POWERFUL WOMEN: AN ANALYSIS OF DOROTHEA SCHLEGEL'S *FLORENTIN*

by

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(Under the Direction of Marjanne Goozé)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the roles of female characters in Dorothea Schlegel's *Florentin.* Dorothea Schlegel, who exhibited feminist behavior in her own life, created a strongly feminist work. The critical responses for *Florentin* explore the novel from many different approaches, including biographical, intertextual, genre, historical, and feminist. None of the previous literature examines the female characters in *Florentin* topically or determines the amount of power female characters hold as this thesis does. First, there is a review of Friedrich Schlegel's novel, *Lucinde,* because Dorothea Schlegel wrote *Florentin* as a response to *Lucinde.* A chronological report of the critical response to Florentin follows. Finally, the thesis analyses the text of *Florentin*, concentrating on the female characters and their authority.

Index Words: Dorothea Veit, Dorothea Schlegel, Dorothea Veit-Schlegel, Dorothea Mendelssohn, *Florentin*, Clementina, and Eleonora

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DEDICATION

This is for strong women, for strong characters. I dedicate this thesis to the two women in my life who inspire me the most: my mother and Virginia.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

I

THE BIRTH OF *FLORENTIN*

Introduction

Women often appear weak-willed, flippant, and silly in Dorothea Schlegel's *Florentin*, leading some to label *Florentin* and Dorothea Schlegel as anti-feminist. Others believe that *Florentin* depicts women in a positive way. Criticisms tend to call attention to the role of women in the story as managers of aristocratic estates and as mothers. My analysis of *Florentin* demonstrates the authoritative roles of women in their separate spheres. Before going further with my argument, though, it is important to define what I mean with the term "feminist." With this term I am not referring the the bra-burnings of the 1960's and not the power-suits with large shoulder pads of the 1980's. In Karin Hausen's study, "Die Polarisierung der 'Geschlechtscharakter' – Eine Spiegelung der Dissoziation von Erwerbs- und Familienleben," she quotes several of Dorothea Schlegel's peers on their views of gender and gender roles. For example, this entry is to be found under the phrase "Geschlechtseigentümlichkeit" in *Meyers Großem Konversationslexikon*: "Auch psychische G. finden sich vor; beim Weib behaupten Gefühle und Gemüt, beim Manne Intellegenz und Denken die Oberhand; die Phantasie des Weibes ist lebhafter als die des Mannes, erreicht aber seltener die Höhe und Kühnheit wie bei letzterem" (qtd. In Hausen 365-66). Another example comes from the *Brockhaus* or the *Conversations-Lexikon oder Handwörterbuch für die gebildeten Stände*:

> Daher offenbart sich in der Form des Mannes mehr die Idee der Kraft, in der Form des Weibes mehr die Idee der Schönheit…Der Geist des Mannes ist mehr schaffend, aus sich heraus in das Weite hinwirkend, zu Anstrengungen, zur Verarbeitung abstracter

> Gegenstände, zu weitaussehenden Pläne geneigter; unter den Leidenschaften und Affecten gehören die raschen, ausbrechenden dem Manne, die langsamen, heimlich in sich selbst gekehrten dem Weibe an. Aus dem Manne stürmt die laute Begierde; in dem Weibe siedelt sich die stille Sehnsucht an. Das Weib ist auf einen kleinen Kreis beschränkt, den es aber klarer überschaut; es hat mehr Geduld und Ausdauer in kleinen Arbeiten. Der Mann muß erwerben, das Weib sucht zu erhalten; der Mann mit Gewalt, das Weib mit Güte oder List. Jener gehört dem geräuschvollen öffenlichen Leben, dieses dem stillen häuslichen Cirkel. Der Mann arbeitet im Schweiße seines Angesichtes und bedarf erschöpft der tiefen Ruhe; das Weib ist geschäftig immerdar, in nimmer ruhender Betriebsamkeit. Der Mann stemmt sich dem Schicksal selbst entgegen, und trotz schon zu Boden liegend noch der Gewalt; willig beugt das Weib sein Haupt und findet Trost und Hilfe noch in seiner Tränen. (qtd. In Hausen 366)

To summarize the generalities made in such descriptions, Hausen demonstrates how society between the 18th and 20th centuries tended to polarize the characteristics of gender using specific words or phrases. For example, men are associated with “Außen,” “Weite,” and “Öffentliches Leben,” whereas women are associated with “Innen,” “Nähe,” and “Häusliches Leben” (368). For the most part with the characters in *Florentin*, this is true; however, Eleonore does not stay at home while her husband goes off to war; instead she follows him to the battlefield. Men are associated with “Tugend,” and women with “Schamhaftigkeit,” “Keuschheit,” and “Schicklichkeit,” but one of the women invites Florentin up to her private chambers and, later, his wife will abort his child. Words such as “Aktivität,” “Energie,” “Kraft,” “Tun,” and “selbständig” are used to describe men, and “Passivität,” “Ergebung,” “Schwäche,” “Sein,” and “abhängig” are used for women (368). There are many examples in the novel where female

characters are responsible for the large undertakings, requiring lots of engergy and hard work, as well as women who act without asking or caring for the approval of their husbands, if they have one. In many situations, women are the ones who give orders, not the male characters. Furthermore, words such as “Rationalität,” “Geist,” “Vernunft,” “Verstand,” and “Denken” are supposed to depict men, however, Eleonore and Clementina, who are role models for the other female characters, both exibit these characteristics throughout the novel. One may think, then, that these two women must be power-hungry, plain-looking, unaminable, and unloving. But this is simply not the case. In addition to possessing all of the positive “male” characteristics mentioned above, these women possess the positive “female” characteristics that Hauser mentions, such as “Liebe,” “Güte,” “Sympathie,” “Gefühl,” “Empfindung,” “Religiosität,” “Verschönerungsgabe,” “Anmut,” and “Schönheit” (368). All of the female characters in Florentin do not exhibit all of these virtues all the time. However, because Dorothea Schlegel’s characters Eleonore and Clementina display these characteristics in addition to the positive male characteristics from above, they can be percieved as women exhibiting feminist behavior.

The feminist behavior found in *Florentin* is much more subtle than bra burnings and large shoulder pads. Eleonore and Clementina, as members of the aristocracy, could have lived very different lives. They could have let their husband and brother, the Count, make all their decisions for them. They could have allowed the Count to hire tutors for their children, to hire artists to decorate their homes, and to let the Count oversee all their servants, both in the house and on the grounds. Hausen describes marriage before Romanticism as viewed as a contract between relatively equal partners. Each person must fullfill certain specific responsibilities, however, both would have a say in decisions concerning the family. However, during the 18th and 20th centuries, a change occurred. Families were increasingly compared to the idea of nation, and the household

increasingly became a “hausväterliches Regiment.” (371-72). The idea of a marriage based entirely on love, as made popular by the Romantics, would have caused the collapse of marriage and family (372). Such demands for female emanicpation were likened to the French Revolution, and therefore, had to be supressed, particularly among the lower and middle classes (372). Therefore, the father gained complete control of the family to maintain the status quo in sociey, and the mother lost what rights she had in the marriage. As *Florentin* was being written, these changes were already beginning to take place.

Dorothea Schlegel is not calling for a feminist revolution in her novel. Rather, she is showing that women can possess the positive qualities associated with being a man, and be an equal, if not the dominate, partner in a marriage and family. *Florentin* exhibits an ideal society in which women can be equal to men in character, intellegence, beauty, and reason without needing a violent revolution that would destroy the family and society. The female characters demonstrate their man-like virtues throughout the novel in many different ways. In *Florentin,* women tend to interrupt men, draw men’s attention, keep men tied down, and control men’s movements, thoughts, and memories. The women of *Florentin* disguise themselves, give commands, act as educators, and manage the estate. They are often portrayed as saints and goddesses, mothers, artists, and enlightened thinkers. Most importantly, women in *Florentin* hold positions of authority. This behavior does not negate the idea that the women of *Florentin* are not sometimes acting helpless, ditzy, or subservient. The most demanding, powerful, and respected characters in *Florentin,* however, are all women.

Before the textual analysis, the first chapter will provide a brief biography of Dorothea Schlegel. It explains how her novel, *Florentin,* is related to her husband’s, Friedrich Schlegel’s, novel *Lucinde*. Chapter One demonstrates that Dorothea Schlegel wrote *Florentin* as a feminist

reaction to *Lucinde*. Chapter Two summarizes the secondary literature concerning *Florentin* in chronological order, focusing on the female characters, Dorothea as a female author, and gender roles. Chapter Three is an analysis proving that the female characters in *Florentin* hold positions of power. The analysis concentrates on the women in *Florentin* and explains how females hold authority over the house, estate, children, and education. It demonstrates that women in the text help to build and shape society. The women in *Florentin* may be limited to a domestic sphere, but within this sphere they rule supreme. Finally, my thesis reveals that *Floretin* is a feminist text because of the strengths of its female characters.

A Short Biography of Dorothea Schlegel

Dorothea Schlegel was born Brendel Mendelssohn, the eldest daughter of the famed Enlightenment philospher, Moses Mendelssohn, and his wife Froment on October 24, 1764, in Berlin (Nehring 288). Moses Mendelssohn and his family were Jewish. Within this family, the roles of women and men followed traditional lines. Brendel and her mother were responsible for the housework and for helping out Mendelssohn and his sons. He was the patriarch of the family (Frank 26, Stern 24-25). Although Moses Mendelssohn was a practicing Jew, he hoped to see other Jews integrate themselves into German society (Weissberg “Nachwort”). Moses Mendelssohn took the education of his children very seriously, making time to instruct Brendel and the other children himself (Frank 20-22). In addition, he allowed the children, including Brendel, to participate in the academic discussions that he held in his household. These discussions included some of the brightest minds of the German Enlightenment (Richardson ix). Moses Mendelssohn was well known, but he was not rich, and had grown up rather poor (Frank 26-28). Though Moses Mendelssohn strictly forbade it, Brendel read many romantic novels,

including Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (Weissberg "Master's Theme"). As a young girl, then, Brendel Mendelssohn stood in-between opposing world views. As a Jewish girl, she had to be obedient to her father and remain at home like her mother. But because of her father's academic circle, she was exposed to the liberating ideas of the Enlightenment. Through reading romantic literature, she also became exposed to romantic ideals, such as the idea that marriage should be based on love.

When Brendel was 19 years old she was married to Simon Veit, a rich banker in Berlin ten years her senior (Deibel 1). Her father arranged the marriage, seeking out Veit, a family friend who attended his academic discussions (Frank 29-30). Moses Mendelssohn chose Veit for his daughter because he was financially stable and had strong moral convictions (Richardson x, Stern 36). Although Brendel did not oppose the marriage, she certainly was not happy in the union (Frank 33, Stern 38). She felt that she was superior to Veit intellectually (Deibel 1-2) and she hated being left alone in the house (Stern 42-43). Despite her unhappy marriage, she gave birth to four sons, two of whom survived past childhood, Jonas and Feibisch, who would later change their names to Johannes and Philipp (Nehring 288-89).

Brendel tried to distract herself from her unhappy marriage. She began a small school for poor children who could not otherwise afford an education, but even the joy that she got from helping others did not reduce the sadness she felt from her marriage (Richardson xii). She began attending the salons of her friends, especially the salons of Henriette Herz and Rahel Levin. These salons offered a special form of escape for Brendel (Roberts 251). She could leave the confines and boredom of her house and discuss interesting ideas in an open-minded atmosphere. Jewish women's salons were open to a broad range of society and were more informal than the academic circle that Brendel Mendelssohn's father used to hold at home (Frank 36-37). The

salons did not limit themselves to discussing Enlightenment topics. In the Berlin salons Brendel Veit was first exposed to the German Romantic movement (Deibel 3). Brendel Veit came into contact with many Romantic and Enlightenment thinkers in these salons, including Goethe, whom she met in 1799 (Weissberg "Master's Theme). She also met Friedrich Schlegel in Herz's salon in 1797 (Richardson xv) and began calling herself "Dorothea" (Nehring 289).

Even though Dorothea Veit was seven years older than Friedrich Schlegel (Krimmer 246), they felt an almost immediate connection to each other because of their similar views on literature, music, and art. They quickly fell in love (Frank 53-54) After much consideration, Dorothea Veit left her husband and divorced him in 1798 (Stern 95, 108). Soon afterwards she moved to her own apartment and began living with Friedrich Schlegel (Nehring 290). They continued to attend the salons together, joining other Romantic-minded thinkers in Berlin (Frank 41-44). Friedrich was invited by his brother to live with him in Jena, where an even greater number of Romantic thinkers were gathering. Even though he was strongly opposed to the divorce, Veit gave her one and allowed Dorothea to keep the guardianship of their younger son, Feibish. Veit continued to help support both his son and Dorothea financially (Nehring 289, Stern 98). In 1799 Dorothea, Friedrich, and Feibish moved to Jena (Deibel 11, Johnson 34).

In 1799 Friedrich Schlegel wrote a novel, *Lucinde*. In this novel, the main character, Julius, enters a non-marital relationship with the character Lucinde, who was based on Dorothea Veit (Stern 120-27). When this novel circulated, she became the center of a literary scandal (Deibel 5). This stress added to Dorothea Veit's precarious situation in Jena. Although she was surrounded by the greatest minds in the Romantic movement, she was a guest in the house of Friedrich Schlegel's brother and sister-in-law (Richardson xxvii). Caroline Schlegel, August Wilhelm Schlegel's wife, did not get along well with her. The two soon became fierce rivals and

complained about each other almost constantly (Frank 78-120). In addition, they suffered from extreme economic stress. Friedrich Schlegel had difficulty completing writing projects and, therefore, brought in little income (Touaillon 560). Dorothea Veit began publishing translations to support Friedrich Schlegel, so that he could focus on his writing, rather than worry about money (Nehring 203-03). Through her writing, Dorothea Veit actively participated in the development of the Early Romantic movement in Jena (Roberts 251). She began writing a novel to earn money, and to satisfy her own curiosity about her talents as a writer (Blackall 44-45). This novel became *Florentin*.

When the Jena circle dissolved in 1802, Dorothea Veit and Friedrich Schlegel moved to Paris, where she converted to Protestantism and were finally married (Nehring 296-97). Dorothea Schlegel never finished the second part of *Florentin* (Blackall 47-48). Instead she concentrated on translations to bring in money (Thornton 171). In 1804 they left Paris for Cologne, where Friedrich Schlegel continued to search for work and give private lectures (Weissberg "Nachwort" 221). She began attending Catholic mass and became a fervent member of the Catholic church (Nehring 297-98). They both converted, as did both of her children later in life (Weissberg "Nachwort" 221). Their conversion helped Friedrich Schlegel attain a position in the imperial chancellery in Vienna, where they moved (Nehring 299). In 1815 Friedrich Schlegel was sent as a secretary of the Austrian Empire to the federal diet where Dorothea Schlegel followed him (Weissberg "Nachwort" 223). When her sons, who had become talented painters, moved to Rome to study art in 1818, she moved there with them (Nehring 301). She returned to Vienna with Friedrich Schlegel a few years later and remained there until he died in 1829 (Deibel 11, Johnson 34). Afterwards she moved to Frankfurt to be with her friends and son Phillpp, remaining there until her death in 1839 (Nehring 301).

Dorothea Schlegel is an enigma. She sometimes seems to be a woman whose life stands in opposition to modern day feminist ideals, and sometimes her life represents feminist ideals. In a way, both viewpoints are correct. Dorothea Schlegel served her second husband in the best way that she knew how, by earning money so that he would not have to (Krimmer 245-46). She believed that women must be dutiful wives and daughters and be obedient to their fathers and husbands, as God commanded. She even held the opinion that women would be lost without the lordship of their fathers and husbands (Helfer "Aesthetic" 145). Many women at the time published their work anonymously or under a man's name, but not all. Dorothea Schlegel never published any of her work under her own name, rather she published under Friedrich Schlegel (Roberts 252). Unlike many women of her time, Dorothea Schlegel was well-educated and participated in literary, political, and religious debates (Deiber 4-5). She left an unhappy marriage, despite the fact that she could have lost custody of her children in the process (Stern 95-96). Unlike Friedrich Schlegel, who could not bring in money with his writing, Dorothea Schlegel kept the family together financially by writing what would sell well (Nehring 302-03). She even had the courage to travel alone during the Napoleonic wars (Nehring 299). One thing is very clear: from the moment that she met Friedrich Schlegel, her life changed dramatically. From that moment on, Dorothea Schlegel dedicated her life to Friedrich. Her choices after meeting him illustrate that she wanted to be near him more than anything else in the world, even if that meant social humiliation, separation from her children, financial hardships, and many relocations. Because of her dedication to Friedrich, much of the secondary literature on Dorothea Schlegel and *Florentin* concerns Friedrich Schlegel and his impact on her life and work.

Lucinde

In May 1799 Friedrich Schlegel published his novel *Lucinde*. Dorothea Schlegel, the inspiration for the novel, is represented by the character Lucinde (Weissberg "Nachwort" 215). In the novel, Lucinde is the current lover of the "author" and artsist Julius. Julius tells the story of his life to Lucinde in the middle section of the novel which is called, "Die Lehrjahre der Männlichkeit."

In his youth Julius has several love affairs as he tries to improve his artistic skills. His relationships with women provide the basis of his education. He describes a liason that he has with a prostitute, who claims to be having his child. He denies that he is the father, and she subsequently commits suicide. The narrative ends with the beginning of his relationship with Lucinde. Afterwards, he tries to explain how his love affair with Lucinde has made him a better artist and man. In two letters that follow the narrative we learn that Lucinde is pregnant with his child and that she has become ill during the pregnancy. Lucinde loses the child, but Julius does not seem as disturbed by the death of his baby and Lucinde's illness as with his own failed chance at paternity. However, Julius tries to imagine his life without Lucinde, and he cannot. "Die Lehrjahre der Männlichkeit" emphasizes the importance of romantic love in marriage, and that boys become men through their relationships with women. Simply put, boys need to be taught by women before they can become men.[1]

Response to *Lucinde*

Many people viewed Friedrich Schlgel's novel as too sensual (Richardson i, Roberts 251). But he felt that it was important that the content of the novel should come from themes he drew from his own life. Friedrich Schlegel held the belief that Romantic novel is the highest form of

literary art, and every well-educated person has the ability to write a novel from their own life experiences (Touaillon 561). In addition, he wanted to show how sensual, as well as spiritual love, between a man and woman is a necessary element to a man's and artist's maturity (Weissberg "Nachwort" 215). Friedrich Schlegel believed that every man went through three stages of maturity: childhood, experimentation with love, and marriage. Richardson explains the importance of the final stage, marriage:

> It is only on the third level – achieved by men after a period of experimentation in love with members of the opposite sex – that true love, true marriage, true parenthood and true religion are achieved. The third level is one marked by androgyny and mutuality. Here for the first time a man can achieve a unity of being through his sexual and spiritual relation to a woman. This unity of being is won through psychological androgyny, i.e., learning how to perceive life from both the male (philosophy) and female (poetry) perspectives. (xxiv)

The inclusion of the sensual elements in *Lucinde* was necessary to express Friedrich Schlegel's ideal of love. Because so much of Dorothea Schlegel was included in the personage of Lucinde, she considered the book not only to be Friedrich Schlegel's "child," but hers as well (Weissberg "Nachwort" 217).

Since the characters of Lucinde and Julius are equal partners in their spiritual and sexual relationship, some critics view *Lucinde* as a representative of modern feminist thought. Women in *Lucinde* occupy a field above men, because Romantic authors already considered women to be perfect. For men, women are the gateway to maturity, spirituality, and the creation of art: "Women are the priestesses of men, and as such, are the divine mediators. Men are redeemed through the divine love of a woman. […] Consequently, Schlegel proposes a religion based on

the feminine ideal" (Richardson xxiv). Friedrich Schlegel clearly emphasizes through *Lucinde* that women, in order to participate in a harmonious marriage, need to be as educated as the man. Furthermore, the wife should not only be an object of romantic desire, but should be the husband's friend. This balanced relationship represented the Romantic ideal of love and marriage (Richardson xxvi).

Others see this ideal as inherently flawed. In *Lucinde*, before Julius can reach maturity as a man, he has several sexual relationships with women. In a way, he uses the women to gain his own maturity as a man and as an artist. As he matures, Julius becomes more and more familiar with his feminine and poetic side. Furthermore, he projects his own ideals of femininity onto the women whom he loves. Julius, in many ways, is not in love with Lucinde, but with what he sees as a female version of himself. Helfer confirms: "Lucinde plays a very conventional female role in Julius's male fantasy, and the text's treatment of androgyny, which relies on the male projecting himself onto the female, is clearly androcentric" (Helfer "Aesthetic" 151). Helfer further argues Friedrich Schlegel was keenly aware of the one-sided nature of his novel and had planned a second part of the novel from Lucinde's point of view. This second part never appeared (Helfer "Aesthetic" 151).

Dorothea Schlegel's *Florentin*

Only a few months after Friedrich Schlegel published *Lucinde* in May of 1799, Dorothea Schlegel began *Florentin* (Weissberg "Nachwort," Deibel 11). She wrote the novel in a little under four months, but it would not be published until 1801 (Nehring 304, Frank 131). The following plot summary is provided here to aide understanding of the critical response to *Florentin* and because my analysis does not follow chronological order. *Florentin* begins with

the main character wandering through the woods and contemplating how he has reached this point in his life. He expresses his desire to belong somewhere and to someone. In the next moment he hears a shot ring out and a boy comes racing out of the thick of the woods, imploring to Floretin to help, because his master, Count Schwarzenberg, is being attacked by a wild boar. Florentin rescues the Count just in time. The Count introduces himself and Eduard, his soon-to-be son-in-law. Eduard and the Count invite Florentin back to the Schwarzenberg estate. Florentin reluctantly agrees. The Countess, Eleonore, comes to meet her husband with their children, including Theresa and Juliane. Florentin learns Juliane will soon become the wife of Eduard.

Time passes quickly for Florentin because he enjoys the company of the Schwarzenberg family so much. He quickly becomes aquainted with the Schwarzenberg estate and befriends both Juliane and Eduard, spending much of his time with them. One day Eduard, Juliane, and Florentin take an excursion through the woods outside of the estate. They dress as hunters so that they will not stand out among the commoners. They have a picnic. Eduard is overcome listening to Florentin's songs and kisses Juliane passionately, frightening her. She then suggests that Florentin tell them about his past.

Florentin explains that he was raised on an island off of Italy by an old man and woman, but that two nobly dressed men and a woman visited him on the island. One day he is brought to his mother on the mainland and told that his father has died. Florentin's mother sends him and his sister, Felicita, to be educated in a cloister, under the guidance of a priest and a prior. While in the cloister gardens, Florentin sees a young man in a military uniform through the hedge. This boy, Manfredi, promises Florentin his and his father's, the Baron's, help. A short time later, the Baron arranges to adopt Florentin but will not adopt Felicita. A few years later, Florentin receives a letter from Felicita informing him of her upcoming vows as a nun. Florentin decides

Felicita is being forced to become a nun and he and Manfredi are meant to rescue her. Their attempt fails, so Florentin and Mandfredi must flee. But before they go, Florentin's mother confesses to him that she is not his biological mother. Manfredi returns to the academy, joins up with the military, and is sent off to battle.

Florentin flees to Venice, where he has many affairs with beautiful and prominent women. One night in Venice, Florentin visits the nearby island of Golfo. There he sees a beautiful woman singing and feels that he must meet her. The Golfo woman tells Florentin to come back the next night. When he returns as promised and sees the interior of her apartments, Florentin no longer has any desire to be intimate with her. He falls asleep and wakes up the next morning as the laughingstock of all Venice. To escape public scrutiny, he travels to the countryside, working as a shepherd.

When he returns to Venice, Florentin spends most of his time gambling and befriends two rich English lords. Because of a gambling dispute, the English lords kill someone, and Florentin helps them to escape arrest. He too must flee, and decides to try studying art in Rome. Florentin's gift as an artist develops remarkably. He marries his painting model and looks forward to becoming a father, as she is carrying his child. After coming back from a short business trip in Florence, Florentin learns that his wife has aborted their child, fearing that she would no longer look beautiful. Florentin goes into a mad rage and tries to kill his wife, but she escapes. She becomes the lover of a powerful churchman, who has Florentin banished from Rome. The Baron, Florentin's adoptive father, disowns him.

Florentin wanders through southern France and England, making what little money he can through portrait painting. He contemplates going to America to help the colonies fight for their freedom, but returns to France first. There, Florentin befriends a Swiss man who invites him

to stay in Switzerland. Florentin agrees and spends the whole winter there, studying German language and literature. Then he decides that he does want to fight in the colonies and begins traveling through Germany. This is when he meets the Count and saves him from the wild boar. As Florentin finishes his story, a powerful rainstorm begins. Juliane promply faints from fright and exhaustion. Eduard and Florentin carry her to a nearby mill, where the Miller and his wife allow the three to take refuge until the next morning. Juliane recovers, but she cannot sleep, because she is still frightened by the storm and decides to spend the time by telling everyone a ghost story.

Juliane's ghost story, which she claims is true, features her aunt, Clementina, and her aunt's friend, the Marquise. The Marquise has fallen into ill health because she is so worried that she has not yet produced an heir for her husband. Even though Clementina tries to comfort her, the Marquise spends all her time praying and trying quack remedies to become pregnant. After praying all night, on Christmas the Marquise faints. The next day, when the Marquise wakes up, she sees a child in her room. Nobody else can see or hear the child, but because the ghost child seems to improve the Marquise's spirits, they let her enjoy her fantasy. Nine months after the ghost child appears, the Marquise gives birth to a baby girl. Juliane's ghost story has quite an impact on Florentin. The three return to the Schwarzenberg castle. When she sees her parents again, Juliane promises her father she will never try to go on another expedition. Over the next few days, Eduard's mood becomes more and more pessimistic and depressed.

The Schwarzenberg family invites their neighbor, the Chief Cavalry Sergeant ("Oberstwachmeister"), over for dinner, where he, Eleonore, and the Count discuss improvements they have made on their lands and Juliane's wedding. Then a letter from Clementina arrives telling the Count and Eleonore that she will not be coming to the wedding.

Juliane writes back, pleading for Clementina's blessing on her up-coming marriage. The day of the wedding feast and ceremony arrives. While observing the decorations, Florentin accidentally sees Juliane's and Eduard's wedding bed and becomes disturbed. He returns to the feast. Florentin realizes he does not have anything appropriate to wear to the wedding ceremony and seeks leave of Juliane and Eleonore. Eleonore, writes a letter to Clementina, expressing how disappointed she is Clementina will not attend the wedding ceremony, but she seeks her blessings nonetheless. Florentin agrees to take the letter to Clementina's estate, since he is leaving anyway. Florentin marvels at the organization of Clementina's garden and house. Betty informs him Clementina is too ill to see visitors. Instead, she offers him the company of her fiancé, Walther, whom Florentin quickly realizes he does not like. There Florentin befriends the Doctor, who helps Clementina with her charitable activities. The Doctor informs Florentin that he lives on Clementina's estate. The Doctor answers Florentin's questions about Clementina.

The next day, the Doctor leads Florentin to Clementina's temple, where the requiem she wrote is being performed. There Florentin sees the portrait of Clementina as Saint Cecilia next to an organ and a sarcophagus of a small boy. Clementina's music moves Florentin greatly, as does Clementina's personage. When their eyes meet, Clementina faints. The Doctor helps her to her room and Betty joins Florentin in the gardens. Walther begins mocking Betty and Florentin, until Florentin comes to Betty's defense. Betty races to Clementina's rooms, looking for help. Clementina sends the Doctor to stop the duel. At this point, Juliane and Eduard, who have married, arrive on Clementina's estate. They ask Clementina to bless their union, which she does. The Doctor returns, explaining that he cannot find Walter or Florentin anywhere. The novel, as it was published, ends here.

Florentin as a Feminist Response to *Lucinde*

Many critics in recent years have begun to view *Florentin* as a feminist reaction to *Lucinde.* Since Elena Pnevmonidou's article, "Die Absage an das romantische Ich: Dorothea Schlegels *Florentin* als Umschrift von Friedrich Schlegels *Lucinde*," deals exclusively with this subject, it stands as the best source for this argument. In order for *Florentin*'s subtle feminist attitude to be seen, one must first understand how Dorothea Schlegel approached her work as a reaction to *Lucinde*.

As Pnevmonidou points out, although Friedrich Schlegel's work carries a woman's name, the woman for whom the story is titled remains absent (273). His work is meant to be a conversation of sorts between two lovers, but it is not, so Dorothea Schlegel creates the feminine voice that the book is lacking by making herself into Lucinde in *Florentin*'s "Zueignung an den Herausgeber" (273-74). By writing these comments, she automatically establishes her work, *Florentin,* as a literary criticism of her husband's *Lucinde* (274-75). Instead of building up a myth, as her husband does in *Lucinde,* Dorothea Schlegel breaks down myths, particularly the Romantic myth surrounding femininity (275).

In *Lucinde,* femininity and females are used to develop the artist within the novel (275-76), the artist as a father/bearer/creator (276-77), and the artist as a "man" (282-83). Therefore the artist is not truly praising females and femininity, but using them towards his artistic ends (278). Dorothea Schlegel reverses these roles by revealing the Romantic feminine mystique. Instead of the artist taking away the woman's power to give birth, as happens in *Lucinde,* in *Florentin,* a woman chooses to take away Florentine's right to fatherhood (280). Furthermore,

Dorothea Schlegel destroys the ideal of a woman as a work of art because, “die Geliebte kann nicht beides gleichzeitig sein, Objekt für Kunst und Gebärerin” (280).

Florentin’s influence causes the women to reflect on their roles in society:

> Der Roman artikuliert damit pointierte Sozialkritik, denn die Einsicht der Frauenfiguren in die ihr Leben bestimmenden Normen und Schranken führt nicht zu einer diese Schranken niederreißenden Tat, sondern nur zur bewussten Inszenierung einer zuvor unreflektiert eingehaltenen Rolle. Die Sozialkritik besteht also eben darin, dass die Frauenfiguren weiterhin in soziale Machtstrukturen eingebunden bleiben, was der Romanintention entspricht, das Leben, und nicht einen das Leben beschönigenden, mythisierenden “Roman” zu schreiben. (285)

Pnevmonidou furthers this point by assessing the “klischeehaft” (291) roles of Florentine’s sister (285-87), Eleonore (287-88), and Juliane (288-91) in relation to Florentin himself:

> Es ist also mit Absicht, dass die weiblichen Figuren in *Florentin* klischeehaft und als Opfer erscheinen, denn das gerade will der Roman ja zeigen, dass jedwede, allen voran die so emanzipatorisch sich gebende romantische, gesellschaftliche Ordnung eine Form patriarchalischer Machtausübung bedeutet. […] Damit artikuliert Dorothea Schlegel eine sehr scharfe Kritik am romantischen Liebeskonzept. (291)

Women, according to Pnevmonidou and others, are not mere objects of Romantic desire, nor do they exist simply to provide a surface onto which authors can project themselves. Rather, women serve vital roles on the estate. Some argue that Dorothea Schlegel did not agree that women

should be viewed as complete people, as works of art, merely because they were females. Instead, Dorothea Schlegel believed that women go through their own passage of maturity, just as men do:

> Dorothea strongly believed that women had a right to their own development. […] She argues that there are three stages. The first stage is that of childhood. The second stage consists of a period after childhood in which women need to gain their independence and become individuals in their own right. This is a period of singlehood. Dorothea does not lay down fixed rules for what should happen in this period. […] It is only at this third stage of adulthood that women are ready to marry. (Richardson xxxvii-xxxviii)

Women, then, have to work to reach a level of maturity just like their male counterparts. They should be shown in their stages of development. For this reason, there are "weak" female characters in *Florentin*. Teresa, the Count's younger daughter, is barely even mentioned, but she is obviously still in the stage of childhood. Juliane and Betty should be enjoying the stage of singlehood but, instead, have decided to skip that stage and move on to marriage. Because they have not fully matured, Clementina believes that they should not be married (140, 150, 199-201). On the other hand, Eleonore and Clementina represent women who have reached the last level of maturity. Their wisdom lies in their ability to recognize their roles in life and to use these positions to their full extent. Eleonore and Clementina are keenly aware of their responsibilities and duties as the heads of households, something for which Clementina feels Juliane is not prepared (140). As mature women, Clementina and Eleonore hold places of power within the household. They are the matriarchs of their respective estates. Eleonore's and Clementina's roles represent the idea of "separate spheres" of influence, which Davidson and Hatcher define as:

> a metaphor that has been used by scholars to describe a historically constituted ideology of gender relations that holds that men and women occupy distinct social, affective, and occupational realms. According to this separate spheres metaphor, there is a public sphere inhabited by men and a private sphere that is the domain of women. (qtd. in Goozé 12)

Goozé explains that the Enlightenment, urbanization, and emancipation through the women's movement in the twentieth-century actually stripped upper-class women of the power that they held within the household (Goozé 12-14). The women in *Florentin* demonstrate that they are in complete control of their households. They raise the children, plan the decorations inside and outside the estate, ensure that the estate is well run by the servants, entertain the guests and family members, and plan all major events on the estate. In short, if there is any decision made concerning the welfare of the estate or the people on it, a matriarch decides what is best.

II

THE CRITICAL RESPONSE TO *FLORENTIN*

Introduction

The secondary literature concerning *Florentin* can be divided up into several types. Most secondary literature fits into more than one of the following approaches. Many authors compare *Florentin* to Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahr*.[2] Others compare the character of Florentin to other Romantic heroes such as Ludwig Tieck's Franz Sternbald in *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen,* or his William Lovell in *Geschichte des Herrn William Lovell*, or Friedrich Schlegel's Julius from *Lucinde*.[3] In a similar way, some critics compare the plots, themes, and ideas presented in *Florentin* to other Romantic novels.[4] Others choose to deal with the text from the perspective of Dorothea Schlegel's biography, or only concentrate on her biography.[5] Some critics believe that Dorothea Schlegel expressed her own desires, wishes, feelings, and ideas through the characters in *Florentin*, particularly through Florentin himself.[6] Other critics see *Florentin* as expressing the dichotomy between the ideals of the Romantic and Enlightenment movements.[7] Still other authors address the novel from a feminist perspective, looking at Dorothea Schlegel as a female author and at gender roles of her characters.[8] Finally, several authors consider *Florentin* to be a feminist reaction to Friedrich Schlegel's *Lucinde*.[9]

In the secondary literature, the following observations can be made; first, that the older secondary literature tends to focus on the influence of Goethe and his *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* or on Friedrich Schlegel and *Lucinde*. The older critiques try to identify the literary model for the character of Florentin rather than analyze him. Eventually, the emphasis moves away from Goethe and Friedrich Schlegel to Dorothea Schlegel and her biography. In addition,

rather than focusing on the negative aspects of her life and writing, secondary authors begin to point out the positive aspects, as well as parts of her life and writing that can be considered feminist. Critics begin to see the stronger sides of the female characters in *Florentin*. Most recently, critics begin to view *Florentin* more often as a critique of Romantic ideals, Romantic writing, and Friedrich Schlegel's *Lucinde*.

My summary of the critical response to Florentin focuses on feminist interpretations in chronological order to show the increased interest in this method of reading *Florentin*.

Critical Responses

Ruth Richardson, in her "Introductions" to Florentin, summarizes much of the early critical response. Because I did not have access to some of this literature, I relied on the information that Richardson provides. The research by Rudolf Haym (1870), William Dilthey (1870), J.O.E. Donner (1893), Ludwig Geiger (1914), Paula Scheidweiler (1916), Paul Kluckhohn (1933), and Hans Borchert (1933)[10] does not approach *Florentin* from a feminist perspective or independently examine the female characters.

Franz Deibel (1905) argues that *Florentin* is a response to *Lucinde* (21). He analyses several aspects of *Florentin*, but only in relation to other Romantic authors. Although Deibel's book compares her work to other Romantic authors, it is the first book completely dedicated to *Florentin*.

Christine Touaillon (1919) is the first to address Dorothea Schlegel as a female author. Touaillon states: "Die einzige offizielle Vertreterin des romantischen Frauenromans ist Dorothea Schlegel, und auch sie kam mehr durch Zufall zu dieser Rolle als durch ihr Wesen" (31). Touaillon places *Florentin* in the category of female Romantic authors called, "Romantische

Elemente im deutschen Frauenroman." Touaillon argues Dorothea Schlegel was not a true Romantic at heart, but in her actions showed much more of an adherence to the Enlightenment (557-58). Dorothea Schlegel, through her relationship with Friedrich, tried to imitate the style of her peers (558-62). She calls it "kein Kunstwerk" (562). Although Touaillon places *Florentin* in the category of Frauenroman, she only briefly examines the female characters of *Florentin* to see if they can be seen as Romantic characters (567-69). She centers her argument on how the main character, plot, style and mood of *Florentin* compare to the other Romantic novels of the time (569-67).

Karin Stuebben Thornton (1966) examines *Florentin* biographically. She searches for aspects of the Enlightenment within the novel. She believes the novel is a "confession" from Dorothea Schlegel's own point of view (164). She sees Mendelssohn's influence in *Florentin* in the oppressive way in which the Catholic church is portrayed and in the enlightened ideal represented in Clementina (165). Thornton claims that Dorothea Schlegel, "nevertheless considered herself obliged to give her novel a Romantic appearance" (166), and traces traits similar to Franz Sternbald (166-67). She argues that Clementina personifies Dorothea's enlightened views of *Humanitätsreligion* and charity: "*Florentin* contains far more individuality than is generally conceded, and Dorothea's ideological contribution stems from a period yet untouched by the fervor of idealistic Romantic religiosity" (171).

John Hibberd (1977), studies the character of Florentin within the setting of a paradise. Hibberd looks at *Florentin* to show how, contrary to Florentin's past life:

> The Schwarzenberg family represents, it seems, an example of idyllic seclusion where men enjoy immunity from a fatal denial of individuality and of the senses

> on the one hand, [as Florentin had in the monastery] and from unbridled license on the other [as Florentin had in Venice]. (199)

Although Hibberd states the Schwarzenberg estate is a "patriarchal idyll," he gives all the credit for its organization to Eleonore (203-04). Hibberd shows how Florentin does not fit into the idyll before him and creates problems within the idyll itself. (204-05). Even though Florentin is mocked by the Doctor for his naïve longing for his own idyll, Dorothea Schlegel's use of the idyll in her novel is more realistic, reflecting how "the Romantics dreamed of a Golden Age in which art and nature, indeed all opposites, would be combined or reconciled" (205). Her idyll, as opposed to *Sternbald* and *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, is a "utopia in which happiness does not involve a restriction of mental or emotional horizons. The author, like the Schwarzenberg family, is aware of building on tradition but is not petrified by it" (206). Although much of the credit for the idyll present in *Florentin* goes to Eleonore and Clementina, Hibberd does not discuss this in relation to Clementina and Eleonore.

Eric A. Blackall in his book, *The Novels of German Romantics* (1983), examines how female characters in *Florentin* create ideal societies and marriages. Blackall includes *Florentin* in his book under the chapter "Traditions and Innovations," implying Dorothea Schlegel tried to adhere to Romantic tradition, but her writing as a woman was in itself a breakthrough. One interesting note that he makes is in regard to women and love. Clementina:

> has tried to delay the marriage because she feels the it will not be based on love. […] Eleonore combines old and new in the tasteful furnishing of the old castle, and the count has abolished feudal villeinage and encourages the peasants to do their own job while he provides them with the wherewithal. It is a community of healthiness. Clementina on the other hand devotes herself to those who need to be

> helped back to health, especially children neglected by their parents and to music. Florentin's attempt to disrupt in Clementina's circle an impending marriage in which there is no love, leads to a violent confrontation. (48-49)

Blackall connects the estates of Eleonore and Clementina with the Enlightenment. He associates the plot of *Florentin*, however, with the plot of *Lucinde* (49-50).

Liliane Weissberg's article, "The Master's Theme and Some Variations: Dorothea Schlegel's *Florentin* as *Bildungsroman*," (1987), determines *Florentin* is a kind of anti-*Bildungsroman*. Weissberg links Florentin's being an orphan with Dorothea Schlegel publishing her novel under her husband's name, subsequently orphaning her "child" *Florentin* (174-75). Although *Florentin* questions social boundaries, it reaffirms the established order of society through the questioning nature of Florentin himself (176-77). Weissberg assumes Dorothea Schlegel was expressing her own desire to belong to society through the character of Florentin, even though, as a woman, she could never occupy the role of a man (177-78).

Weissberg's "Nachwort," to an edition of *Florentin* (1987) is largely a summary of Dorothea Schlegel's biography with some comments from Friedrich, Dorothea, and literary critics, but it does not include a literary interpretation. She explores Dorothea Schlegel's depiction of love and marriage, which was based on the romance books she read in her youth and on Friedrich's ideals (229-30). Weissberg notes that women in the novel are hardly ever commented upon in critiques of the text. She shows that there were few female novelists in Dorothea Schlegel's time. She attributes this to women sacrificing themselves and their intellect for their literary husbands (236-37).

Heike Frank's biography of Dorothea Schlegel (1991) marks an important turn in the reception of *Florentin* and of Dorothea herself. Frank points out that, all cricital works focus on

Dorothea Schlegel or *Florentin* in connection with the Romantic school or with Friedrich Schlegel, and if they do center on Dorothea, they concentrate on her connection to the Catholic church (9-11). She approaches *Florentin* from a feminist and historical standpoint at first, examining the growing number of women writers of the time (121-30). Frank stipulates that *Florentin* serves as a tool for Dorothea Schlegel to express her position between the opposing Enlightenment and Romantic ideals (140). She considers the relationship between the Count and Eleonore as the ideal relationship that Dorothea wishes she had with Friedrich Schlegel (142), whereas Clementina embodies the ideals of Henriette Herz's *Tugendbund* of which Dorothea Schlegel was a member in Berlin (143). Frank views the innovations that Eleonore and Clementina implement on their estates as ideals that Dorothea Schlegel wanted to see realized in society: "der Adel nicht als Herrscher, sondern als Gehilfe des Volkes – das war Dorotheas Gesellschafstutopie" (146). Frank explains how Dorothea Schlegel dealt with the problem of female authorship, explaining that the reason she published the novel under Friedrich's name was for financial reasons, to help the book sell better, and as an inside joke (147-48).

Ruth Richardson's introduction to an edition of *Florentin* (1988) includes a biography and a summary of the critical response until that time. She considers *Lucinde* a feminist text. Richardson scrutinizes *Florentin* as a social critique on the education and rearing of children, love and marriage, friendship, social class, and religion. She argues that Florentin represents the stages of maturity that women and men need to have before entering a marriage (xxxvii-xlvii). She believes that Dorothea expresses her own frustration with her first marriage through the relationship of Juliane and Eduard. Richardson hypothesizes that the ideal marriage that Dorothea Schlegel wants with Friedrich is expressed through Clementina's beliefs on love and marriage (xlv), although she insists that the marriage between Eleonore and the Count is also a

happy marriage (xlv-xlvii). She hypothesizes that Clementina's views on class and society express Dorothea Schlegel's opinions (lv-lvi). She believes Dorothea Schlegel thought of religion differently in reference to men and women. Because men try to purge their sorrow, they become "sick men" and create unhealthy institutions that wall off other sick men. Women, on the other hand, try to cope with sorrow, and therefore, if they were to organize a religion, it would be one of charity (lix-lx). This religion of charity is represented in the character of Clementina (lx-lxviii).

Inge Stephan (1990) examines *Florentin* through the perspective of Dorothea Schlegel as a female author. Stephan maintains that the works *Florentin* and *Lucinde* "speak" to each other (83-84). She points out that both texts deal with the same basic themes of longing, peace, and love (84). Even though the texts do speak to each other, they are not conversing with each other, because there is no "Dialog" between them; these texts could never be unified (84-85). Julius searches for a woman his whole life and finds her in the form of Lucinde. Florentin looks for a woman, but never discovers his "Lucinde." The women in *Florentin* are all variations of the women in *Lucinde,* with the Lucinde-like character remaining absent (85). Stephan is of the opinion that the character of Florentin represents Dorothea Schlegel's own feelings of disappointment and isolation (86). She views Dorothea Schlegel's novel as the opposite of *Lucinde* (88-89). Because Dorothea Schlegel projects herself onto the character of Florentin, he takes on feminine qualities (89), however:

> Für die "Lehrjahre der Männlichkeit" gibt es kein Pendant in Form von "Lehrjahren der Weiblichkeit." Die Überschreibung der eigenen Weiblichkeit in die Figur des Florentin ist notwendige Konsequenz einer Situation, in der die Frau – historisch gesehen – von Selbstbestimmung und Progression ausgeschlossen

> war. In dieser Überschreibung drückt sich Überschreitung als Rebellion gegen festgelegte Rollenzuweisungen und Regression als Festlegung eben dieser Zuschreibungen zugleich aus. […] In Wahrheit aber ist der "Florentin"- Roman eine vehemente Einrede gegen androgyne Vereinigungsphantasien, weil er deutlich macht, das dafür jegliche Voraussetzungen fehlen. (91)

Dorothea Schlegel rejects the Romantic view of androgyny and idealized women. Whereas Julius sees himself reflected many times over (95), Florentin lacks the ability to see himself reflected (96). Florentin cannot even comprehend the difference between image and reality (95-96), and that these are all images of women. There is a clear chasm between Florentin and women, whereas Julius becomes closer to women through his androgyny (96-97).

Carola Stern (1990) presents a very personal and intimate biography of Dorothea Schlegel. Stern argues against traditional portraits of Dorothea Schlegel, stating:

> Nicht um Verklärung geht es, sondern um Gerechtigkeit und die Zerstörung von Klischees. In der bisherigen Literatur wird meistens danach geurteilt, was für Friedrich Schlegel gut gewesen wäre, und Dorothea als "Dämon", als "Verhängnis" für den Mann beschrieben. Hier wird danach gefragt, was für sie gut gewesen wäre, nach ihrer Zufriedenheit und ihren Sorgen. (11)

Stern does not address Dorothea Schlegel's *Florentin* in the expected place in her life, namely, while she was living in Jena. Stern instead assesses all of Dorothea Schlegel's works in one chapter that fits in between her time in Paris and Cologne (203-20). Within this chapter she only briefly discusses *Florentin* (207-13). Here she compares *Florentin* to *Wilhelm Meister* and *Franz Sternbald*, but does not go further in her analysis of the text.

Christine Branter (1991) views the female characters of the novel as positive female characters, especially Clementina and Eleonore. Brantner posits that the Romantic genre, as created by the male authors before Dorothea Schlegel, was anti-feminist in nature: “Ein partnerschaftliches, sich gegenseitig erziehendes, gleichberechtigtes Verständnis gibt es bei den männlichen Romantikern nicht. Die Frau wird entweder dämonisiert (Venus), oder idealisiert (Maria), aber jedenfalls auf sichere Distanz gerückt” (52). Therefore, Dorothea Schlegel’s *Florentin* should not be compared with their writing. Brantner argues Dorothea Schlegel’s depiction of women is much better than her male counterparts’: “In ihrem […] Roman *Florentin* entwickelte Dorothea Veit ein Frauenbild, das weit über das idealisierte ihrer männlichen Romantikerkollegen herausging (52).

The roles that the women in *Florentin* play, “im häuslich-landwirtschaftlich-ökonomischen und im künstlerich-sozialen Bereich,” make these characters into well-needed “Modellfrauen” who did not previously exist in Romantic novels (52). Florentin exists in the novel merely to show a reaction to the strong women in the novel, particularly to Eleonore and Clementina (52-53). She notes that Florentin is in awe of Eleonore for her running the gardens and estate and for her progressive ideas in governing the estate and in raising her children (53-56). Florentin admires Clementina for her mother-like nature in caring for those around her and for her saint-like love of mankind (56-60). The Doctor and Count Schwarzenberg, having already gone through their “Lehrjahre der Männlichkeit,” are futher along in their maturity and in accepting the female world in which they live. Brantner explains: “Gerade aber weil es nicht aus seinem [Florentins] innersten Bedüfnis wohltun zu wollen entspringt, wird er sich Clementinens Umgebung entziehen. Wiederum triumphiert eine von einer Frau gestaltete Welt

über die unfertig unstete des unproduktiven Mannes." (61). Florentin must leave because he is not ready or willing to accept the female world which surrounds him.

Brantner compares several passages from *Florentin* that speak about Clementina with Dorothea Schlegel's own opinions on charity, religion, love, and feudalism. These comparisons imply that Schlegel was expressing her own philosophy through Clementina's actions (61-65). Most importantly, these two women, Clementina and Eleonore, have reached their final level of development. They know their place and are comfortable in it (65). Brantner sees the character of Juliane as a typical Romantic woman, in that she is either a Venus or a Maria, though not at the same time. But Brantner falls short of calling Juliane a critique of other Romantic characters.

Todd Kontje's book *The German* Bildungsroman*: History of a National Genre* (1993), includes *Florentin* under the section of his review of the *Bildungsroman* called, "Gender and Genre in the *Bildungsroman*." He describes in this section how, as the feminist analysis of novels gained popularity, more works written by female authors were categorized as *Bildungsroman* (102-03). In response, some critics approached *Bildungsroman* from a feminist perspective. Kontje summarizes the problems associated with the idea of the female *Bildungsroman*:

> The troubled history of the male *Bildungsroman* suggests another reason why some feminists might hesitate to identify its female counterpart: given the incessant terminological debates surrounding the *Bildungsroman* and its implication in the German ideology, why would one want to rediscover forgotten texts by women only to associate them with this dubious tradition? Finally, the search for the female *Bildungsroman* runs the risk of measuring women writers against a standard of male creativity. (Kontje 104)

He places texts in the genre of female *Bildungsroman* because they contain female characters (104), because the protagonist is female (105-06), or because the plot seems feminine (106). Kontje includes *Florentin* in a separate category: "To circumvent the cultural prohibitions against female creativity many women writers around 1800 published anonymously. Another strategy was to mask one's ambitions behind a male protagonist, as in the case of Dorothea Veit-Schlegel's *Florentin*" (107).

Martha Helfer's article, "Dorothea Veit-Schlegel's *Florentin*: Constructing a Feminist Romantic Aesthetic" (1996), views *Florentin* as a feminist reaction to the Jena Romantic circle and *Lucinde*: "Florentin instantiates a feminist theory of writing that has been underestimated, if not completely ignored, in the secondary literature to date" (146). She calls the majority of prior criticisms of Florentin "(mis)readings" (146). Dorothea Schlegel did not consider her work to be a novel, but her self-criticism is in itself a reflection of Romantic ideas of art, and her self-criticism, therefore, reflects "the essence of feminist Romantic theory" (149). *Florentin* "enacts its own theory of feminism" (149). She traces the similarities between Florentin and Julius, including their "homosocial" relationships with men and their heterosexual relationships with women in order to have children and recreate themselves in "Romantic poesy" (152-53). Florentin hopes to recreate himself as a work of art by having a child and, symbolically, giving birth to himself as a work of art. This dream is crushed through his wife's abortion (152-53). Helfer contends that the women who are portrayed in *Florentin* represent some form of absence (154-56), and therefore, "the theory of the feminine that Veit-Schlegel develops in her novel is not defined by positive role models, but by absence" (156). The women in the story are all "problematic figures" because they are criticisms of the very woman-ideal in Romanticism.

Florentin rejects the 'masculine' Romantic ideal of woman, therefore, it cannot be considered a novel.

Heike Brandstädter and Katharina Jeorgakopulos (2001) determine why *Florentin*, besides the fact that it was written by a woman, remains a "forgotten" text and why *Wilhelm Meister* is not (4). They suggest that one reason the text has been largely ignored is that her biography has been so thoroughly studied instead of the text. They attribute difficulties that Dorothea Schlegel encountered as a result of misconceived notions about women from the Romantic authors themselves. Women cannot create art, according to the Romantics, because they are already works of art themselves (38-39). According to them, Dorothea Schlegel expresses her own feelings of placelessness and isolation through the character of Florentin (70). In a discussion dealing with Florentin's gender, the authors examine closely the passages concerning the Golfo woman and when Florentin first comes to his mother's house (75-90). Although Brandstädter and Jeorgakopulos do not argue that Florentin is a feminist text, their analysis presents the first thorough examination of Florentin's mother and the Golfo woman.

Corey F. Robert's study (2002) incorporates an analysis of political models, botanical imagery, and Dorothea Schlegel's biography. He associates the Schwarzenberg estate with Romanticism and French gardens because of its "concentric organization, the central, privileged position of the palace, and the numerous references to its planned order," and because of its "unnatural and artificial" order (255). Juliane's failed trip outside the garden's borders demonstrates how she is, and women in general are, dependent upon and trapped by the Romantic nature of society (256). Florentin, too, feels oppressed by the rigid order of the Schwarzenberg estate and thus leaves (256). Roberts states that Clementina's garden, however, "embodies the ideals of liberty and equality and represents, on a small scale, the model of the

Liberal state as envisioned by Wilhelm von Humboldt" (257). Because Clementina's garden is an English garden, a refuge for the sick and poor, and lacking any central organization, it stands for Liberal ideals of the Enlightenment (258-59). Even Clementina's garden, however, is not perfect. Because Clementina refuses to use her power, there is no means to deal with bad elements of society, as represented by Walther (259). Walther also demonstrates how too much personal freedom can impinge on others (259). Therefore, Clementina's garden and the Liberal model are "too fragile" (259). Roberts explains that Florentin rejects both Romantic and Liberal models by leaving Eleonore's and Clementina's estates. Florentin leaves to search for a third form somewhere in between the two, possibly in the Americas (261). This undiscovered third form that Dorothea Schlegel suggests could be a political model for Germany (260).

Wolfgang Nehring (2004) approaches Dorothea Schlegel's biography from a feminist perspective:

> Das Ziel ist zu zeigen, dass Dorothea Schlegel in ihrem Denken und Handeln trotz einer konservativen Grundeinstellung, die sich zunehmend mit den gesellschaftlichen und religiösen Tradition identifiziert, eine starke, selbstbewusste Frau ist, die viele Eigenschaften besitzt, welche auch moderne Feministinnen zu schätzen wissen. (287)

Dorothea Schlegel is an enigma from a feminist standpoint, concentrating on her relationship with her husband, Friedrich. He views Dorothea's life as a model of modern feminist ideals (287). Nehring states that Dorothea Schlegel's reasons for writing *Florentin* were to earn money for her family and to help Friedrich. He argues that the character of Florentin represents Dorothea Schlegel's own conflict between tradition and new liberal ideas (314-15). He points out the problem of Florentin being a friend of both Eduard and Juliane, because it causes a love

triangle, and shows the faults of the Romantic ideal of intimate male friendship (318-19). Nehring implies Florentin is fixed in his ideals (319-23), but he does not call Florentin's faults a critique of the Romantic School.

Laurie Johnson (2005) also demonstrates how the character Florentin vacillates between two extremes. Johnson begins her study by discussing the Romantics' use of "self-constructed images" and "oscillation between reciprocal concepts," in which she suggests that these Romantic concepts are not truly "progressive" and that the loving pairs displayed in Romantic novels are really displays of the author loving himself (33-34). Johnson describes how the Romantics eventually determined a more founded notion of reality by switching back and forth between "rationality and conciousness" (34), which Friedrich Schlegel called his "reciprocity axiom"(34). This principal states that the individual constantly switches between himself and the real world, and therefore "Ich" is located somewhere between the individual and its environment (34-35). Johnson considers Dorothea Schlegel's *Florentin* the best portrayal of the reciprocity principal. She believes that *Florentin* is a reaction to Friedrich's philosophy and the Romantic aesthetic represented in *Lucinde* (36). Dorothea Schlegel's *Florentin* improves on her husband's model of alterity (Johnson 41-42). Florentin is trapped between the ideals of Romanticism and the Enlightenment. He is stuck somewhere between glorifying and fearing the past (42-43), between his own ideas and reality (43), between art and reality (43-44).

Although Florentin is oscillating between two extremes, he never really makes any progress (49-50). Women in the story, however, do make progress by finding the middle ground between extreme polarities (51-52). In addition, the female characters help to show that Florentin cannot comprehend the difference between image and reality because Florentin thinks of the images of the women as reality until he is confronted with the real woman (52-55). Florentin

does not truly represent alterity, because, in his movement between extremes, he never makes any progress. However, the women in *Florentin* demonstrate alterity. Yet he does parody the typical Romantic hero. In her own life Dorothea Schlegel ultimately rejects the idea of Romantic alterity and chooses one extreme; traditional Catholicism (55-57).

Elena Pnevmonidou's article (2006) examines gender roles and Dorothea Schlegel's *Florentin* as a feminist response to Friedrich Schlegel's *Lucinde*. An explanation of her article appears in "Response to Lucinde," in Chapter I of this thesis. Elisabeth Krimmer (2007) also approaches *Florentin* from the theme of gender roles and the genre of *Bildungsroman*. Krimmer argues, "The concept of *Bildung* is inextricably linked with the concepts of gender and the body" (235). The male characters of the *Bildungsroman* must mature to reach the same level women, such as *die schöne Seele*, naturally possess. In the *Bildungsroman*, women help the men to develop. Female characters in *Florentin* differ from Goethe's because her women "transcend the limits of the sexed body," "emphasize the importance of paternity and patrilinearity," and because her women demonstrate that homo-social bonds are destructive, rather than positive relationships (236-37). She notes the important role that Juliane's ghost story plays in establishing how vital producing an heir is to a noble woman (249-50).

She explores Dorothea Schlegel's use of cross-dressing characters, stating: "Juliane's cross-dressing does not confer on her the strength and agency associated with the male sex. Schlegel does not rely on the act of cross-dressing alone to deconstruct the gender-body alignment of the model of *Geschlechtscharakter*" (252). Krimmer associates what she calls Dorothea Schlegel's "openness," with the indefinite ending to the story, because of her characters' "gender bending." She explains that Dorothea Schlegel has a difficult time as a female author expressing herself in a male world; therefore, her characters also share this

inability to express themselves in a male-dominated genre (253-57). Mere cross-dressing by a female character does not help her to move beyond her basic female nature, and a female story, masked as a *Bildungsroman* through a male character, does not make that story a *Bildungsroman* (254-57).

As the critical responses reach the present, there are increasing interpretations of Dorothea Schlegel's *Florentin* as a feminist work. The early critiques showed the influence of *Lucinde* and other Romantic novels on *Florentin*. There has been extensive research on how Dorothea Schlegel's life may have influenced *Florentin*. Investigations show *Florentin* was also inspired by the Enlightenment. Very recent critics have even examined the specific gender roles present in *Florentin*. None of the critics so far have focused their studies only on female characters and their authority within the household. My analysis examines women's roles in *Florentin* topically to show the full extent of their power.

III

POWERFUL WOMEN: AN ANALYSIS OF *FLORENTIN*

As has been shown through the critical review of *Florentin*, no one has analyzed the novel looking exclusively at the female characters. My examination of the text will be organized topically, not chronologically, as many sections of the novel can be approached from several different angles. Other critics have already studied the novel from biographical, inter-textual, character, plot, setting, and historical perspectives. In many of these analyses, expecially the most recent ones, the authors have maintained that there are feminist aspects to the novel. None of these authors, though, has fully explored the extent of power that female characters hold. My analysis illustrates that women in *Florentin* control everything from how society is formed to who is allowed to speak in conversation. Women in *Florentin* hold traditionally feminine roles, as mothers and wives. However, their ability to demand authority in these roles makes *Florentin* a genuine feminist text.

Interruptions

Because the female characters in *Florentin* are aristocratic, they are expected to behave in a refined manner. They repeatedly interrupt men. When the Count mentions to Florentin that his wife came with him on his campaigns, and Florentin asks to hear more, Eleonore breaks in, shouting, "'Nichts, nichts, […] hören Sie nicht auf ihn!'" (22). The reason that Eleonore interrupts the conversation is most likely because she assumes that the Count is about to tell Florentin how dependent she is on her husband, and she does not want Florentin to hear this (22). She quickly changes the subject of conversation back to where she is in a position of control,

asking him if he wants to settle down here and learn how she runs the estate. Instead of talking about how she left her infant daughter because she could not stand to be away from her husband, Eleonore brings the conversation back to where she can shine. When the Chief Cavalry Sergeant comes for a visit to the Schwarzenberg estate and complains about the rights that his farmers have gained, the Count tells him all about of the new agricultural innovations that he began on his estate. Eleonore breaks in, saying that her husband has abolished the farmers' compulsory labor duties. In praising her husband, she indirectly takes some of the credit for what has been done. At the same time, she makes the Constable seem even more unenlightened (135). Eleonore's interruptions demonstrate the power she holds in her household. She controls the topic, the speaker, and the length of the conversation. In each situation, she tries to look as important as possible. As the mistress of the Schwarzenberg estate, Eleonore's tendency to interrupt men is passed on to her impressionable daughter, Juliane.

After Florentin plays a song for the Schwarzenbergs the night of his arrival (23-24), Juliane breaks the silence and insists on singing a duet with Eduard (24). During Florentin's narrative of his childhood and early adulthood, Juliane interrupts him (50, 80, 89, 94, and 102). Even though Florentin is the one telling his story, it is Juliane who controls the flow of the narrative. Florentin tells his story while on their adventure, at a geographic distance from the Schwarzenberg castle and Eleonore. This gives Juliane a chance to act in a position of authority outside the sphere of her mother. Even though she is younger than Eduard and Florentin, she directs the events. Her interruptions provide clear breaks in Florentin's story. Juliane's interruptions serve as a literary device, to break up the narrative into smaller pieces, however, it is Juliane, not Eduard or Florentin, who does this. As a reader and listener, we are separated from Florentin's past and brought back to the present every time Juliane interrupts. When this happens,

we see Florentin's story from a more objective point of view. The longer Florentin is allowed to continue telling his own story, the longer the reader feels he is still a part of Florentin's past. The reader identifies more intimately with Florentin. Each time Juliane interrupts, she steals the attention away from Florentin, which causes a sharp break in Florentin's narrative and in his life. Because of these interruptions, the reader himself achieves distance from Florentin and views Florentin's actions and feelings critically.

Letters from the female characters interrupt men as well. Clementina's letter dashes Eduard's hopes for an early wedding (38), Felicita's letter to Florentin causes him to leave the military academy (72), Clementina's second letter interrupts the Count when he is speaking to Florentin (138), and Eleonore's letter to Clementina causes Florentin to go to Clementina's estate (149). The letters serve to break up the long periods of time spent at the Schwarzenberg estate and to give the reader a subjective view of Juliane, Elenore, and Clementina. Because of the intimacy associated with writing and receiving letters, we as readers see these women from an extremely personal point of view. We know what they are feeling and thinking without a narrator or a mediator or without being interrupted by someone else. The women who write the letters have the power to control how they are portrayed. By writing letters, they can organize and reflect on their thoughts better than in conversation. There is only one note from a man in the story, and it is so short that is does not receive its own chapter as the other letters do (156). Women, in conversation and through their correspondence, have the power to distract men from their own thoughts and to bring men's attention back to themselves. Furthermore, women hold power over the flow of the narrative, holding the attention of the reader more than the male characters. The women in *Florentin* hold men in check verbally, as well as captivating men with their physical beauty.

Feminine Power with Feminine Beauty

Women in *Florentin* have the power to make men do things that they might not ordinarily do. Their physical beauty results in men responding in a physical way. For example, women have the ability to draw men's gaze. To Florentin, Juliane's face is "unwiderstehlich" and "anziehend" and her eyes have a "nah zurückschreckende Hoheit" (20). Eduard is drawn to Juliane's beauty when they have their picnic and he kisses her unexpectedly and passionately (45). Her simple beauty draws everyone's attention at the Miller's house (111). Florentin's gaze is drawn to the Golfo woman, so much so, that he must see her more closely (103). Even though her image is multiplied in the mirror in her apartment many times, he says, "'ich konnte mich nicht satt sehen'" (104). Juliane and the Golfo woman represent objects of desire for Florentin. These women are not only beautiful, they are also seductive and, at first sight, appear available. The minute that these women are no longer sexually desirable to Florentin, he will turn his eyes elsewhere. Just before he leaves the Schwarzenberg estate, his gaze is no longer attracted to Juliane; when he sees her in her wedding dress, he describes her as "blendend" (152). It is as though her radiance is hurting his eyes and he must turn away. This painful vision shows that Florentin finally sees Juliane as a woman who is about to be married and unavailable. Because he leaves the estate shortly thereafter, this is the last time that he sees Juliane. When he is no longer attracted to the Golfo woman, he quickly falls asleep (106). In this way, he does not look at her again. Beautiful women, as long as they are unmarried and attractive, will keep Florentin's gaze.

Even paintings of beautiful women attract Florentin. The portrait of Clementina as Saint Cecilia and the portrait of Juliane as Saint Anne draw Florentin's attention (181, 31). Because Juliane's portrait is based on Clementina's, both portraits are linked to Saint Cecilia. Even

though St. Cecilia is blind (Kirsch), she still has the power to draw Florentin's eyes towards her. Without actually being physically present, Clementina holds Florentine's attention. As he sees Clementina for the first time, he is captivated. While he looks closely at her eyes, "Florentin konnte die seinigen nicht von ihr abwenden" (183). His gaze remains locked upon her until she recognizes him and faints (184). This attraction is no longer a sexual one. When he sees Clementina in person, he recognizes that time has passed since her portrait was first made (182, 184), and he is no longer attracted to her previously youthful beauty. His inability to turn his eyes away from her demonstrates that he recognizes Clementina from somewhere in his past.

Women Keeping Hold of Men

The men in *Florentin* do not just gaze at the women in their lives. Sometimes men feel bound by the very same women. In some situations, they are actually tied up or trapped. As Eduard is waiting for his wedding day, he feels like, "der Gefangene, der der bestimmten Befreiung entgegensieht" (34). His sexual desires are hindered not only by Juliane's fright every time he becomes romantic with her, but also by Clementina's delay of the wedding. In this way Eduard is trapped by his sexual desire for Juliane.

Florentin precedes his childhood story with a song about how childhood can seem like being imprisoned (49), forshadowing his own horrible childhood under his weak mother. His nurse never left him alone, even for a second (50), and his mother's house always felt like a prison (61). This feeling of being caged leads Florentin to cherish personal freedom so much, which is reflected in his desire to fight for the American colonies' freedom (16-17, 96-97, 171).

Florentin does not just feel bound by his past life, but also by his present. Juliane wants to keep Florentin on the estate, even though he obviously does not want to stay (141). Eleonore, by

making sure that her daughter stays on the estate after she is married, is also holding Eduard back and keeping him from traveling as he hoped (147). In a letter to Clementina, Eleonore writes, "Es fehlt ihm vielleicht nichts weiter, als die bestimmende Vereinigung mit der Geliebten, um ihn ganz fest zu halten" (150). Eleonore sees marriage as a necessary means to keep men close to the home. As long as Eduard remains on the Schwarzenberg estate, he will be subject to Juliane and Eleonore. Both Florentin and Eduard stay on the estate longer than they desire because of women in their lives. The women in *Florentin* desire their men to remain in the sphere they control.

Women Ousting Men

Women have the ability to keep men from leaving the estate. But, they can also make men leave when desired. When a woman in *Florentin* rejects a man, it is the man who must physically move, and the woman who can stay. Florentin keeps traveling from place to place. He blames this on the women in his life. Florentin leaves his childhood home on the island that he knows for the mainland because his mother orders him to (51), and he must go to school where he feels mistreated because his mother does not stand up to the Prior (53). His mother practically banishes Florentin from his first and second childhood homes. When Felicita tells Florentin that she is going to take her vows as a nun, Florentin feels compelled to leave the military academy so that he can rescue her (73); after the failed escape attempt, he and Manfredi must run away, and Florentin escapes to Venice (78-79). His mother, not the Prior, tells Florentin and Manfredi to leave, even though she believes she is acting for his safety. When the English lords kill someone while gambling in Venice, Florentin flees. He does not leave because of the murders, but because his affairs with women will be discovered in the papers he left in his house (85-86).

When Florentin almost kills his wife in Rome, he leaves, too (94). The reason that Florentin lost control over his actions and acted so violently was because of his wife's abortion (93). In an indirect way, Florentin's wife is responsible for Florentin being banished from Rome. When Florentin is looking for a place to stay in England, the English lord does not refuse him a place to stay, rather his new fianceé does (99). This leaves Florentin no choice but to continue moving. The incident with the Golfo woman causes him to go into seclusion in the countryside and to live as a sheperd (106). Women banish Florentin because of embarrassment, scandal, and crime. In each situation, the women clearly exercise their right to remove an unwanted member of society. Dorothea Schlegel believed that truly intelligent women try not to display their power within the household or over men at all, but allow men to believe that they are in charge. She once quoted the following advice in a letter: "Es ist sehr klug von den Frauen, wenn sie den Einfluss, den sie auf ihre Männer haben, nicht allein diesen, sondern auch allen übrigen Menschen verbergen" (Nehring 287). A woman who does not appear to hold much authority may actually hold quite a lot. Pretending to be weak is an advantage for women.

Chivalry Benefiting Women

In many ways women's "helplessness" becomes apparent in *Florentin.* Women are often portrayed as weak and unable to complete certain tasks. The male characters in *Florentin* also view women in this way. Polite society demands that the male characters act as chivalrous pawns in these situations. Therefore, the perception of women as fragile often benefits female characters, in that they can receive assistance whenever they desire. Although this behavior may seem manipulative, it demonstrates the control women hold over men in the story. When Juliane faints, Florentin and Eduard carry Juliane through the woods to the Miller's house (107). She

gets up the next morning totally recovered from the night's dramatic events, she does not walk to the castle. Instead the Miller goes on foot to fetch the carriage for Juliane (127) while Florentin and Eduard voluntarily walk to the castle (131). Florentin offers to take a letter to Clementina for Eleonore (155). He also allows himself to be bullied into a duel with Walther on Betty's behalf after Walther insults her. Florentin himself is not sure, "'ob die irrende Ritterschaft wieder erstanden sei, den beleidigten Jungfrauen Schutz zu gewähren?'" (188). This duel over a woman leads to Florentin's disappearance. In these situations, no woman is ordering, or even requesting men to act on her behalf. Rather, Eduard and Florentin take it upon themselves to act chilvalrously. It is clear by their almost blind willingness to do so, however, that Eduard and Florentin consider this behavior completely normal. The women whom they help never seem to complain, signifying that they would expect nothing less from their men. Women's roles are so clearly defined in this society that men do not even need to be told when to do favors for them.

Sometimes the influence women hold over men is so powerful in *Florentin* that men feel vulnerable, threatened, or completely out of control. Women do not use physical force to persuade men in the novel, but rather, their feminine charm. This charm captivates Florentin. From the very beginning of his acquaintance with the Schwarzenberg family, "die Unbefangenheit der Frauen bei seinem Empfang, die wenigen bedeutenden Worte, der herzliche Ton, der Blick von dem sie begleitet waren, hatten ihn leichter zu bleiben bewogen, als die dankbare Einladung der Männer" (19). Florentin allows himself to be more easily persuaded by the women than by men. After describing Juliane's beauty, the narrator states, "alles das waren ebenso viele Bezauberung, von deren vereinigter Macht Florentin nicht ungerührt bleiben konnte" (20). Florentin feels completely helpless in the presence of Juliane and is willing to follow her, even if that means changing his plans. Eleonore also commands Florentin's attention

in conjuction with her daughter. For Florentin the “Einladung der wohlwollenden Eleonore, und dem schmeichelnden Blick Julianens war nicht zu widerstehen, und so versprach er zu bleiben” (21). Once Florentin is on the estate, however, the order and neatness of the place created by Eleonore seems, “erdrückend und Geist ertötend” (22). Florentin recognizes at this point that he is completely within the power of Eleonore and Juliane.

When seeing the painting of Juliane as Saint Anne, based on the portrait of Clementina as Saint Ceclia, Florentin feels compelled to fight for her, and Eduard points out how silly this idea seems (33). After only knowing women for a very short time, Florentin feels like he must come to their defense. When Felicita writes that she will be taking her vows as a nun, Florentin feels that he must come to her rescue, even though she has not asked him to do so. Both Florentin and Manfredi feel that they risked their lives for Felicita and are punished for it (75). During his gambling phase, Florentin gives back a huge sum of money in Venice that he could have used to live on, not because he pitied the men from whom he won it, but because he felt sorry for their wives (81). Florentin feels compelled to make his wife as happy and healthy as possible when she is carrying their child. Though his wife copes with the pains of pregnancy, Florentin states that, “‘ich unaufhörlich von ihren Launen litt’” (92). Florentin’s history consists of one woman after another for whom he makes huge sacrifices, but who all cause Florentin anguish.

When Florentin is not sacrificing himself or fighting for women, they enchant him to such an extent that he cannot help himself. When he meets the Golfo woman, he states, “‘Ich war wie festgebannt,’” as though she had power over his mind (104). He is so enchanted by the Golfo woman that he returns the next night to see her again (105). Her charisma eventually causes him a great amount of embarrassment, so he believes he must leave Venice (106). When he sees the Saint Cecilia painting that is the portrait of Clementina, he feels “ergriffen” (181). As Florentin

listens to Clementina's music, "niemals hatte er aber sich so davon durchdrungen gefühlt" (183). It is as though Clementina is looking into Florentin's soul and to his past. Without saying anything or touching Florentin at all, Clementina penetrates Florentin's very being.

Florentin is not the only one whose feelings are affected by women. When Juliane becomes scared because of Eduard's enflamed passion, he feels "betroffen," as though she had slapped or hit him (45). Juliane's plans to return home affect him: "So oft sie [Juliane] ihre Ungeduld, nach Hause zu ihren Eltern zu kommen äußerte, stieg sein [Eduards] Unmut beinah bis zur Bitterkeit" (130). Without even trying, Juliane has nearly broken the heart of her fiancé. Eduard's happiness is absolutely dependant upon Juliane. She alone has the ability to make him ecstatic or depressed.

Women and Florentin's Memories

Women in particular seem to hold a special power over Florentin: the power to make him remember things in his past. Looking back on his first day with the Schwarzenbergs, Florentin thinks of how he and Eduard were praising Juliane's beauty. When he was looking at Juliane, "Wünsche und Erinnerungen an den schönen Leichtsinn von ehemals erwachten in ihm, und dann erschien ihm wieder die Geliebte seines künftigen Freundes, und all ihre Verhältnisse in einer Würde, die ihn zurückschreckte" (26). Juliane's face alone has the power to make him remember past loves and happiness, to remind him how alone he really is in the world. At Juliane's suggestion Florentin tells the story of his youth (46, 49), and she insists that he finish his story (102). In an indirect way, Juliane forces him to confront and examine his painful past. Her persistence in making Florentin tell his story allows the reader to know parts of his history

that he would rather keep hidden. Through Juliane's pushiness we become truly familiar with Florentin.

The Golfo woman also triggers memories that Florentin has forgotten. When he sees the inside of the Golfo woman's apartment, he suddenly no longer wishes to be romantic with her (106). The apartment reminds him of his mother's apartment that he sees just after he father dies. He describes the decorations there:

> "Endlich gelangte ich in ein sehr großes Zimmer, dessen Wände und Fußboden schwarz behängt waren; kein Tageslicht drang hinein, ein paar Wachskerzen mit Schwarz umwundenen hohen Leuchten brannten düster. Ganz am entgegengesetzten Ende stand ein schwarz behangenes Ruhbett, auf dem eine gleichfalls ganz schwarz gekleidete Dame saß, die einen langen schwarzen Schleier über das Gesicht hatte." (51)

After the black mourning sheets are all removed from his mother's house, he tells how the magnificence of the decorations inside are revealed: "'Die hellen Teppiche kamen nun zum Vorschein, die prächtig vergoldeten Zierraten glänzten mir entgegen, ich war voller Freude über diese Herrlichkeiten'" (53). The Golfo woman's apartment, although it is not as large, is equally majestic:

> "ein niedlich gebauter Salon, der so geschmackvoll und zugleich prächtig dekoriert war, als ich es selten gesehen habe. Besonders zog meine Blicke ein schöner Fußteppich an, mit grünem Grund, auf den zerstreute Rosen eingewirkt waren, der sich gegen die glänzenden mit Gold verzierten Wände sehr schön ausnahm. Das Ganze ward von einem kristallnen Kronleuchter zauberisch beleuchtet." (103)

But when the Golfo woman's maid leads him into the same room the next night, it is dimly lit, and the room appears to him to have changed. His mother's room improves from being dark and dismal to being bright and radiant, but the Golfo woman's room becomes darker. On the second night, the Golfo woman's maid takes Florentin by the hand:

> "sie führte mich durch einige finstre Zimmer, jeder Umstand fiel mir unangenehm auf. Endlich öffnete sie eine Tür und ging zurück. Die Gebieterin kam mir entgegen, sie war im nachlässigen Nachtgewande, sehr schön, das Zimmer äußerst prächtig, der Schein einer Lampe erleuchtete es nur dämmernd; alles war köstlich, unvergleichlich, aber es war nicht jenes Zimmer, jene Erleuchtung, jene Spiegel, jener schöne Teppich; mich umgab nicht der süße Blumenduft, es war nicht dieselbe Grazie, die umherschwebte. Ich sehnte mich nach dem Schimmer, nach der Luft jenes kleinen Tempels, der mich zuerst so freundlich begrüßt und meine Phantasie gefangen genommen hatte. Das ganze reizende Bild war mir entrückt, meine Wünsche mir fremd geworden. Ich setzte mich neben die schöne gütige Dame [...]." (106)

Florentin's mother's house and the Golfo woman's house are both richly decorated. In both descriptions, Florentin notes the wall, the carpet, and the lighting. In both situations, the changing of the interiors has a great effect on Florentin. When his mother's house changes, the brilliance brings him great joy and he revels in the beauty of his surroundings. A simple change in lighting in the Golfo woman's room depresses Florentin and makes him feel that something significant has changed in his relationship with the Golfo woman. Before this moment, he referred to her merely as "'sie'" (104), but afterwards, he calls her "'die Dame'" (106), which is the same word that he uses when he describes his mother for the first time (51). The Golfo

woman's apartment has become his mother's house. It has metamorphosized from a seductive interior to a painful memory. This unconscious connection to his past makes Florentin feel uncomfortable and prevents him from sleeping with the Golfo woman. This unnerving reminder of Florentin's past occurs merely because the Golfo woman dimmed the lights in her apartment.

Brandstädter and Jeorgakopulos, in their observations on the Golfo woman and Florentin's mother, compare the scenes with Florentin's mother after her husband's death and the scene with the Golfo woman in great detail. The first time Florentin saw his mother's apartment was the same day that he found out that his father had died. Therefore, his memories of his mother's apartment are associated with death:

> Legt man die beiden Szenen übereinander, so liest sich die Begegnung mit der jungen Frau im verdunkelten Zimmer wie eine Umschrift oder Reinszenierung seines Kindheitstraumas: das Liebeslager ist von Anfang an mit dem Tod, dem "Ruhebett" verknüpft, auf dem Florentins toter Vater liegt. Die Frau im dunklen Zimmer, im fließenden Gewand ist die Wiederauferstehung des leeren "Geistes" der Mutter, die von Florentin als Trugbild entlarvt wurde. So kommt es zu einer Umwertung der Venedig-Szene: Hinter der schönen Maske der Liebe verbirgt sich das schreckliche, janusköpfige Gesicht des Todes. (90)

Florentin is no longer attracted to the Golfo woman because now she reminds him of his father's death which he experienced as a child. The Golfo woman remembers Florentin, but he cannot remember her (104). The connection between the Golfo woman and Florentin may not be incidental at all. The close similarities between her apartment and his mother's house, in addition to her insistence that she knows him, suggests that she knew him as a child. She is very likely related to Florentin.[50]

Juliane's ghost story brings up familiar feelings for Florentin. Afterwards he says:

> "Mir war, als wären mir sowohl die Begebenheiten, als die Menschen darin fremd; unwillkürlich schob sich mir bei jedem eine bekannte Person unter, so wie man, wenn man ein Schauspiel liest, sich die Schauspieler denken muß von denen man es einst hat spielen sehen. Und was ich sonst nicht leicht fühle, mich hat ein leises Grauen dabei überfahren." (126-27)

Although Florentin could be acting overly dramatic, the child in the story could actually be Florentin. Florentin could be the child of the Marquise,[11] or if Clementina has been trying to keep a secret, the child could be her own.[12] What is becoming clearer, is that Florentin is somehow related to Clementina and Juliane. Clementina is Florentin's one link to his origins.

When Florentin sees Clementina during the requiem: "Die Szenen seiner Kindheit wurden wieder lebendig vor ihm; die Erinnerung an Manfredi drängte sich ihm besonders wieder auf, und alle Begebenheiten jener Zeit" (183). After he and Clementina looked at each other and she fainted, Florentin asks himself: "'Warum ist diese Clementina und alles was sie umgibt, grade mir wie eine Erscheinung, das sie doch unter den übrigen Menschen wie eine längst bekannte Mitbürgerin wandelt? warum wird jede ferne Erinnerung wieder wach in mir?'" (185). Clementina has an almost-supernatural ability to cause Florentin remember the vaguest memories from his youth. Her capacity to do so completely unnerves Florentin, making him uncomfortable. Unintentionally, women have the power to force Florentin remember his childhood. Though it is the past that he has been longing to discover, he leaves Clementia, signifying that he does not really want to discover his true orgins.

<u>Florentin Feeling Betrayed by Women</u>

Perhaps one reason that Florentin feels so hurt by the women in his past is because the women in his life have often disguised themselves. By disguising themselves, women ultimately betray Florentin when they reveal their true identity. Florentin believes he has been betrayed by the women in his life whom he most trusted. Juliane is told that she must dress in men's clothing if she is to be granted permission to go adventuring with Eduard and Florentin (44). When she is listening to Florentin's story during their picnic, she is doing so dressed as another person. She becomes one of the women in his life who wears a disguise.

When Florentin first mentions his mother, he states: "'Ich musste sie Mutter nennen,'" hinting to the listener and reader that she was not his real mother and that this relationship was not a natural one. It is not surprising then, that she does not treat him with the comfort and warmth that a natural mother would give her son. When he is first living with his mother in her house, she begins to dress differently than when she would visit him on the island. Instead of her usually splendid clothing (50, 52), she now only wears dark dresses (52), and she forces her children to wear dark, cloister-like clothing too (53). His mother has changed from a beautiful and magnificent creature into a weak, mean, and harsh warden. The image of his mother is completely destroyed. In dressing him entirely in black, Florentin's mother disguises Florentin too.

When Florentin tries to rescue Felicita from the cloister, she tells their mother, and then his mother betrays him to the Prior. The only two women still in Florentin's life betray him (76-77). His mother confesses that she is not his mother at all, but merely knew his real mother and raised him as a favor to her (77-78). When Florentin reflects on the fact that he was raised by strangers, he uses the word "'Gewalt'" to describe the power that his mother and sister had over him (79).

Florentin's wife is in disguise too. When he first speaks of her, he remarks, "'Wahrscheinlich traute sie mir, und ich habe ihr nur zu viel getraut'" (89). Their marriage seems happy at first. Florentin loves to dress up his wife and put make up on her like a doll (90), signifying how much her appearance and her beauty mean to him. She is his artistic model. During the week that he leaves her alone to work on a piece in another town, she has an abortion (94), and Florentin does not see it as her killing their child, but him. After he tries to kill her, she takes up a new lover and has Florentin kicked out of Rome (94). The woman who was his lover and the mother of his child has become his arch enemy. Just as Florentin's mother betrayed him when she told him that she was not his real mother, his wife betrayed him by not becoming the mother of their child and by banishing him.

When he goes to England to visit his friends there, he cannot stay, but his friend suggests dressing him up in a disguise to fool his friend's fiancée. Florentin is not being betrayed here by his friend, but by his friend's fiancée. The Golfo woman had left a cloister and married an older man. Just as Florentin seems close to sleeping with her, her room appears to change as though she had been disguising her real identity from him all along.

Clementina trys to hide her previous life as well, and not just from Florentin, but from almost everybody. The Doctor remarks that the only person who really knows about Clementina's past is Eleonore (169), so perhaps Florentin would have been more successful asking Eleonore about his youth. When he first sees Clementina, Florentin likens her to marble and describes her as an older woman (182) but, during the concert, he compares her directly to the portrait of her as Saint Cecilia, he considers it to be "ein wahrhaftes Urbild" (184), implying somehow that Clementina, even if only momentarily, looks younger and more vibrant. His memories come flooding back to him (183). In any case, Clementina is not who he thought she

would be. In a strange way, the women are responsible for causing Florentin to reflect on his life. He perceives that these women inactively direct him to remember his childhood.

Men Following Women's Orders

There are situations where women are completely in control and command men. What is more remarkable is how willingly men follow the women's requests and orders. The Count allws himself to be tied up by his daughter, Theresa (19). Eleonore, and not the Count, leads Florentin through the estate (21). During this tour of the estate, Eleonore points out, "'der Mann, der jetzt eben so kriegerisch und wild spricht, muß manch häuslich Sorge übernehmen'" (22). The Count concedes by saying: "'Es geziemt dem Manne allerdings'" (22). Men may command the battlefields, but women will still give them household duties. Florentin notices that Juliane's beauty gives her a certain power over himself and Eduard that she enjoys. Florentin doesn't seem to mind that she has this power (35). At Clementina's request, the wedding is held off until the last minute (37), which everyone in the household seems to accept without much complaint. Juliane decides to go adventuring with Eduard and Florentin (43). Juliane orders Florentin to continue with his story, to which he replies: "'Ich gehorche'" (80). When his drawing model fell in love with him, he followed her wishes and married her (90). In describing himself as a husband he says: "'Ich war der beste Ehemann von der Welt, und ließ mich von ihr beherrschen'" (90). The Golfo woman asks him to wait on the balcony, and he gladly does so (105). Florentin has spent his entire life following the wishes, requests, and orders of women. He considers doing what he is told as part of being a good son, husband, and friend. Florentin is never given an order by men in the story, except from the Prior, who acts according to the wishes of Florentin's mother.

Even as a guest in another's house, Florentin is told what to do. When Eduard, Juliane, and Florentin are at the Miller's house, Juliane gives out orders as though the house belongs to her, and the Miller and his wife are her servants. The Miller and his wife, as well as Eduard and Florentin, follow Juliane's orders obediently (109, 110, 114, 119, 127). Eduard could very well give orders in this situation as well, because of his aristocratic standing and his closeness to the Schwarzenberg family, but Juliane commands the house. At the same time that Juliane gives orders at the Miller's house, Eleonore orders the Count not to leave her alone at the castle to look for Juliane (152). At the wedding, Eleonore is not seen first with her husband or her daughter, but checking to see whether her orders for the wedding have been properly carried out (152). Florentin is not only bossed around by Juliane, but also by Betty. When he arrives at Clementina's estate, Betty tells him bluntly he cannot see Clementina that day and that he should stay until the next day when Clementina is giving a concert and he may see her (158). Betty orders Florentin to describe every detail of the wedding. He does so gladly, drawing Juliane's wedding dress in detail (174). There is no situation on these estates where a man cannot be given orders or commands by women. The number of requests and orders reflect a society in which women clearly have the right to make requests and demands of their friends, family, and servants. As long as men are in women's domain, they must obey their commands. Women have absolute control of the garden, the house, and the children. A very strong position of authority, in which women can freely give orders to men, is when they are teaching them.

Women as Educators

Women act as educators in the story. Upon his arrival at the Schwarzenberg estate, the Count states of Eleonore and her work in the garden, "'mich hat sie erst zu dem Geschäft

einigermaßen gebildet'" (22), implying both that the Count did not know much about running an estate before Eleonore educated him in it and that she has not taught him everything there is to know yet. Shortly thereafter, Eleonore asks Florentin, "'Wollen Sie mein Schüler in der Ökonomie werden?'" (22). She automatically assumes that Florentin is ignorant in the matter, he wants to learn about running an estate, and that she is the best person to teach him.

Clementina clearly is the one who is most responsible for the education of the family. In a letter to Clementina, Eleonore describes Clementina as Juliane's example of good morals and behavior (149). Clementina seems most concerned about the education of her nieces, Theresa and Juliane, but especially of Juliane, now that she is about to be married so young. The Doctor acts as Clementina's mouthpiece when he tells Florentin about her concerns for her nieces. He states: "'Clementina sagte einmal, Juliane müßte durch das Leben zur Liebe gebildet werden; aber Theresa würde erst durch die Liebe, zum Leben sich ausbilden'" (173). Clementina must be thinking of Juliane's tendency to be dependent on the men around her. Perhaps Clementina believes Juliane is too naive in her thinking about love and she mistakes her feelings of dependency for Eduard as true love. This statement also implies that Juliane's and Eduard's marriage will not be a happy one.[13]

Clementina educates people outside her family as well. The Doctor informs Florentin: "'Es ist eine der liebsten Beschäftigungen der Gräfin [Clementina], sich dieses Chor auszubilden, von dem sie sich nicht allein ihre eignen Kompositionen vortragen läßt, sondern auch die herrlichsten alten Sachen, die man sonst nirgends mehr hört als bei ihr'" (162). The Doctor describes how much Clementina enjoys instructing choir audiences about music they would not otherwise hear. She alone teaches her society about its forgotten musical past. The Doctor also points out that, music, to Clementina, is "'nicht bloß zum eitlen Zeitvertrieb, wie die meisten

Frauen, sondern als ernstes Studium'" (165). Clementina is not content with just educating those around her. She insists on improving her own knowledge by continuing to educate herself. Clementina has complete control over the education of her family and all of the people who live on her estate.

Women Running the Estate

In *Florentin,* noble women rule over the estate. They design it, control its maintenance, and organize the roles of everyone who lives there. Upon arrival at the Schwarzenberg estate, the Count informs Florentin that Eleonore is completely responsible for the creation of the natural park (17) and the gardens that surround the castle (22). The interior of the castle has been designed by Eleornore (30-31). Eduard remarks on how she blends both old and new items into one unified style. When Florentin is married, his wife also seems to be head of the household. She handles all of the money brought in from his painting and determines how to spend it (89). When Juliane is at the Miller's house, she is away from her mother and her mother's dominance for the first time. Yet Juliane quickly fills the role of running a household, as seen in her eagerness in giving orders there (109-27). Even though the Count takes credit for the agricultural improvements on the estate, Eleonore feels that she must also give credit to the Count for abolishing the *Frondienst* (135). In doing this, Eleonore is trying to give, as accurately as possible, a clear description of how the farmers on her land are treated in comparison to the Chief Cavalry Sergeant's. Eleonore, not the Count, organizes the wedding feast (138), even though she organizes it with Clementina's taste in mind (151).

Clementina is very clearly in charge of her household. When Florentin remarks how easily Clementina's good deeds could be misused, the Doctor tells Florentin: "'Die Not der

Hülfesuchenden wird jederzeit von ihr selbst geprüft. Dies Geschäft überträgt sie niemals irgend einem andern; kann sie nicht selbst prüfen, so hilft sie ohne Untersuchung'" (177). She has so much power over her dealings that she acts like a goddess, judging who is worthy of her help. Accordingly, her estate resembles paradise on earth (184). She manages everything on her estate, despite her constant illness, without anyone else's input or assistance. Her ability to organize her estate has reached almost super-human proportions.

Women as Saints or Goddesses

The power that the female characters hold in the story is often expressed by associating those characters with saints or goddesses. Eleonore, for example, is compared to Ceres, the goddess of harvest, in praise of her organization of the garden and park (21). Not surprisingly, then, the Count describes her as the "'Meister'" of the garden and park, as though she has command over the very living plants (22). Eleonore has reached a goddess-like status simply because she organizes the garden and park on her estate.

Also important are the two portraits of Juliane and Clementina. Because the portrait of Juliane is based on the portrait of Clementina, both Saint Anne and Saint Cecilia are associated with her. Saint Anne was the mother of Mary (Holweck) and was responsible for her upbringing, as Florentin notes (31-32). As Saint Anne, Clementina is portrayed as a mother, which symbolizes the relationship between her and Juliane. For the first fourteen years of her life, Juliane was raised by Clementina and not by Eleonore (32). Saint Cecilia, who was blinded before being martyred, is reported to have written some of the first hymns for the Christian church, and is the saint of musicians (Kirsch). This is also fitting for Clementina as a gifted musician. She writes spiritual music, such as requiems (161) and her music is described as a holy

art (165). Clementina is compared again to Saint Anne and Saint Cecilia when Florentin sees the original portrait in Clementina's temple and Clementina herself (181-82). Saint Cecilia is described as "die Beschützerin der Tonkunst und Erfinderin der Orgel," and as "die göttliche Muse, die in lichter, freudenreicher Glorie des großen Gedankens, über Tod und Trauer siegend schwebte" (181). These powers can be applied to Clementina as well, because she is the model for the portrait. Florentin is looking at Clementina's face in the portrait when he understands for the first time "die Göttlichkeit der Musik" (181).

Clementina seems so much like a saint to Florentin that he thinks of her as having goddess-like powers. And indeed, her work with the sick does seem to give her a supernatural ability to bring the terminally ill back to life (167) All her work for charity she does purely out of kindness, as a true saint might act (170). In her work with children, Clementina is also described as "'die gute Fee'" (165). She not only brings the sick back to health, but she also has plans of installing public baths (167). These baths would be open to all of those with an illness, not just the wealthy. These baths are symbolic of Clementina's spirituality. Bathing is often associated with baptism. It seems that Clementina wants to baptize those people whom she is treating, if only symbolically. In this way, she acts not only as a savior of peoples' lives on earth, but also of their eternal souls.

Because of her goddess-like powers, it is not surprising that Clementina is Juliane's spiritual guide (149), and that other people ask for Clementina's blessings (142, 191). Clementina's sister, Eleonore, mockingly refers to herself and her family as "Weltkinder" (149). This title implies that Eleonore and her family are mere mortals in comparison to the goddess-like Clementina. Eleonore is perhaps getting annoyed at Clementina telling her what to do in her

own household. But by making the analogy in the first place, she is admitting that Clementina really does hold this power over her family.

Clementina is not the only female in the story who is goddess-like. When Florentin describes the women he associated with in Venice, he remarks, "'die Schönheit betete ich an'" (46). These women do not have to have saintly qualities or morals to be revered as goddesses. Florentin always painted his wife in positions of power, according to the fashion of the time, "'als Göttin, als Heilige, als Priesterin, als Nymphe'" (90). Even though they were living very modestly at the time (90), Florentin did not paint her in any modest clothing or setting, preferring the grander idea of painting his wife as goddess-like.

After his wife aborts his child and he only paints portraits of strangers to earn a living, he says that, for him, art itself has gone from being a goddess to a wench (100). The Marquise has similar saintly characteristics as her friend, Clementina. Juliane explains about the Marquise:

> "sie hätte soeben einen Vorsatz ausgeführt, den sie schon seit länger als einem Jahre in ihrem Herzen gehegt habe, zu dessen wirklicher Ausführung sie noch niemals Kräfte genug in ihrer Seele gefühlt hätte; aber heute Nacht hätte sie diese in ihrem heißem Gebete zur heiligen Jungfrau errungen. Sie hätte es glücklich vollbracht, doch sich so angestrengt, daß sie gleich darauf ihre Besinnung verloren habe. Dieselbe, an von Himmel in ihrer Seele empfangen, möge es ihr vergeben, daß gleich darauf ihren Körper diese Schwäche befallen, und dass sie auch jetzt noch sich der Tränen nicht enthalten könne." (121)

This description of the Marquise's behavior is reminiscent of a saint's story. Shortly after she faints, the Marquise starts seeing a ghost-child, who has "'ein wundersüßes Engelsköpfchen'" (123). Nine months later, the Marquise miraculously bears a girl and promises that the girl will

go to a cloister some day (126). If she had failed in her wifely duties to produce a child, she would have sacrificed herself and allowed her husband to remarry after she retreated to a convent (122). The Marquise's story portrays her wifely devotion and demonstrates the power of prayer.

Juliane is also regarded as a goddess. When she appears at the wedding feast, the guests and her siblings treat her like a queen and make her the center of what is described as a "Feenaufzug" (146-47). Juliane's wedding bed is adorned with images of Psyche and the God of Love (145). When Florentin says goodbye to Juliane, he kneels down in front of her, submissively. Eduard sees this and asks what is going on; Florentin replies, "'Anbetung,'" as though he is praying to Juliane (153). These women are regarded so highly, not just because of their beauty and their good deeds, but their power to create, protect, and nurture life. Nowhere in the novel are men described as god-like or having god-like qualities. This is reserved for women because of their ability to have children and to act as protective mothers. Because of this ability, women are viewed by men as holy.

Women as Mothers

As women, Eleonore, Clementina, and Florentin's wife all have the ability to have children and be mothers, or act in a motherly way. This automatically gives them a position of authority, both because they have authority over their children and those under their protection, and because they can do something that men cannot do, create life. Florentin notices that Eleonore's expressions are full of "der mütterlichen Liebe" (21). This observation follows the description of her healthy estate, its happy people, and of her as "Ceres." Eleonore is not just the head of the household, but she is truly the mother of the household, responsible for the health and happiness of everyone who lives there. Even though she has been an absentee mother for the

majority of Juliane's life (32), she never really lost the role and authority that goes along with being a mother.

Eleonore seems to be the only one who is not affected by Florentin's charms. Juliane, in writing to Clementina, tells her how each member of the household is easily persuaded by Florentin except for Eleonore:

> Dem Mütterchen bleibt aber der Kopf ruhig, wenn er uns auch allen verdreht wird; nicht ein einziges Mal ist es ihm gelungen sie irre zu machen, wiewohl er es oft darauf anlegte; sie lächelt, und ist freundlich und liebreich gegen ihn, aber Gewalt hat er gar nicht über sie, er fühlt es: Mutter ist auch die einzige, vor der er gehörigen Respekt hat. (41)

Although Florentin does not have a mother in the traditional sense, there are many times that he has had a motherly figure in his life. The woman who raised him, despite the fact that she was not his real mother, insisted that he call her mother (32), and she had complete control over his life until he escaped. In a way, because of his respect for and obedience to Eleonore, Florentin fills the role of a child in her household. When he speaks of the women with whom he had affairs in Venice, he explains, "'ich war an der Erziehung der berühmtesten schönen Frauen in Venedig überlassen,'" implying that he thought of them as motherly figures, even if he says this only sarcastically (46). Florentin is only interested in these women sexually, and yet, he still thinks of himself as one of their children.

When Florentin describes his wife, he makes it clear: "'Geliebt hatte ich sie wohl eigentlich nie'" (93). But when she becomes pregnant with his child, and he realizes he will become a father, his feelings for her change. Because of her ability to produce his child, he says, "'jetzt fühlte ich wahre Zärtlichkeit für sie; sie war mir heilig'" (93). Until his wife showed her

ability to become a mother and to fulfill his wish of becoming a father, she was practically no more than a live-in model to him. Now that she is to be a mother, he gains so much respect for her that he regards her as holy. This relationship changes dramatically when she rejects her role as a mother and aborts their child. Florentin is so affected and disappointed because of this that he transfers her act to himself. He says to Juliane of his wife, "'Mich, mich hatte sie höchst unbarmherzig gemordet!'" (94). In an instant, Florentin's role has switched from that of a father to that of a child. Just as Florentin marveled over his wife's ability to create life, he feels horrified at her choice to end it. No doubt, he feels betrayed by what he feels as her misuse of her power.

Clementina's friend, the Marquise, is portrayed almost as a saint in her struggle to have a child. She has been married for five or six years without conceiving (119), she is plagued by guilt because she is not able to fulfill her marital duties, and her physical and mental health soon begin to suffer (120-21). The Marquise's story shows the critical importance of motherhood for the aristocratic woman. She alone is blamed for the lack of an heir; her inability to produce one makes her a bad wife and an incomplete woman as well. As a woman who cannot produce a child, her only other option is to live a spiritual life (121). Her prayers seem to be answered with the appearance of a ghost child. The Marquise "'liebte die kleine Gestalt mit wahrer mütterlicher Leidenschaft'" (125). The Marquise does give birth to a baby girl after nine months, and the ghost child disappears. Juliane ends the story with the birth of the real child. It is assumed that, because the Marquise finally fulfilled her role as a wife and mother, her life would end happily, and there was no need to tell the rest of her life. In finally giving birth to a real child, the Marquise regained her position of power within her marriage and her household.

Clementina, even though she does not claim to have any children of her own, acts in a motherly way. She raised Juliane for the first fourteen years of her life (32), and she spends a great deal of her time with the children who are patients on her estate: “Sie wird von ihnen wie eine Mutter geliebt, und sie hat auch die Zärtlichkeit einer Mutter” (165). In addition, Clementina’s temple seems to be dedicated to the memory of a small boy, implying that she perhaps gave birth to a boy, but somehow lost him:

> Auf einem Sarkophag ruhte ein Genius in Gestalt eines Kindes, die Fackel entsank verlöschend seiner Hand; es war nicht gewiß, ob er tot oder schlafend abgebildet war. Auf den Seiten des Sarkophags zeigten sich in halb erhobener Arbeit die Horen, die traurend, mit verhülltem Angesicht, eine nach der andern hinschlichen; über dem Monument befand sich das Gemälde der heiligen Cäcilia. (181)

Because of the monument’s proximity to the painting of Cecilia, and the Hours looking from the monument to the painting, we can assume that there is some sort of relationship between the boy and Clementina. She is not only the mother of music, but quite possibly, of a boy who was lost to her. As Florentin arrives, Clementina is listening to her requiem, which she has performed every year (161), implying that she is mourning the specific date that she lost her son. This requiem reawakens many familiar feelings in Florentin (183). As the music seems to reach its climax:

> Die Brust des Knaben auf dem Sarkophag schien sich vom gewaltigen Gesang zu heben; staunend erwartete Florentin, er würde sich aufrichten und seine Stimme mit einmischen in die Stimme der ganzen Welt für die Ruhe der Seelen, und mit der heiligen Cecilia, die ihre Lippen zu öffnen schien, beten für die Erlösung der Büßenden. (183)

Both Florentin and the boy on the sarcophagus seem to be affected by Clementina's requiem, allowing us to assume that they are, indeed, one and the same. In his desire to join the prayers of the choir, Florentin is praying for his own lost soul.

Women as Artists

The women in *Florentin* are not just creators in the sense that they can create life; they are also artists in their own right. In fact, Eleonore's park resembles the natural forest so closely, that one can barely tell where the forest ends and the park begins. Juliane is a talented singer, perhaps she was tutored by Clementina while she was still living there (32). In telling her ghost story, Juliane displays her ability to act as a gifted story-teller (119-126). Clementina's gift as a musician is noted by both the Count and the Doctor (32, 165). Her music is so artful and powerful that it seems to come from a saint or goddess. Florentin observes the concert:

> Nach einer kurzen feierlichen Stille erschollen wie vom Himmel nieder die Stimmen der unsichtbaren Sänger! Begleitet von den Tönen der allmächtigen Orgel, schwoll der Gesang des heiligen Chorals in tief ausströmenden Akzenten, wälzte sich and der hohen Kuppel hinauf, und zog die Andacht des tiefsten Herzens wie in einer Weihrauchsäule mit sich zum Himmel auf. […] Der schwebende Nachhall des Chorals erstarb in einen leisen Hauch; da erscholl die Posaune durch Herze und Gebein rufend, und nun begonnen die Chöre bald abwechselnd sich einander antwortend, bald vereinigt vom Aufruf einer einzelnen Stimme geweckt, zur mächtigen, alles mit sich fortreißenden Fuge anzuwachsen, bis Himmel und Erde in den ewigen, immer lauter werdenden Wirbel mit

> einzustimmen schienen, und alles wankte und bebte und zusammenzustürzen drohte. (183)

Clementina's music is constantly in motion, becoming louder, stronger, and more powerful as it progresses. The voices of the singers and instruments become tools to connect heaven and earth. In writing this piece of music, Clementina acts as a prophet. The temple shakes as though God himself is speaking. During the concert, Clementina herself appears to Florentin almost as a work of art. She seems statue-like in her prayers next to the monument, as though she is part of it herself, and her face has a distinct "Marmorblässe" (182). In addition, she closely resembles the portrait of herself as Cecilia, indicating that she has always seemed to be like a figure out of a work of art (184).

Florentin's wife also seems to be a living piece of art. His greatest pleasure is dressing her up as a doll for his paintings (90), and when she tells him why she aborted the child, she says, "'sie fürchtete für ihre Schönheit'" (93). She cannot be a work of art and a mother at the same time. When Florentin describes the abortion, he says, "'sie hatte durch künstliche Mittel von dem Zustande befreit'" (93). Helfer emphasizes this point:

> The woman, as a childbearer, [...] is the true source of Romantic poesy. This creates a profound identity crisis for the man: the self-positing male subject cannot define himself fully except by somehow becoming a "woman" so that he too, can "give birth" to Romantic poesy, and hence to himself as a self positing subject. ("Aesthetic" 151)

When Florentin's wife aborts his child, she destroys his chances at defining himself (151). Women can be artists in their ability to create and also in their ability to destroy life. In her destructive act, Florentin's wife has robbed him of his own ability to create meaningful art. After

he flees Rome, he is forced to work as a portrait painter, and he says, "'es war mir nach und nach ein schlechter Spaß geworden, Gesichter aller Art für bare Bezahlung zu konterfeien'" (96). Even though he continued to move from place to place after leaving Rome, he says: "'Es ward mir aber schwerer und zuletzt ganz unmöglich, eine Kunst, die die Göttin, das Glück und die Gefährtin meiner schönen und glücklichen Tage gewesen war, im Unglück als Magd zu gebrauchen'" (100). Here Florentin personifies art with three females: a goddess, companion, and a servant. To him, art is the sole goddess in his life and the one constant companion who has remained loyal to him. The artful act of his wife destroys his vision of art as a goddess. After the abortion, art has become Florentin's maid. He can no longer worship, pray to, or make love to art. To Florentin, art is now simply a means to pay his bills. Because he no longer takes any joy in what he paints, he is no longer creating works of art. In robbing Florentin of his chance to be a father, Florentin's wife has also robbed him of his ability to create art. In her deceitful act, Florentin's wife destroys the one true joy of his life.

Women Implementing Change in Society

As mothers and as heads of the house, women in *Florentin* have the opportunity to change their society and implement modern and liberal ideas. Eleonore has created a very modern park and does not allow hunters on her estate (17). Florentin observes the reverence for the Schwarzenbergs when he returns with them to the estate, "Voll Ehrerbietung, ohne Furcht und ohne knechtische Erniedrigung wurden sie von den Landleuten, die ihnen begegneten, begrüßt. Gesundheit, und Vergnüglichkeit leuchtete auf jedem Gesicht, Ordnung und Reinlichkeit glänzte ihnen aus jeden Haus entgegen" (21). This balanced society is completely due to Eleonore's organization of the estate (22). Eleonore also has no qualms about following

her husband to battle, and in doing so, leaving her children behind (22, 32). She maintains men have household duties in addition to their duties outside of the household (22). When the Chief Cavalry Sergeant complains of the changing times, he brings up the fact that his daughter danced with one of the farmers from his estate (134), an incident from which he has not yet fully recovered. If his daughter is willing to dance with one of the farmers, then she must be comfortable with the new reforms, whereas her father obviously is not.

Although the Count is responsible for the new agricultural reforms on their estate, Eleonore tells how the Count abolished *Frondienst* on their land, an act she obviously agrees with, because she brags about it to the Chief Cavalry Sergeant (135). In addition, Eleonore does not want to have a traditionally status-oriented wedding feast, stating, "'ich konnte mir nie weder Gutes, noch Erfreuliches dabei denken, wenn ich diese Leute an einer langen Tafel, schnurgerade gereiht sitzen sah'" (137). She also wants to spare the lower class from being mocked by the aristocracy (138). She allows the guests to sit among their own groups (138). The Count wants to stand on tradition. In the end, however, Eleonore gets her way, and the tables at the wedding feast are designed so that families can sit together and everyone serves themselves so that there are no lackeys (143). By organizing the wedding feast this way, Eleonore completely breaks with tradition. This emphasizes family bonds rather than rank and status. It is clear from her treatment of her servants and the people on her estate that she thinks of them in a more humane way than her husband and the Chief Cavalry Sergeant. She manages her servants with an enlightened respect.

When the question of apparel comes for the wedding, the Count insists on the traditionally rich and fancy clothing (148), even though Florentin and Juliane both prefer the plainer dress (148, 152). The Count stubbornly refuses to allow Juliane and the rest of his family

to be simply dressed for the ceremony. Women usually decide what will be worn at a wedding, yet the Count has the final say in the matter (148). He agrees that Juliane looks pretty in her simple clothes, but states, "'aber hier darf nicht die Rede von der Schönheit der Kleidung sein, sondern von der Schicklichkeit. In dieser kann sie nicht öffentlich getraut werden, heute müssen wir notwendig in Gala sein'" (148). For the Count, it is not a matter of aesthetics, but of propriety. The Count succeeds in keeping the traditionally elaborate wedding attire as part of the ceremony.

Clementina, like Eleonore, rules over her estate with the most modern and liberal reforms. She insists on caring for the sick, regardless of their economic status, and even provides them with free housing (165-66). In addition, she plans to add a public bath (167). The park on her estate is open to the public (187). As a female composer and unmarried woman with no children, Clementina still runs her estate herself and makes all decisions concerning who deserves her charity and who does not (177). Eleonore and Clementina, although they are changing their societies, are not changing them so quickly that the reforms are revolutionary. Both women are not trying to produce classless societies on their estates, but rather to build societies in which the aristocracy and the peasants are well taken care of and healthy, forming a generally pleasant and efficient environment. Clementina, however, goes one step further than Eleonore because of her views on marriage. Whereas Eleonore believes common understanding, friendship, and equal distribution of the household duties makes the happiest marriages, Clementina insists that marriage must be based on love, and not on self-sacrifice (199-201). In regards to love and marriage, Eleonore stands on the side of tradition, and Clementina is thinking in a more Romantic sense, where marriage should be based on true love. It is not surprising, given Dorothea Schlegel's background; her reading romantic novels, her being trapped in an unhappy

marriage, and her affair with a man who wrote about the importance of love in marriage, that she would champion the ideal of a romantically-based marriage. In both Eleonore's and Clementina's ideals of marriage, women stand on equal footing with their husbands.

Conclusion:

The power that women hold in *Florentin* allows them to command a great authority, each in their own way. Juliane, as one of the weakest women in the novel, still holds authority at specific times. Even though she is still considered a child, while she is at the Miller's house, she is in complete control, and all who are there are glad to do her bidding (109-30). This obedience is a result of Juliane's rank as daughter of the Count, and it demonstrates how status is still very clearly defined on the Schwarzenberg estate. Yet even though Eduard shares the same social status as Juliane, Juliane gives the orders in the Miller's house.

Eleonore holds the respect of her people not through fear, violence, or threats, but through her generosity and fairness (21). She governs her estate with consideration, not oppression, causing her servants to hold her in esteem. Florentin, who seems to be an authority himself in her household, is willing to serve her out of admiration (41). When he leaves the Schwarzenberg estate, Florentin asks leave of Juliane and Eleonore, but not of the Count or Eduard (153, 155). Florentin defers most to the women and not to the men of the house. Eleonore is not the woman in the Schwarzenberg family who holds the most power; this position belongs to Clementina. Eleonore, although she has control over the wedding feast, does everything with Clementina's wishes in mind (151). Betty, who is the weakest woman in the story, holds authority while she is in Clementina's service. She is very authoritative in talking to Florentin. She commands him, "'begrüßen Sie fein ehrerbietig in mir die Gräfin Clementina. Ich komme in

ihrer Person, als bevollmächtiger Minister, und mir haben Sie Ihr Kreditiv zu überreichen. Nun so halten Sie nur Ihre ehrfurchsvolle Anrede!'" (158). Just by acting as Clementina's spokeswoman, Betty gains authority and respect. Clementina's power is far-reaching as well. She manages to delay Juliane's and Eduard's wedding, simply by saying that she is sick and will not be able to come until she is better (37). This upsets Eduard: "'doch mußte er sie sich aus Achtung für die Gräfin Clementina fallen lassen'" (38). Eduard is the groom, and yet he, Juliane, and her parents, do not control the date of the wedding. They continue to hold off the wedding until Clementina finally refuses to come (139). Yet after the ceremony, Juliane and Eduard still feel it necessary to go to Clementina for her blessing (189-91).

Clementina, according to the Doctor, is careful in how she uses her authority. When Florentin is shocked that Clementina would allow Betty to be married to Walther, the Doctor explains: "'Nie hat sie aber jemand durch Autorität zum Bessern zu zwingen versucht'" (164) Clementina uses her influence, "'nie zu verletzen und auf das höchste auszubilden'" (164). Just like her handling of Juliane's and Eduard's marriage, Clementina hopes that Betty will come to realize on her own that she should not marry Walther. In other words, she wants Juliane and Betty to act independently, so that they have control over their own lives. Clementina's power reaches beyond her family. She decides who is worthz to receive life-saving medical care through her charity. In an indirect way, she has control over life and death on her estate (177). In a similar way, Florentin's wife also uses her prerogative over life and death when she aborts her own child.

Dorothea Schlegel's novel, like her life, includes situations where women show strength and authority. In both the novel and her life, there are situations where women can be seen as

weak. Dorothea Schlegel was a woman who realized the supremacy noble women held in the home. Eleonore and Clementina:

> sind Frauen auf der, nach Dorothea Veit, letzten Entwicklungsstufe eines Menschen, sie haben die Experimentierphase durchschritten (nicht ohne Spuren des Grams im Falle Clementinens, nicht ohne gefährdende Leidenschaften im Falle Eleonorens), sie haben sich und ihre Grenzen angenommen, ihren Platz im Leben gefunden und können nun ruhig auf das Leben zurückwirken. (Brantner 65)

The women in *Florentin* serve as the foundation of society. Despite Dorothea Schlegel's later retreat from these feminist beliefs and her later affirmations that her husband was her lord and rightfully held dominion over her (Nehring 286, 288), in *Florentin* she makes a very clear statement. The women in *Florentin* rule the estates. Eleonore and Clementina, although their sphere may cover only their respective estates, govern these estates in an absolute manner. Husbands, sons, and fiancés may be allowed to express their opinions, but the decisions women make are final. The women in *Florentin* may depend on men in the public, outside world, but within their own sphere, they govern supremely.

ENDNOTES

1. For a more detailed summary of *Lucinde*, see Eichner.

2. Johnson 41-42, Weissberg "Nachwort" 215, Stern 133, Brantner 52, Helfer, "Confessions," Pnevmonidou 273-5.

3. See: Haym, Dilthey, Donner, Deibel, Scheidweiler, Kluckhohn, Borchert, Hibberd, Weissberg "Master's Theme," Richardson, Stern, Brandstädter and Jeorgakopulos, Nehring, and Krimmer.

4. See: Deibel, Haym, Donner, Hibberd, Blackall, Weissberg "Nachwort," Kluckhohn, and Borchert.

5. See: Deibel, Touaillon, Blackall, Hibberd, Weissberg "Master's Theme," Kontje, Richardson, Stephan, Brantner, Helfer "Aesthetic," Brandstädter and Jeorgokopulos, Roberts, Nehring, Johnson, Pnevmonidou, and Krimmer.

6. See: Geiger, Thronton, Weissberg "Nachwort" and "Master's Theme," Frank, Richardson, Stern, Roberts, Brandstädter and Jeorgakopulos, Nehring, and Pnevmonidou.

7. See: Weissberg "Nachwort" and "Master's Theme," Frank, Richardson, Kontje, and Brandstädter and Jeorgakopulos.

8. See: Blackall, Thornton, Weissberg "Nachwort" and "Master's Theme," Frank, Roberts, and Johnson.

9. See: Touaillon, Hibberd, Blackall, Weissberg "Nachwort," Frank, Richardson, Stephan, Stern, Brantner, Helfer "Aesthetic," Brandstädter and Jeorgakopulos, Nehring, and Krimmer.

10. Rudolf Haym, *Die romantische Schule: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Geistes*. (1870; New York: AMS, 1972); Wilhelm Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermachers*. 3rd ed. Martin

Redeler. 2 vols. (1870; Berlin Walter de Gruyter, 1966); J. O. E. Donner, *Der Einfluss Wilhelm Meisters auf den Roman der Romantiker* (Helsingfors: C. Frenckell & Sohn, 1893); Ludwig Geiger, "Dorothea Veit-Schlegel," *Deutsche Rundschau* 160 (1914): 119-134; Paula Scheidweiler, *Der Roman der deutschen Romantik* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1916); Paul Kluckhohn, "Einfuehrung," *Florentin: Ein Roman* by Dorothea Schlegel, *Deutsche Literatur in Entwicklungsreihe* Vol. 7 *Frühromantische Erzählungen* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1933). 89-244; Hans Heinrich Borchert. *Der Roman der Goethezeit* (Urach: Port, 1949).

11. Touallion believes that the Marquise is Florentin's mother, 564.

12. These critics believe that Clementina is the mother of Florentin: Krimmer 249, Blackall 49, Thornton 166, Nehring 312, Richardson xxx.

13. See: "Gespräch zwischen Eleonore und Clementina," which is included in the "Aufzeichnungen und Entwürfe zum Florentin," in the Reclam edition of *Florentin* 199-201. In this conversation, Clementina is concerned that Juliane's and Eduard's marriage will not be a happy one.

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