive rejection of other art forms, Anaïs Nin also arrives at totalizing ideals, with regard to her image as woman as well as her views on artistic form. In the introduction to her self-explanatory book The Novel of the Future she insists categorically :

My main theme was that one could only
find reality by discarding realism (182).

Yet advocating

die Geschlossenheit einer Spiegelrelation,
die die Frau auf ein Totalitätsideal fixiert (183)

contradicts her very intention, namely to shatter the self-
reflecting form of representational realism and to break
the mirror that encloses women in reductive female images.

C O N C L U S I O N

Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anaïs Nin have always tended to elicit strongly positive or overwhelmingly negative reactions. Such polarized responses follow the typical lines of polarization from the wholly approving to the harshly sceptical. In the more recent past, for instance, Cordula Koepcke's biography praises Lou Andreas-Salomé especially for the self-confident independence she displayed in her ways of living and thinking. Yet in a collection of biographical sketches about authors who published around the turn of the century Hannelore Schlaffer dismisses Lou Andreas-Salomé's achievement altogether, maintaining that her reputation derives from the renowned spiritual company she kept. Irritation and disappointment are discernible as the woman writer's work is not found to be measuring up to that of her friend, the poet Rainer Maria Rilke. A similar controversy surrounds Anaïs Nin's work. On the one hand, she is favourably presented as a much underrated writer and appreciated for her unique achievement in integrating psychological insights and fiction (Sharon Spencer) and for her elaborate technique and intricate symbolism (Evelyn J. Hinz). On the other hand, when Anaïs Nin's fiction first began to be published in German translation in the 1970's German press reviews almost unanimously rejected it, criticizing in particular its heightened emotionalism and a certain esoteric vagueness. There is also Joanna Russ, accusing her of failing to develop the 'right' response to her situation as a woman writer on the grounds of her attempted redefinition of writing.

Implicit in those mutually opposed attitudes to both writers are expectations grounded either in unquestioned assumptions as to what 'good art' ought to be or normative prescriptions concerning the course a woman's proper response to her situation as a woman writer ought to take. The very existence

of these contrasting judgements highlights the fact that any speaker proceeds to speak from a specific position which, whether acknowledged or not, itself determines ways of looking at the world and at texts. Taking into account that Lou Andreas Salomé's and Anaïs Nin's relationship to their art is largely determined by their gender this study has sought to offer a more differentiated reading of their texts. It has particularly attended to four interrelated areas of struggle in which the writer's interaction with a male cultural tradition takes place. They concern the woman writer's difficulty in perceiving and breaking out of misrepresented images that carry connotations of uncreative passivity and its relation to her own self-definition, notions of identity and character, the relationship between language and consciousness, forms of perspective and structures of plot.

If, following Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, one translates Freud's notion of female psychosexual development into literary terms it helps to understand why issues of power in the form of creative self-assertion inevitably conflict with internalized notions of female inferiority and docile feminine submission. According to the Freudian model the little girl develops a feminine attitude when, on entering the Oedipal phase she displaces her original desire for the mother into that of being loved by the father. Lou Andreas-Salomé's and Anaïs Nin's biographical information reveals strong affective attachments to the personal father and subsequent father surrogates as representatives of cultural authority as well as a problematic dependence on the traditional concept of God as masculine. In their fiction they both use paternal figures to clarify their relationship towards a cultural tradition which they apprehend as problematic. Lou Andreas-Salomé's adulatory representation of these figures serves both to demystify the existence of patriarchal power that is grounded in the father's authority and in the culturally valued male text and to insist on the father's superiority as creator and law-giver. Yet her texts also suggest that a certain idealization of male power that

avoids confrontation is needed to rationalize female inferiority. Anaïs Nin uses the construction of a hostile paternal image to the same effect, namely to escape internalized debilitating structures that are overtly rejected and to assume responsibility for perpetuating them. Despite formulating insights into the inadequacy and destructiveness of paternal power her texts betray an overwhelming fear to confront the father directly and thus work to sustain paternal authority.

With both writers this close connection between the autobiographical and the fictional points to problems associated with the woman writer's own self-definition. Allegiance to the father, even when ambivalent or antagonistic, inevitably places the woman in a position of inferiority, entailing anxieties about her abilities and ambition, the need to understand them and to develop strategies for overcoming them. With both writers the works that are most intense involve a woman's relationship to art and its relation to female psychology. Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anaïs Nin also focus directly on the fundamental problem of the woman artist who in search of herself is confronted with the emptiness of the mirror. None is able to fill this void because they fail to disentangle themselves from internalized ideals of femininity. So the void is experienced and represented as lack and inferiority and not as a creative chance. In their efforts to define themselves through their characters Lou Andreas-Salomé and Anaïs Nin both try to define the genesis of this void and the nature of the tensions between the mirror and its emptiness, between circumscribed femininity and diffuse transgressive desires. Anaïs Nin repeatedly reworks the same father-daughter conflict with different female figures in an effort to locate the woman's loss of power. Similarly, Lou Andreas-Salomé has frequent recourse to crucial situations where the girl's constitution of identity becomes a problem, resulting in the repression of active desires and the redirection of her

energies into the father's or lover's service.

With both writers the act of writing fiction is motivated by the conscious desire to articulate what cannot rationally be grasped and formulated. The sense that what they try to express has no place within the socio-symbolic ordering system shows as a placing on the margin of the father's territory in their fiction or in the absence of historically definite places. Even Lou Andreas-Salomé's evocation of Moskow and Anaïs Nin's of Paris and Golconda makes these towns appear more like mythical places than like 'real' cities. Anaïs Nin posits the sealed room as the not-known both as undefined space soliciting exploration and as an elusive concept that is metonymically related to other concepts like being and self, the body and the house. An object of desire, it incites transgression. The writer's pursuit of this elusive object is simultaneously presented as an irrational response involving the transcription of emotional movement and as a rational act aiming at logical interpretations. Anaïs Nin chooses two ways of unlocking the sealed room. She pursues her character in the present and follows her into the past. The effect, however, is that in retracing the transformations that have brought the sealed room into existence she projects even more sealing. On the one hand, the act of establishing causal relations between past and present covers previously unsignified material with a single meaning. On the other hand, representing the emotional movement in pursuit of its evasive object mirrors it and thus again confines it within limits.

Almost all of Anaïs Nin's texts are about the woman's struggle to free herself from socially induced falsifying ideals which she recognizes as distorting. She makes the contradiction between femininity and self-centred desire explicit, revising especially the opposed images of angel and monster inherited from a male literary tradition by portraying the woman herself as the site of warring opposites. Yet her characters remain entrapped in the mirror, forming imaginary relationships, where the 'you' is only used to reflect the 'I' back to itself. They

as much as Anaïs Nin's texts themselves do not go beyond the romantic affirmation of dream and desire. The movement of the text, intense with self-contradictory drives, constitutes a labyrinth which generates it. This circularity reveals the domination of the mirror and highlights the fact that the sealed room is not only closed and locked, in which case causal explanations and the associative representation of unconscious processes might provide keys to open it.

Anaïs Nin's emphasis on the falsifying ideal of symmetry between inside and outside, past and present as the result of arbitrarily imposed transformations ignores the function of this transformative process, which is to impose and assure limits. Undoing the seal would therefore require ^{her} to transgress these limits by disturbing single meanings and exploiting the ambivalence of meaning. Her first published text House of Incest may be seen as a conscious effort in this direction. However, it appears that ignorance about the relationship between language and consciousness, a certain confusion between writing and the writing of fiction and inadequate awareness of traditional literary structures contribute to making subsequent texts more conventional than their overtly innovative form may lead ^{one} to assume. Her syntactic structures often reproduce the pattern of male dominance and female submission acquired within the socialization process into femininity. Such repressive mechanisms operate equally on the level of perspective and plot. The narrator whose perspective is not distinguished from that of her character frequently confirms the latter's restricted self-image and reinforces the self-denial of liberating impulses voiced by the other. Similarly, the evaluative closure of the plot by means of a reductive interpretation produces the illusion of a solved conflict by silencing other questions raised by the text. Moreover, foregrounding the end as the result of a significant psychological development betrays the presence of a superimposed meaning to which the heterogeneous material of depicted experiences is subordinated. Yet in projecting

a new kind of identity as achieved the text constructs a new confining enclosure, despite its initial focus on elucidating the inevitable repression of problematic impulses bound up with a unifying self-definition. Paradoxically then, Anaïs Nin who claims the woman's right to develop all facets of her personality allows her fictional women only fantasized escapes.

Lou Andreas-Salomé's texts, in contrast, tend to undermine delimiting self-definitions to which the overt development of the central female character aspires by avoiding the traditional closure of the plot. Thus desire is made to insist, exceeding its confinement within fixed images. As a result, the internal logic of a certain psychological process is also implicitly questioned, opening the space for *other possibilities of self-definition and other forms of creation*. Related to this significant difference in plot structure is also a qualitative difference involving the possible use of those energies locked up in the sealed room of the woman's undeveloped self. Anaïs Nin sees them as muted anger, hostility and violence. This negative qualification accounts for her one-sided emphasis on the woman's helplessness to confront the father and for her construction of a fluid female world as the opposite of the father's rigidity. Relief from constricting identities is envisioned in terms of a passive self-dissolution in moments of ecstasy. In this respect she reveals her dependence on the traditional female image which associates women with irrationality, passivity and formlessness. All this is also to be found in Lou Andreas-Salomé's texts. Yet there is more. She also posits a relationship between diffuse self-centred desires and the perception of the world as a chaotic mass of undifferentiated objects that is potentially meaningful. Whenever she evokes the momentarily disruptive effects of active desires on a reduced but rigidly maintained feminine self-image the sealed room

suggests a hidden potential of competence, ability or creative power. Her concern with issues of power as both control and ability occasionally also leads her to inventing strategies of giving power to the female protagonist and to concentrate on the development of her desire for power.

More often than not ,however, the contradiction between active female self-assertion and the feminine investment of creativity for others is resolved in various other ways. Lou Andreas-Salomé foregrounds the father's power of symbolization, his ability to define self and world, to create order out of chaos and to impose his self on the world of objects and on other selves. She casts the son as the sole inheritor of this form of competence and endows him with her own understanding of art. He alone possesses the necessary combination of adequate training , strength and energy to engage in a guilt-ridden yet self-confident struggle with his cultural inheritance and his subject matter. However, this male mimicry is problematic. Although it allows the woman writer to deal with other than traditionally female subjects, it also amounts to a denial of her own potential and her own struggles for creation. This element of self-alienation becomes intensified when it is accompanied by creating a feminine figure who only functions as a passive vessel of transformation. In Anaïs Nin's fiction the self-alienating character of male impersonations appears even more problematic. Male artists who are representative of her own form of art are often associated with an inspiring female muse while narcissistically transforming the woman into an art object.

Whenever power is primarily conceived in terms of male control that consists in the ability of imposing one's self on another or takes the form of assault in social situations the writer's interest shifts to resolving the conflict between anger and aggression and femininity in the following way. Lou Andreas-Salomé and and even more so Anaïs Nin create certain figures that are tormented by their deviation

from the traditional female role and direct their aggression inward against themselves instead of acting it out against the cause of their torment. Their reactions range from suicide, suicidal depression, hysterical symptoms and mental unease to the woman's self-conscious veiling of transgressive impulses by posing as a mirror of male needs and desires and enduring her internal self-division.

With both writers their awareness of limited options for women and the fear of social retribution connected with female self-assertion often takes the form of the woman's loss of love. However, in Lou Andreas-Salomé's fiction this is progressively depicted as a risk to be taken on the way towards female self-development and personal autonomy.

Ironically then, Lou Andreas-Salomé whose conscious efforts are directed towards advocating traditional notions of femininity arrives in her fiction not only at calling them into question but also at representing them as the effects of a specific social formation that is grounded in the power and authority of the father. Her fiction reveals in detail how psychosexual processes work to achieve the social subordination of women to men. Similarly, despite her explicit disregard for matters of language and artistic form she uses her fiction to meditate on the functioning of language within the construction of the self and to highlight the ideologically formative influence of art. Besides, her choice of language itself occasionally reveals contradictions between a conventionally accepted truth and its underlying repressed content. Her weakness is that she idealizes a tradition which she nostalgically endorses, failing to deal directly with the exclusions that help to constitute it.

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PART ONE : THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS

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In a recent study about the relationship between female identity formation and artistic production Judith Kegan Gardiner offers a rather misleading suggestion concerning the relevance of literary conventions and social reality.

The fact that the author shapes her 'narcissistic extensions' (p. 187) through literary conventions is seen as resulting from the author's need to 'allow her text a limited autonomy' (p. 187). Wrongly, this implies that the text is in some way free of the author's subjectivity. Judith Kegan Gardiner's article 'On Female Identity and Writing by Women' is included in : Elizabeth Abel (ed.), Writing and Sexual Difference, Brighton: The Harvester Press 1982, pp. 177-191.

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99. *ibid.*, pp. 42-43
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103. Anaïs Nin, 'A New Center of Gravity', in : A Woman Speaks, p. 2
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110. Anaïs Nin, Winter of Artifice, House of Incest, p. 179
111. Hélène Cixous, 'Entretien avec Françoise van Rossum Guyon, Le rire de Méduse', Arc 61, 1975, p. 487
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114. In her analysis of Rilke's 'Sonett an Orpheus XIII' Hélène Cixous pursues the traces which inscribe the male poet's femininity into the text. She shows that decisions in writing are effected by a specific logic of separation from the mother. She points out that the act of symbolization is situated after the separation from the origin of life and organized as an act of resistance against castration by incorporating the original power of life. Moreover, the relationship between Orpheus and Eurydike illustrates that for the male poet any woman recalls the relationship to the mother. (H. Cixous, Weiblichkeit in der Schrift, 1980)
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116. Anaïs Nin, Winter of Artifice, House of Incest, p. 192
117. *ibid.*, p. 188
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119. *ibid.*, p. 176
120. Franklin/Schneider argue convincingly in their analysis of House of Incest that its structure is partly more conventional than it appears.
121. Her diary entries reveal that there are at least three persons that influence the writing of House of Incest in significant ways: Henry Miller in the role of critical judge, June as Nin's sensuous alter ego and Otto Rank's interpretations of her neurosis as well as of the function of the 'double' and of the Don Juan figure in literature.
122. This has also been the criticism directed at Luce Irigaray's

and Hélène Cixous' equation of the unconscious as the culturally repressed with the feminine. See: Gabriele Schwab, 'Selbsterstörerische Bewahrung des Selbst bei den Frauenfiguren in Virginia Woolfs Romanen' p. 298

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125. *ibid.*
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For chronological purposes, the first date of publication is provided in brackets when later editions have been consulted.

Abbreviations

FB : Freie Bühne für modernes Leben
NDR : Neue Deutsche Rundschau
NR : Die Neue Rundschau
DR : Deutsche Rundschau
LE : Das lit(t)erarische Echo
ML : Das Magazin für Literatur

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