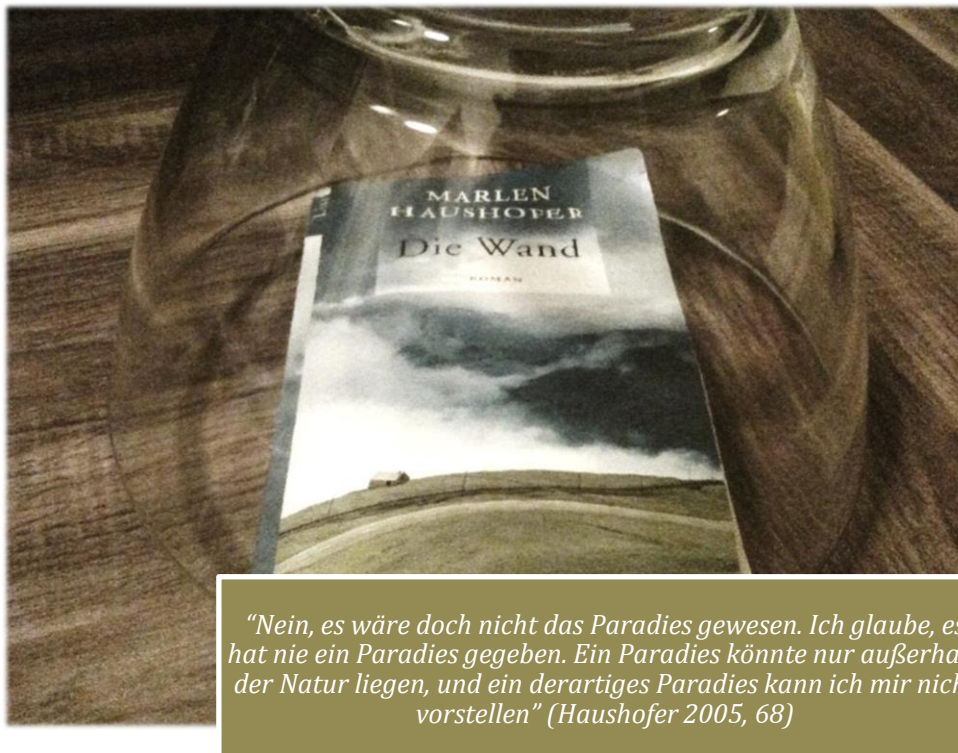


# MA Research Report

---

## **Feminist Utopia and Dystopia:** Marlen Haushofer's *Die Wand*



**Laura Kapelari (300945)**

**Under the Supervision of: Professor Kathleen Thorpe**

**Research Report submitted 15 February 2013 towards the Award of Master of Arts**

**School of Literature, Language and Media: German**

**University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg**

\*Title page picture courtesy of <http://www.kekinwien.at/wp-content/uploads/images/2012/04/Die-Wand.jpg> [consulted February 2012]

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	4
TITLE .....	4
AIM.....	4
RATIONALE .....	5
METHODOLOGY .....	8
THE LIFE AND WORK OF MARLEN HAUSHOFER .....	11
REVIEW OF LITERATURE .....	13
AUSTRIAN WOMEN WRITERS AND FEMINISM IN AUSTRIA – THE “OTHER” AUSTRIANS .....	14
UTOPIAN LITERATURE.....	15
FEMINIST UTOPIAS AND DYSTOPIAS .....	17
<i>DIE WAND</i> – UTOPIAN AND DYSTOPIAN INTERPRETATIONS .....	18
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....	21
SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR – <i>THE SECOND SEX</i> .....	21
JULIA KRISTEVA – <i>BLACK SUN</i> .....	28
ANALYSIS .....	30
FEMINIST UTOPIA AND DYSTOPIA IN MARLEN HAUSHOFER’S <i>DIE WAND</i> .....	30
A FEMINIST UTOPIAN EXPERIMENT .....	31
A ROOM OF HER OWN.....	36
A FAILED EXPERIMENT.....	40
MELANCHOLY – A SYMPTOM OF DYSTOPIA .....	43
<i>DIE WAND</i> – AN APOCALYPTIC DREAM .....	47
CONCLUSION.....	52

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The author wishes to thank several people. First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Kathleen Thorpe, who has been a great source of motivation and resources for this research paper, and whose wealth of literary knowledge has been indispensable. I also wish to extend my thanks to my proof-readers, Dustin and Nicole, whose unwavering support during the tumultuous ups and downs have made this piece of work possible. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank my wonderful mother, who has always pushed me to chase my dreams and inspired me to look beyond the label “woman”. I dedicate this to you.

# INTRODUCTION

## TITLE

Feminist Utopia and Dystopia: Marlen Haushofer's *Die Wand*

## AIM

This research report's aim is to explore and analyse Marlen Haushofer's feminist novel *Die Wand* (1963) as the representation of feminist utopia and dystopia. This will involve closely examining how the terms "utopia" and "dystopia" appear in and are defined by the novel, as well as to which side this novel ultimately leans. Haushofer critiques the position of women in Austrian society of the post-war period as she herself experienced it, yet her account can also be extrapolated to the global level, at least with regards to the position of the woman in Western society, which was also the focus of the second wave of feminism, as well as later movements.

To begin with, the utopia depicted in Haushofer's novel is a problematic one. Initially, the wall behind which the female protagonist finds herself is seen to protect her from the apocalypse that occurred on the other side of the wall, which seems to have petrified the rest of world. It also frees her from the limitations and projected roles of the phallogentric society she was a part of before. The wall can therefore be interpreted as the manifestation of a feminist utopia. Yet this wall is invisible, and according the novel's original title, "Die gläserne Wand", it is also inherently breakable and weak, denoting the fragile nature and

unfeasibility of a sustained feminist utopia and a definite end to patriarchy. The dystopian side of the novel may be found in both the female protagonist's "return to nature", which supports patriarchal mythmaking about women; in her melancholia; as well as, most blatantly, in her murder of the only other survivor, an unknown man, toward the end of the novel. She symbolically destroys patriarchy, yet the utopia that existed before the man's appearance, though illusory, is now forever out of reach.

Haushofer's *Die Wand*, as well as its location on the utopia/dystopia spectrum, will be used to demonstrate Haushofer's diagnosis on woman's status in patriarchal society and also to more closely analyse her quite pessimistic view of the woman question<sup>1</sup>, especially within today's context, where feminism remains a talking point despite apparent gender equality. This will be achieved through a close textual analysis of the novel, which will in turn be accompanied by the relevant feminist theory to be used to further expand the analysis. This research report aims above-all to use the text as a means to critically explore the role and situation of women in patriarchal society, in the past and in the present-day, and why there is still a need for such debates today.

## **RATIONALE**

Though the text is indeed one predating the second wave of feminism of the late sixties and early seventies, it nevertheless offers an accurate diagnosis of the situation of women in patriarchal society, one that is, as will be shown in this research report, still relevant today. My choice of topic is further informed by the following question: why is there

---

<sup>1</sup> The "woman question" is a phrase most often used in connection with a social change in the latter half of the nineteenth century, which challenged the fundamental roles of women (i.e. Women's suffrage, reproductive rights, bodily autonomy, property rights, legal rights, and medical rights, and marriage) in countries such as the UK, the US, Canada, and Russia. (Helsing 1989)

still a need for feminism today? The progress achieved by the first wave of feminism<sup>2</sup>, where women's rights activists campaigned for the vote, and the second wave, which wrestled for reproductive rights and equality in the workplace, has put women, legally-speaking, on equal footing with the opposite sex. (Weinberger 2012) However, it has also lulled many of today's young women into a false sense of security, leading them to dismiss the need for feminism<sup>3</sup> in their lives altogether. (Weinberger 2012)

Yet the current generation of women needs to remove these rose-coloured glasses, as the present state of women's rights and gender parity in Western society reveals: (1) the gender pay gap<sup>4</sup>; (2) gender disparities in leadership positions<sup>5</sup>; (3) a culture minimising rape and sexual harassment<sup>6</sup>; (3) the still unequal division of housework between men and women<sup>7</sup>; (4) renewed attempts to curtail women's reproductive rights<sup>8</sup>; (5) lack of or

---

<sup>2</sup> First wave feminism took place in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Within the Austrian context, Rosa Mayreder (*Zur Kritik der Weiblichkeit*, 1905, and *Geschlecht und Kultur*, 1923) was one of its forerunners. Her ideas in many ways foretold future progress on the subject of women's emancipation, such as the reassessment of gender roles, motherhood and fatherhood, and the idea of partnership as a foundation for matrimony. (Moessner 2010)

<sup>3</sup> The origins of the term "feminism" may be traced back to French social philosopher Charles Fourier (1772-1837), who saw societal progress as intrinsically linked to the freedom of woman and thus gender equality. (Caberta 2012)

<sup>4</sup> A study by Cornell University's Francine D. Blau and Lawrence M. Kahn showed that even after adjusting for education, race, experience, industry and occupation, women still only earned 91% of what their male counterparts did. This 9% difference in pay could not be explained and is so linked back to discrimination of women in the workforce, often also referred to as the "glass-ceiling" effect. (Blau and Kahn 2006)

<sup>5</sup> In the UK, there is a resounding lack of women in senior leadership positions, despite a quota system, and even in Norway, one of the progressive Scandinavian countries, the number of women in senior management has only risen from 15% to 18% in the past five years, with no female chief executive of any major Norwegian company. Though the US leads globally in terms of total women chief executives at the head of major companies, with 20 women running companies in the S&P 500, just 17% of board members are actually women. (Neville and Treanor 2012)

<sup>6</sup> These discriminatory attitudes are exemplified around the globe, for example by (1) Toronto police officer who said that women should refrain from "dressing like sluts" if they did not want to be sexually assaulted (Gibson 2011). (2) Two young women were chased and sexually harassed by a group of men at Noord Street taxi rank, Johannesburg, in December 2011. The assailants blamed their behaviour on the women's clothing – a mini skirt and a showing bra strap. (News 24 2012)

<sup>7</sup> An analysis by the UK Institute for Public Policy Research think-tank revealed that 8 out of 10 married women do more household chores than their husbands, while only 1 in 10 men do an equal amount of the housework. (McVeigh 2012)

<sup>8</sup> The following two legal cases helped liberalise access to contraceptives and safe abortion in the United States. In *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), the Supreme Court overturned a doctor's conviction for prescribing contraceptives, and In *Roe v. Wade* (1973), the Supreme Court extended this right to privacy to include abortions. (Wood 2010) Yet the progress made in terms of women's reproductive rights is being increasingly challenged by the Republican front, who took control of the US House and majority of statehouses in 2010. (PFAW 2012) For example, in February 2012 the state of Texas decided to cut off 130 000 low-income

underused paternity leave<sup>9</sup>; and lastly (6) the “Wollstonecraft dilemma”<sup>10</sup> and the resultant “Superwoman syndrome”<sup>11</sup>. All these aspects show how, despite legal equality, women are still treated differently to men where they should not be. The diagnosis with regards to the present state of women’s affairs is thus as follows: there is equality, but not equity between the sexes. (Caberta 2012) That is, legally-speaking, women and men are equals, but in reality, inequality and discrimination run rampant, if not as obviously as before, underlining how, despite progress, not much has changed on the gender equality front. (Caberta 2012)

I feel that this research paper will make a new contribution to the study of Marlen Haushofer’s *Die Wand*, given that it goes beyond existing material and studies that have been done with regards to the utopia/dystopia spectrum in the novel. It also offers new interpretations of the novel, namely (1) how the female protagonist may be seen as suffering from depression, which is analysed through the use of Julia Kristeva’s *Black Sun*, and also (2) how *Die Wand* may be interpreted, in line with many of Kafka’s works, as a dream. Furthermore, the inclusion of Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* and Julia Kristeva’s

---

women’s access to reproductive and preventative health services. (PFAW 2012) A further culprit is North Dakota – one of four US states with only one abortion clinic – who began 2013 with a total of 5 anti-abortion bills attempting to: “[define] a “person” as a fertilised human egg; [enforce] penalties on physicians who perform abortions after a foetal heartbeat is detected; [restrict] abortions to women only in the event of a threat to life; and [criminalise] physicians who perform them” (McVeigh 2013, 1).

<sup>9</sup>Though paternity leave has become a recognised policy throughout Europe, in contrast to other countries where it has not even been introduced, it remains quite underused by fathers. For example, Austria has instituted a campaign meant to promote paternity leave (“Echte Männer Gehen in Karenz”) in order to bring up the numbers, seeing as currently only 5% of fathers make use of their allotted leave. (Echte Männer Gehen in Karenz 2011)

<sup>10</sup>This phenomenon still persists today and may be attested to what Carole Pateman calls the “Wollstonecraft dilemma”. Mary Wollstonecraft, one of the founders of Western feminism, demanded that social status be determined not by gender, but by individual ability and skill, enshrined in her 1798 work *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*. (Hanman 2009) The “Wollstonecraft dilemma” then, describes how the two routes toward citizenship of the “patriarchal welfare state”, namely (1) women becoming like men, or (2) continuing with women’s work, which is of no significance for citizenship, are actually irreconcilable with this state. (Hanman 2009)

<sup>11</sup>The “Superwoman Syndrome” arose during 1970-80s America, after legal equality was attained during the second wave of feminism. (Campo 2009) Although women were now encouraged to pursue careers and establish themselves in the business world, this in no way diminished the expectation that they would continue to be just as successful as wives, mothers and domestic goddesses. (Campo 2009) This balancing act came to be known as the “Superwoman Syndrome”, denoting the immense pressure exerted upon women to use their new-found freedom to their advantage, while at the same time living up to their traditional societal roles. (Campo 2009)

*Black Sun* in the theoretical framework will enrich the close textual analysis. Together with the contemporary stance, that is looking at why today's women should not turn their backs on feminism, this research paper represents a new take on Haushofer's *Die Wand* that brings this feminist novel into a present that has much need of the diagnosis Haushofer makes regarding woman's inferior and limited status in patriarchal society, hopefully opening other women's eyes to the on-going need for feminism. I am also not alone in my interest for Haushofer, as there also seems to be a renewed interest in Haushofer's work, evinced by the first film version of the novel by Austrian director Julian Pölsler, released in 2012, challenging those who had previously dismissed the novel as unsuitable for a film adaptation, due to the story's introspective narration. (Schwickert 2012)

## **METHODOLOGY**

Marlen Haushofer's novel *Die Wand* may, as a representation of feminist utopia/dystopia, be located within the realm of speculative fiction. This is an umbrella term that encompasses science fiction, fantasy, supernatural horror and utopian/dystopian literature, to name but a few. (Barr 1993, Sargent 1995) Speculative fiction is especially relevant to feminists, as it offers women writers the opportunity to explore social conventions, including gender, gender roles, and beliefs about gender, as well as gives them the freedom to imagine societies that are different from deficient existing ones, making it a useful tool in the examination of sexual bias as well as forcing the reader to re-evaluate their cultural and societal assumptions. (Barr 1993, Sargent 1995) Moreover, within speculative fiction, extrapolation allows writers to focus not on the way things are (or were), but rather on the ways in which things could be different. Such notions are instrumental to the feminist



movement and its literary espousal, and so also validate Haushofer's decision to locate her feminist novel *Die Wand* in the speculative space.

The close textual analysis of the novel also calls for a theoretical component. Feminist theory pre-dating the second wave of feminism (like the novel), will serve to complement the findings of the close textual analysis of *Die Wand*. The special relationship between feminism and literature has a long and involved history, to which Moi's title *Sexual/Textual Politics* (1985) accurately draws attention. The literary text provides – among other things like enjoyment and identification – a wealth of ideological representations of women and gender difference, which can and have been mobilised in diverse ways. As stated by Moi (1985), the two main approaches within the field of feminist literary theory are the Anglo-American and the French.

This research report will predominantly make use of French feminist theory. The Anglo-American branch of feminism<sup>12</sup> will not feature within the scope of this research report, given that European and specifically Austrian women, so too Marlen Haushofer, were influenced much more by its French counterpart. Furthermore, French feminist theory's main units of analysis (the nature of women's oppression, the construction of sexual difference and the specificity of women's relations to language and writing) are instrumental to the in-depth analysis of Haushofer's *Die Wand*.

Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) and Julia Kristeva's *Black Sun* (1989) will be used for the French feminist theory that informs this research paper's theoretical framework. De Beauvoir's seminal feminist work was the main impulse behind

---

<sup>12</sup> Anglo-American feminism's frontrunners include Betty Friedan (*The Feminine Mystique*, 1963), Shulamith Firestone (*The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution*, 1970), and Germaine Greer (*The Female Eunuch*, 1970), Kate Millett (*Sexual Politics*, 1970), to name but a few. (Reese 2010) Anglo-American feminists often also dismissed works by their French counterparts, due to the latter's overly intellectual approach, steeped as it is in European philosophy (Marx, Nietzsche and Heidegger), Lacanian psychoanalysis and Derridean deconstruction. (Moi 1985)

the second wave of feminism and the linchpin of French feminist theory; as a result it may be seen as having a decided influence upon European women at large. (Moi 1985) Though she is surpassed by later writings of the feminist movements, which addressed issues such as women's contribution to history, lesbianism and female eroticism, as well as went above and beyond de Beauvoir's dualistic existential model<sup>13</sup>, de Beauvoir's contribution to feminist theory is very much a significant part of the historical time to which Haushofer belonged.

De Beauvoir may be seen as having informed the author's perspective on the woman question, as Haushofer both read and was an avid supporter of the proto-feminist work. (Strigl 2009) Given that Haushofer's novel was published in 1963, the second wave feminist works and theory would not yet have influenced her, making Beauvoir's proto-feminist work the only major theoretical component appropriate to this synchronic analysis. The second component of the theoretical framework, namely Julia Kristeva's work on female melancholy, *Black Sun*, will be used in the analysis of the female protagonist's depression and how this ties into the dystopian interpretation of the novel.

This research is furthermore located within the qualitative tradition. The method of analysis will be synchronic, that is, Haushofer's novel will be situated and analysed within its historical context and time period. Nevertheless, more contemporary literature and theories will be used to complement what is gleaned from the novel by way of close textual analysis, and a current outlook will inform the novel's relevance to the present-day. The method of data collection to be used in this research report will involve document review and close textual analysis of *Die Wand*. The document review, more specifically, includes the use of works of fiction, biographies, scholarly articles, literature review articles, essays, anthologies, reference books, research institution publications, as well as the World

---

<sup>13</sup> De Beauvoir claims that the only solution to the woman question is to overcome the "immanence" of woman – her imprisonment in her biological functions – in order to achieve "transcendence" – the active creativity of man and thus culture. (De Beauvoir 2011)

Wide Web (especially for a more contemporary view of feminism) as sources of material and evidence, all of which will be listed in the bibliography. The qualitative nature of this method of data collection and analysis involves the triangulation of data, which in turn adds to the credibility of the research report's findings.

## **THE LIFE AND WORK OF MARLEN HAUSHOFER**

The post-war Austrian writer Marlen Haushofer, born 11 April 1920 in Frauenstein to forester Heinrich and domestic goddess Maria Frauendorfer [“wahre Märtyrerin der Küche” (Strigl 2009, 55)], attended a catholic boarding school run by the Ursulines, married dentist Manfred Haushofer at the very tender age of twenty – only to divorce in 1950 and remarry in 1958 – and during the course of her life experienced the great difficulty of reconciling her ambitions as a writer with her role as wife, mother and housewife [“Da es sich nicht anders machen läßt, schreib ich von 9h abends bis Mitternacht – mit Hilfe von Cola u. Kaffee” (Strigl 2009, 178).

Earning literary awards as early as 1953, Haushofer went on to publish her first novel, *Eine Handvoll Leben*, in 1955. (Strigl 2009) In 1956, she won the Theodor-Körner Prize for early contributions and projects involving art and culture, and in 1958 her novella, entitled *Wir Töten Stella*, was published. (Strigl 2009) *Die Wand* (1963), though considered her finest accomplishment and having received the Arthur Schnitzler Prize, only experienced true recognition and appreciation during the second wave of feminism, as was the case with most of her work. Haushofer's overall contribution to Austrian literature, as well as her last short-story collection *Schreckliche Treue*, earned her a Grand Austrian State Prize for literature in 1968. Her last novel, *Die Tapetentür*, was published in 1969, shortly before she died of bone cancer the following year. (Strigl 2009)

Marlen Haushofer's novels predominantly feature female protagonists confronted with feelings revolving around the themes of escape, isolation, alienation and walls, as well as the paradisiacal realm of childhood, and how these figures, like Haushofer herself, "trauern alle einem früheren Ich nach, dem sie untreu geworden sind, das sie verraten und preisgegeben haben" (191). While the protagonist from *Eine Handvoll Leben*, Elisabeth, sacrifices her family and life in the domestic sphere for freedom, the young librarian Annette of *Die Tapetentür* instead gives up her independence and career for matrimony. In *Wir Töten Stella*, the narrator, wife, housewife, and mother of two, Anna, tells the story of the eponymous heroine, a young and inexperienced woman, who, after having an affair with Anna's philandering husband Richard, is run over by a bus. The novella explores Anna's guilt surrounding Stella's death – she all but sets up the two of them and gets Stella to wear make-up and buy trendier clothes to get Richard's attention – as well as questions woman's complicity in patriarchy, and whether a person will always accept their fate or make an attempt to break out.

Of all these works, Haushofer's feminist novel *Die Wand* (1963) is the one that most exemplifies the themes of isolation, alienation and barriers, as symbolised by the invisible wall in the novel. *Die Wand* tells the story of a woman who goes on a short holiday to a hunting lodge in the Austrian countryside with her cousin and the cousin's husband. After their arrival, the married couple walks to the nearby village, from which they fail to return by morning. As she attempts to go to the village to look for them, the female protagonist hits an invisible wall, behind which all life seems to have been exterminated by an apocalypse of some kind. The woman must now learn to survive in the forest on her own, cut off from the rest of the world. A dog, cat, cow and bull are her only companions. One day a second survivor appears, an unknown man, only to be shot dead by the protagonist herself after he kills two of her beloved animals.

Though Marlen Haushofer saw through the factitiousness and double standards of conservative Austrian society, and consequently criticised it from a feminist point of view, she herself failed to undergo or effect any concrete change, just like with her above novel, which offers a diagnosis of the problems and contradictions facing woman in patriarchal society, but fails to present a vision of the future or call for a revolt against this limiting system. After having divorced him ten years earlier due to infidelity, a time during which Haushofer stayed on in the shared home looking after children and household as if nothing had happened, she remarried her husband Manfred in 1958, seemingly resigning herself to her fate as a woman. (Strigl 2009) Haushofer had the option to cut loose, but chose not to; instead she tried to accommodate her writing with her family, in so doing yet again making her life and her own private desires subordinate to the wishes of others.<sup>14</sup> Marlen Haushofer's conservative roman-catholic upbringing (despite her later becoming an atheist), as well as her socialisation through her mother, a traditional and dedicated housewife, seem to have not left her unmarked and surely explain her lack of resolve or vision when it came to truly breaking through the walls of a suffocating patriarchal society when given the chance to do so. The woman versus society conflict that Haushofer experiences is most keenly summed up by George Eliot in *Daniel Deronda* (1876):

[W]hat is it to have a man's force of genius in you, and yet to suffer the slavery of being a girl. To have a pattern cut out ... a woman's heart must be of such a size and no larger, else it must be pressed small, like Chinese feet; her happiness is to be made as cakes are, by a fixed receipt. (quote as it appears in Heilbrun 1988, 37)

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

---

<sup>14</sup> One could even speculate that the guilt associated with her first (illegitimate) child, whom she abandoned, intensified her sense of duty as a woman (in the roles of wife, mother and housewife) in her later marriage, which she may have viewed as an opportunity for redemption, especially when taking into account her roman-catholic upbringing. (Strigl 2009)

Three main bodies of literature are relevant to this review of literature: (1) Austrian women writers of the post-1945 period – the so-called “Other” Austrians; (2) utopian (and dystopian) literature and theories; (3) feminist utopian writing; and lastly (4) utopian (dystopian) interpretations of Marlen Haushofer’s *Die Wand*. Haushofer’s body of work was largely forgotten up until the early 1990s, when it experienced a revival. As a result, critical literature on Haushofer is quite sparse, especially in relation to the utopia/dystopia spectrum within which her novel *Die Wand* will be analysed later.

#### **AUSTRIAN WOMEN WRITERS AND FEMINISM IN AUSTRIA – THE “OTHER” AUSTRIANS**

The second wave of feminism that washed over North America, Britain, France and Germany, though it had a profound effect upon these countries, nevertheless had a negligible impact on conservative Austrian society and consciousness. (Vansant 1988) Though Austrian women were given the vote with the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in 1918, the next progressive period regarding women’s rights and roles in society only came in the seventies, continuing into the eighties and early nineties. (Vansant 1988, Rosenberger 1998) The feminist movement in Austria therefore also started much later than its Anglo-American and German counterparts (Germany – 1971, North America – 1967/68 and Great Britain – 1969). This is in part due to the reactionary stage that occurred between both progressive time periods, where Austro-Fascist and National Socialist policies, aimed at keeping women out of the public sphere and at home as mothers and wives, continued on even after the war. (Vansant 1988) The fifties and sixties witnessed an increased conservatism in Austria, which in turn affected societal attitudes to women and their role in society, leading to the creation of policies and laws reflecting and supporting this (patriarchal) conservatism.

Though this may lead to one thinking that feminism and Austria are mutually exclusive, there nonetheless exists a body of Austrian literature with feminist elements, wherein the conflicts and contradictions in the lives of women, which also became the focus of the later feminist movement in the late sixties and early seventies, serve as key themes. This, according to Vansant (1988), is seen to be the case in the literary works of Austrian women authors such as Ingeborg Bachmann, Brigitte Schwaiger, Elfriede Jelinek, Barbara Frischmuth and most importantly, in terms of this research report, Marlen Haushofer. In her study *Against the Horizon* (1988), Vansant argues that Haushofer, Bachmann, Frischmuth, Jelinek, and Schwaiger, all write against an “imaginary line” (i.e. the horizon in her study’s title), that is, against male projections of femininity, which prevent women from achieving true self-realisation.<sup>15</sup>

## UTOPIAN LITERATURE

Plato’s *Republic* is considered one of the earliest utopian works – in it Plato states the importance of the development of specific skills and divisions of labour in ways that are undeniably precursors of modern technology. (Booker 1994) Yet the actual term “utopia”, and so the name of this literary genre, has its origins in Thomas More’s sixteenth century work entitled *Of a republic’s best state and the new island Utopia*, in which More describes a human society living in paradise-like conditions, in a time before original sin and in a place called *Utopia*. Utopia, translated literally, is Greek for “no place” (Gnüg 1983).

---

<sup>15</sup> A similar idea is to be found in a work by Carolyn G. Heilbrun, entitled *Writing a Woman’s Life*, which questions how biographers and autobiographers write about women, more specifically their suppression of the truth of the female experience, which is seen as an attempt to make the “written life” imitate the societal expectations of what a woman’s life should be like. (Heilbrun 1988)

Though More's utopia depicts a human wish or fantasy, it is rooted in the awareness of a lacking and corrupt reality. Utopia therefore does not denote a paradisiacal existence or a state predating current civilisation, but rather represents a type of historically-anchored counter-existence to a social reality that is perceived as false and as standing in the way of man's happiness. The implied spatial and temporal distance of the utopia further acts as a fictional signal that the utopia does not yet exist. Utopia, within the literary genre, hence serves as an instrument to critique current societal issues, through the creation of a better, utopian society. Voßkamp (1996), however, defines the real significance behind utopia as not the societal and diagnostic critique thereof, but rather the formulation of a new beginning.

According to Gerber (1955), after two world wars, the increase of dictatorships, as well as the perceived dangers of the nuclear bomb, utopian optimism began to flounder. Post-war utopias are thus seen as taking on a more socially realistic character. The utopia is no longer perfect, but has instead turned into a place of power and fear, in which the social discontents and moral problems of the present are highlighted. This is reflected both in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *1984*.

The above are dystopian or anti-utopian works of fiction. According to Ross (1991), utopianism rests upon a critique of "deficiencies of the present", whereas dystopian thinking is usually based upon a critique of perceived "deficiencies in the future" (143). Dystopian fictions reflect this difference, in that they are typically set in a time and place distant from the writer's own, while it is simultaneously made clear that the referents of the dystopian scenario are actually rather concrete and impending. (Booker 1994) For instance, Huxley's *Brave New World* is set in a futuristic England, but it is in actual fact a satire of the excesses taking place in the author's contemporary reality. (Booker 1994) Dystopian fiction's main technique is that of defamiliarisation, whereby the critique of a society in a distant time



or space in turn offers new perspectives on questionable social and political practices that might otherwise have been accepted as natural and thus inevitable. (Booker 1994)

In terms of theory, Ernst Bloch's seminal philosophical work *The Principle of Hope* (1959) is the most prominent within utopian studies. Bloch (1986) situates utopian thought within the realm of fiction and speculation, where imaginative possibilities of what is not are brought into the concrete realm of what *could* be. Bloch (1986) further differentiates between *concrete* and *abstract* utopias, the former referring to a viable blueprint for future societal or political organisation, the latter referring to wish-fulfilment fantasies. According to Bloch (1986), utopias are not arbitrary or ahistorical daydreams, but rather form part of a social contract, a dormant or looming disposition toward an imminent societal phase or change, which Bloch refers to as the "not-yet". Bloch's "not-yet" is particularly significant to feminists, as it is here, according to Bartkowski, that "freedom and necessity meet", and where the not-yet, as used in writing by feminists, can "rewrite views of the past and present even as it projects possible futures" (1989: 10).

## **FEMINIST UTOPIAS AND DYSTOPIAS**

By the twentieth century, the utopian genre had more or less been absorbed into that of science-fiction, and according to Burnett (1991), it is a genre often dismissed as escapist at best and irrelevant at worst, as well as declared as obsolete by male critics. Bartkowski's *Feminist Utopias* (1989), however, challenges this view, as the author argues that not only is the utopian novel still alive, but that it is neither escapist nor insignificant in its feminist manifestation, seeing as it fulfils the function of creating a confrontational space in which to speculate the relations between men and women, sex and power, and sex and gender.

Bartkowski (1989) views Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Herland*, in which the author creates a utopian all-female society where reproduction is achieved without men via the process of parthenogenesis, as the prototype of a feminist utopia. Bartkowski maintains that utopian fiction "comes in spurts and is responsive to a social history of times of reorganization, upheaval, revolution, and perhaps more likely, reform" (1989: 6-7), which makes this literary genre a historically-conditioned one. This would also explicate the rise in (feminist) utopian fiction with the arrival of the second and third waves of feminism. Utopian thought is furthermore seen as an integral part of feminism by Bartkowski, which is a movement that could only be produced, and challenged by and in, a patriarchal world.

#### ***DIE WAND* – UTOPIAN AND DYSTOPIAN INTERPRETATIONS**

According to Vansant (1988), the protagonist of *Die Wand* differs from the others found in Haushofer's novels, as she is the only one to eschew male projections of femininity, as well as patriarchal society. The wall, despite its mysterious appearance and it being a physical barrier to the female protagonist's movements, represents a protective barrier rather than a threat. (Strigl 2009) It is, to be exact, only in this context of total isolation that woman can attempt to define herself, and it is this view that lends itself to the interpretation of *Die Wand* as a feminist utopian novel.

Walls or barriers that can be read on a symbolical or metaphorical level, especially relating to patriarchy, can be found in quite a few feminist works of fiction that predate the second wave of feminism or were published during it, for example in Bachmann's *Malina* (1970), or Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* (1963). In Bachmann's *Malina*, the female protagonist walks and disappears into a crack in the wall at the end, symbolising woman's

non-existence in patriarchy.<sup>16</sup> *The Bell Jar*, on the other hand, describes, in detail, the estrangement and alienation of a young woman, who fails to adapt to the model of femininity of 1950s American society. (Gnüg and Möhrmann 1985)

Podgornik (1993) interprets the wall as a two-dimensional symbol, or as she puts it, a split/division-motif: (1) there exists a wall between Haushofer's female protagonists and a societal and interpersonal order perceived by them as foreign and strange, in/from which they are simultaneously locked in and out. (2) This wall also separates the protagonists from their actual selves, from their "real" life, in contrast to the substitute life they are forced to lead within patriarchal structures. The "real" life can nonetheless only ever be experienced as a memory of what was lost even before it existed. *Die Wand* is seen as an exploration of regions or spaces in which reality as a defined order, and femininity as a role, are not yet fixed as a criterion of perception or awareness, and where the female protagonist may as a result experience a freedom unhindered by historic and social convention.

Zeyringer (2008), as well as other writers and critics, interpret the space behind the wall as a feminist utopia. Russ (1981) seems to concur with Haushofer in her article "Recent Feminist Utopias", where she highlights the palpable reasons for which writers create separatist utopias: "if men are kept out of these [feminist utopian] societies, it is because men are dangerous" (77). Yet this would at the same time annul matriarchy, as male behaviour and the violence of patriarchy are paradoxically exposed as the same methods used to attain matriarchy and, above-all, matriarchy cannot continue if there is no male sex present for reproductive purposes.

---

<sup>16</sup> Hélène Cixous states that "woman is [either] passive or she does not exist" (Cixous 2008), as woman is consistently linked with passivity in philosophy and ontology at large. The female protagonist in *Malina* represents this dilemma; she chooses to disappear into the wall and thus exit reality because patriarchy will only accept her if she conforms to the passivity expected of woman.

Both Tabah and Hofmann (2000) however recognise the problematic nature of Haushofer's supposedly utopian setting as established in *Die Wand*. The isolation of the woman within the companionship of the animals is understood as a questionable reaction, given that the patriarchal order's patterns are reproduced as a result. That is, by sacrificing herself for her animal companions, the female protagonist re-enacts the role of wife and mother, which in itself stabilises the patriarchal order. As can be seen, there is a dark flipside to this supposed utopia, namely patriarchy, the very system the protagonist and Haushofer seek to escape.

Tabah's critique of Haushofer's illusory utopia rests upon the following observations: (1) the utopian "return to nature" is still part of patriarchal mythmaking concerning women, as the willingness to make sacrifices is seen as a "natural" female characteristic and the female protagonist is shown to be a creature of and close to nature, in so doing supporting the patriarchal oppression of women. (2) Haushofer suggests matriarchy can only be accomplished with the death of all representatives of the male sex, which is unfeasible if the established matriarchy is to survive. Furthermore, one should highlight that when the female protagonist eventually dies, there will be no possibility of carrying on the human race. Perhaps this is also Haushofer's intention, namely that she sees the situation of woman in patriarchy as so hopeless that it can only truly be lifted in death, and that a true removal of this societal structure is actually not possible. Gnüg and Möhrmann (1985) also view the return to nature, namely the retreat into a mythical, archaic world of matriarchy (e.g. Verena Stefan's *Häutungen*), as regressive, for the reason that such a move makes no significant contribution to end woman's dilemma.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> The second wave of the feminist movement also saw the ejection of men from women's lives, evinced by literary works such as Verena Stefan's *Häutungen* (1975) or Christa Wolf's *Kassandra* (1984). Yet, as will be shown later in this research report through the example of Haushofer's *Die Wand*, matriarchy is only another

# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

## SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR – *THE SECOND SEX*

Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) forms part of the synchronic analysis of *Die Wand*, as it was also published before the second wave of feminism that arrived in the late 1960s, and was read and esteemed by Haushofer herself, with whom this French feminist's work would have resonated greatly. (Strigl 2009) Furthermore, Bartkowski (1989) defines *The Second Sex* as one of the women's liberation movement's proto-feminist texts that also voice the philosophical and sociological contexts of a post-war dystopian situation for women, thereby making it even more relevant to the analysis of *Die Wand*, which is a fundamentally dystopian text. This research paper's theoretical framework will be informed by Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, with an emphasis on the following sections: "Formative Years", "Situation", "Justifications" and "Toward Liberation", given that they are most pertinent to the analysis of *Die Wand* later on, and due to their focus on the socialisation of woman within patriarchy, that is, how femininity as such is constructed.

Though de Beauvoir never associated herself with the label "feminist" per se, she did, in the 1970s, rescind her earlier belief that socialism would liberate women, instead choosing to embrace feminism as a "potentially revolutionary force" (in Freedman 2007, 251) that would be to everyone's advantage. In *The Second Sex*, de Beauvoir dispels myths of female inferiority, as well as discards the biologically deterministic explanations of women's

---

dead-end, serving as a temporary place of sanctuary at best, where women can regroup and gather their strength, as is the case in the latter feminist work. (Gerdzen and Wohler, 1991)

secondary status in society, exemplified by the Beauvoirian catchphrase: “One is not born, but rather becomes, woman” (Beauvoir 2011, 283). Existentialism and Marxism inform de Beauvoir’s concepts of woman as the immanent “Other”, created in opposition to the transcendent male, and, unlike the latter, incapable of attaining human freedom. (Freedman 2007) Woman’s status as the “Other” is related back to the early history of patriarchy, where woman was kept “in a state of dependence” in order to serve “males’ economic interests; but also suited their ontological and moral ambitions” (De Beauvoir 2011, 159). She further highlights how only “the mediation of another can constitute an individual as an Other” (De Beauvoir 2011, 283), that is, woman is accorded this secondary status through man, who is seen as responsible for the binary of self/subject and “Other” in the first place.

Within the section entitled “Formative Years”, de Beauvoir traces the socialisation of the female sex. Beginning in the chapter “Childhood”, she negates Sigmund Freud’s penis envy theory<sup>18</sup> and instead posits that the girl is given a doll instead of a penis. (De Beauvoir 2011) This doll, though it suggests a whole body, is also passive. This passivity is in turn instilled into the little girl, who identifies herself with it, consequently viewing herself as an object, to be admired and to exist for others, which points toward her later status as both the “object and prey” (De Beauvoir 2011, 723) of the male sex. Furthermore, a girl is taught from birth, to be a woman, her feminine “destiny”, that is, marriage and a family, forced upon her by her mother, teachers and society at large. (De Beauvoir 2011) In the subsequent chapter, entitled “The Girl”, de Beauvoir explains how the pressure exerted upon the female sex only increases as she enters adolescence, when she is faced with “enormous social pressure [...] to find a social position and justification in marriage” (De Beauvoir

---

<sup>18</sup> Penis envy is the female version of Freud’s concept castration anxiety. Freud suggests that during the phallic stage (around age 3-5), girls will distance themselves from their mothers and instead turn their affections toward their fathers. According to Freud, this occurs when a girl recognises that she has no penis: “Girls hold their mother responsible for their lack of a penis and do not forgive her for their being thus put at a disadvantage” (Freud 1933, 124).

2011, 381), while everything “converges to hold back her personal ambition” (De Beauvoir 2011). A girl’s upbringing and education are therefore to be viewed as part of this socialisation process to prepare and preen her for her “destiny” within society.

In the next section, entitled “Situation”, de Beauvoir explains how women are “destined to maintain the species and care for the home, which is to say, immanence” (De Beauvoir 2011, 443), as opposed to transcendence, the realm of man and culture. Woman’s destiny is therefore not in her own hands, but determined by society, which locates her in the reproductive and domestic sphere. What is more, men are seen as “the masters of the world” (De Beauvoir 2011, 341), and “being-for-men is one the essential factors of her [woman’s] concrete condition” (De Beauvoir 2011, 156). This leads to a situation in which woman can only achieve an identity through man, and is, on account of her confinement within the domestic sphere, forced to live vicariously through the respective man in her life. Impending brides are, moreover, not promised love, but an ideal of happiness contained within home and family:

[A] peaceful equilibrium within immanence and repetition. [...] A gilded mediocrity with neither passion nor ambition, days leading nowhere, repeating themselves indefinitely, a life that slips toward death without looking for answers” (De Beauvoir 2011, 468)

That love could occur within the stilted situation that marriage is also dismissed by de Beauvoir, as an emotion such as love, which implies freedom of choice and passion, cannot possibly come to fruition in a situation so determined and constrained by society:

To claim a union founded on convention has much chance of engendering love is hypocritical; to ask two spouses bound by practical, social, and moral ties to satisfy each other sexually for their whole lives is pure absurdity. (De Beauvoir 2011, 466)

Another aspect of marriage that de Beauvoir criticises is housework: “Washing, ironing, sweeping, routing out tufts of dust in the dark places behind the wardrobe, this is holding away death but also refusing life” (De Beauvoir 2011, 476). Housework is thus an activity that occupies women, but at the same time fails to offer any concrete feeling of satisfaction, let alone fulfils a woman’s desires or wishes. After marriage, woman becomes the mistress of the house, and through it,

[S]he achieves social justification; her job is also to oversee food, clothing, and care of the familial society in general. Thus she too realizes herself as an activity. But [...] it is an activity that brings her no escape from her immanence and allows her no individual affirmation of herself. (De Beauvoir 2011, 472)

Her role in the domestic sphere, especially as a housewife, thus leads to a hollow and unrewarding life, as it “does not grant her autonomy; it is not directly useful to the group, it does not open onto the future, it does not produce anything” (De Beauvoir 2011, 484). In the process, woman is made to be dependent on her husband and children, as they are the only ones through whom she may validate her existence. The same may also be said of a woman’s social “life”, along with adultery and friendships, which

are but diversions within married life; they can help its constraints to be endured, but they do not break them. They are only artificial escapes that in no way authentically allow the woman to take her destiny into her own hands. (De Beauvoir 2011, 598)

Moreover, if woman is not yet a “complete” individual as wife and housewife, she is seen to become one as a mother, that is, according to patriarchal society, which is explored in the chapter entitled “The Mother”. (De Beauvoir 2011) Traditionally viewed as her “natural” vocation, motherhood is viewed as giving the marriage meaning, and through the child, the institution may be said to have achieved its



initial goal. (De Beauvoir 2011) Pregnancy is to women both a blessing and a curse, as while creating life, woman also loses more of her Self, as she becomes “a passive instrument of life” (De Beauvoir 2011, 538-539). The so-called maternal “instinct” is further seen by de Beauvoir as a farce, as the mother’s attitude is wholly “defined by her social situation and by the way she accepts it” (De Beauvoir 2011, 554), not through some innate drive contained within her. Each of these events in a woman’s life that are traditionally ascribed meaning, namely marriage and starting a family, are in fact consistently empty thereof, instead reflecting the lacking opportunity for woman to assert her own destiny:

Like the “passage” into puberty, sexual initiation, and marriage, motherhood generates morose disappointment for subjects who are waiting for an external event to renew and justify their lives. (552)

The role of the mother in the socialisation of the girl child is also not to be underestimated. The daughter is viewed by the mother as both her double and an “Other”, with the consequence that she in turn forces her own fate upon her child, as a way of simultaneously claiming her own femininity and retaliating against it. (De Beauvoir 2011) She also raises her daughter to view men as superior to herself, demonstrated by the way she will treat her husband with deference, as well as would deal out punishment or make requests in his name, which denotes authority. (De Beauvoir 2011) Ultimately, this circle of socialisation will repeat itself when this young woman has a daughter, leading to a self-perpetuating situation in which women will undermine themselves and their female offspring, all as a result of their secondary status within society.

Furthermore, de Beauvoir elucidates motherhood as an enslaving factor of woman. (De Beauvoir 2011) This is because it is rare for a woman, at least during the time de Beauvoir lived and wrote, to raise a child on her own without there being a

scandal, leading her to often choose marriage as a way of pacifying the strict social conventions. (De Beauvoir 2011) That is, motherhood is only esteemed within the institution of marriage, not in the case of an unwed mother; as only in the former case will woman be in a position subordinate to her husband.

Also, the general lack of childcare facilities means that even one child is enough to “entirely paralyze a woman’s activity” (De Beauvoir 2011, 735), if she does have an occupation or independent activity. De Beauvoir’s view of the independent woman is that of a balancing act, as she is

divided between her professional interests and the concerns of her sexual vocation; she has trouble finding her balance; if she does, it is at the price of concessions, sacrifices, and juggling that keep her in constant tension. (De Beauvoir 2011, 736)

At the same time, the secondary status of the independent woman, one applicable to women at large, gives her an “inferiority complex”, that is, her femininity makes her question her own professional opportunities and abilities. Due to this defeatist outlook, women will often settle for mediocre success instead of aiming higher. (De Beauvoir 2011) De Beauvoir sees the above as the reason behind there being no “great” women, the likes of van Gogh, Kafka or T.E. Lawrence, again underscoring how, when talking about women’s limitations, one must look at her situation and not to a “mysterious essence” (De Beauvoir 2011, 750):

Men we call great are those who – in one way or another – take the weight of the world on their shoulders; they have done more or less well, they have succeeded in re-creating it or they have failed; but they took on this enormous burden in the first place. This is what no woman has ever done, what no woman has ever been *able* to do. It takes belonging to the privileged caste to view the universe as one’s own, to consider oneself as guilty of its faults and take pride in its progress; those alone who are at the controls have the opportunity to justify it by changing it, thinking, and

revealing it; only they can identify with it and try to leave their imprint on it. (De Beauvoir 2011, 749-750)

In the section “Toward Liberation” and more specifically the chapter entitled “The Independent Woman”, de Beauvoir addresses the fact that although women now have the vote, this by no means signposts their freedom from oppression or object position within society. (De Beauvoir 2011) This is because woman, unlike man, whose “vocation as a human being in no way contradicts his destiny as a male” (De Beauvoir 2011, 723), “is required to be object and prey; that is, she must renounce her claims as a sovereign subject” (De Beauvoir 2011, 723). Thus, in contrast to woman, man is not divided, and is as a result free to choose his own destiny and make his way in life on his own terms.

In her conclusion to *The Second Sex*, de Beauvoir lists how equality may be achieved between the sexes:

women raised and educated exactly like men would work under the same conditions and for the same salaries; erotic freedom would be accepted by custom, but the sexual act would no longer be considered a remunerable “service”; women would be *obliged* to provide another livelihood for themselves; marriage would be based on a free engagement that the spouses could break when they wanted to; motherhood would be freely chosen – that is, birth control and abortion would be allowed – and in return all mothers and their children would be given the same rights; maternity leave would be paid for by the society that would have responsibility for the children, which does not mean that they would be *taken* from their parents but that they would not be *abandoned* to them. (De Beauvoir 2011, 760)

Simone de Beauvoir nevertheless underlines how economic independence and reproductive rights are not enough to transform woman’s secondary status in society, as “until it [economic independence] brings about the moral, social, and cultural consequences it heralds and requires, the new woman cannot appear” (De Beauvoir 2011, 761). What is needed is a collective change; in the words of Stendhal: “The forest

must be planted all at once” (De Beauvoir 2011, 761). Changing woman’s position within society cannot be achieved through legal rights and economic independence alone, but must be accompanied by an overhaul of patriarchal society itself, given that it is this societal structure that is the main culprit behind the secondary status of woman.

Socialisation is thus a factor that cannot be overlooked when calling for change in patriarchal society. In an overhauled societal structure, where men and women enjoy equal status [at the same time “affirm[ing] their brotherhood” (De Beauvoir 2011, 766)] the girl child would in turn be raised accordingly, in the process breaking the cycle of inferiority women face and themselves perpetuate:

If, from the earliest age, the little girl were raised with the same demands and honors, the same severity and freedom, as her brothers, taking part in the same studies and games, promised the same future, surrounded by women and men who are unambiguously equal to her, the meanings of “castration complex” and the “Oedipus complex” would be profoundly modified. The mother would enjoy the same lasting prestige as the father if she assumed equal material and moral responsibility for the couple; the child would feel an androgynous world around her and not a masculine world; were she more affectively attracted to her father – which is not even certain – her love for him would be nuanced by a will to emulate him and not a feeling of weakness: she would not turn to passivity; if she were allowed to prove her worth in work and sports, actively rivalling boys, the absence of a penis – compensated for by the promise of a child – would not suffice to cause an “inferiority complex”; correlatively, the boy would not have a natural “superiority complex” if it were not instilled in him and he held women in the same esteem as men. (De Beauvoir 2011, 761-762)

### **JULIA KRISTEVA – *BLACK SUN***

In *Black Sun*, published 1989, Julia Kristeva examines the subject of female melancholia within the context of art, literature, philosophy, the history of religion and culture, as well as psychoanalysis. She uses the image of the “black sun” from Gérard de

Nerval's sonnet, "El Desdichado" (1853), to denote the melancholy state, which is simultaneously dark and radiant. (Kristeva 1989) Kristeva defines the depressive as someone who perceives the sense of self as a fundamental pursuit and a virtually impossible goal, as well as describes how the love of a lost identity of attachment is at the very core of depression. (Kristeva 1989) Kristeva also sees melancholy or depression (she uses the terms interchangeably) as signifying "a primitive self – wounded, incomplete, empty" (Kristeva 1989, 12). The melancholic person is therefore not attached to an object (one which has been lost, as Freud argued), but rather to a pre-object or place, a former oneness that, like death, is impossible to symbolise. (Kristeva 1989) Though Julia Kristeva's theory on melancholia/depression is more wide-ranging and detailed than how I have presented it here, her definition of melancholia is what is most important to the later analysis and so there is no need to delve further into *Black Sun* within this research report.

# ANALYSIS

## FEMINIST UTOPIA AND DYSTOPIA IN MARLEN HAUSHOFER'S *DIE WAND*

The focus of this chapter will be on how Marlen Haushofer's experiment, namely locating her female protagonist outside patriarchy, fails from its inception. This is because Haushofer does not take into account the female protagonist's previous socialisation within patriarchy, which has made her psychological make-up reflect society's construct of femininity. This constructed definition of woman hence manifests itself in the utopian environment, despite the female protagonist's removal from the phallogentric society itself. Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* will complement this synchronic analysis in terms of theory. De Beauvoir, like Haushofer, wrote before the second wave of feminism, which began in the late 1960s, and adequately diagnosed the issues women faced in patriarchy, as well as observed how woman was socialised toward her femininity.

More specifically, Marlen Haushofer's *Die Wand* seems initially seems to present a feminist utopian setting, where the female protagonist, set free from patriarchal constraints and roles, is forced out of her passivity, after an apocalypse has apparently wiped out the rest of the human race, and she must now learn to survive on her own. The glass wall that protected her from the disaster by separating her from her former world, also gives her the opportunity to freely determine her destiny, unhampered by the social roles imposed on her by patriarchy and the resultant burden. Her newfound freedom also gives her the opportunity to write down her experiences and thoughts regarding her new life, which may be seen as part

of her journey of self-discovery, as well as an example of female experience<sup>19</sup>, and thus a part of the utopian tenet of the novel.

Yet this utopia soon reveals itself to be inherently dystopian, as evinced by the protagonist's nurturing and sacrificial relationship with her animal family, seen as a manifestation of the caregiver role women are socialised toward within patriarchy; the male stranger (undoubtedly the last surviving man) that she murders in cold blood after he kills two of her animals; as well as her depression, rooted in her inability to escape patriarchal binds and truly lead a life of her own creation, even after the wall separates her from her former life and its limitations. The latter of these dystopian aspects will be analysed with the help of Julia Kristeva's work on female melancholia: *Black Sun*. The interpretation of *Die Wand* as an apocalyptic dream, also forming part of the dystopian nature of the novel, in turn serves to underline the illusory nature of the utopia set up within the novel. Ultimately, it will be shown that Haushofer fails to provide any vision or solutions to the dystopian situation she sees woman in. Though she does make an accurate diagnosis of the challenges and contradictions that woman faces in patriarchy, as well as how femininity is constructed and woman in turn socialised toward her respective roles in society, her female protagonist, as well as Haushofer herself, seem to resign themselves to their fate and not attempt to truly break out of their restricted situations.

#### **A FEMINIST UTOPIAN EXPERIMENT**

The novel's utopian setting is established by the glass wall, which may be seen as simultaneously protecting the female protagonist from the destruction wrought by the

---

<sup>19</sup> The "female experience" may be understood as a decidedly female point of view of the world and how woman experiences it, with the purpose of challenging the predominantly phallogentric *Weltanschauung* of History at large. (Lerner 1992)

apocalypse on the other side and freeing her from the expectations and roles that patriarchy imposes on women. The novel may be viewed as Haushofer's own feminist experiment, in which she uses the freedom of speculative fiction to test out a "what if" situation. In an experiment, there are usually certain elements or factors that are removed from a certain situation or context, in order to observe the consequences thereof and develop a hypothesis based upon these results. In Haushofer's experiment, men, and so also patriarchy, are removed from the female protagonist's life and immediate surroundings, through the catastrophe and the subsequent appearance of the wall, in order to examine whether woman could live a free and unconstrained life as a result.

The subject, a former housewife ["Ich war immer schon eine seßhafte Natur gewesen und fühlte mich zu Hause am wohlsten" (Haushofer 2005, 10)], is forced out of passivity when she is forced to learn to survive on her own, without prior knowledge or experience of how to do so ["Ich habe zweieinhalb Jahre darunter gelitten, daß diese Frau so schlecht ausgerüstet war für das wirkliche Leben" (Haushofer 2005, 73)]. When looking at the ostensibly patriarchy-free environment the protagonist finds herself in, through the lens of de Beauvoir's theories, it seems the ideal place for woman to truly craft an identity of her own – heretofore achieved through the husband – and freely determine her destiny, thereby transitioning from object to subject – a space typically reserved for only her male counterparts. As a result thereof, this contained space may also be viewed as a specifically *feminist* utopia.

That the wall ultimately offers the subject of the experiment (the female protagonist) a place of sanctuary, becomes evident from her view of it, which evolves from a negative and disconcerting one, rooted in the inability to rationalise its appearance ["dem schrecklichen unsichtbaren Ding" (Haushofer 2005, 14), "Waldgefängnis" (Haushofer 2005, 20) and "schreckliche Wand" (Haushofer 2005, 23)], to an apathetic acceptance of its



existence, as she realises not that much has changed after all, as birth, death, the seasons, growth and decay impact her life just the same as before:

Die Wand ist so sehr ein Teil meines Lebens geworden, daß ich oft wochenlang nicht an sie denke. Und selbst wenn ich an sie denke, erscheint sie mir nicht unheimlicher als eine Ziegelwand oder ein Gartenzaun, der mich am Weitergehen hindert. Was ist denn so besonders an ihr? Ein Gegenstand aus einem Stoff, dessen Zusammensetzung ich nicht kenne. Derartige Gegenstände hat es in meinem Leben immer mehr als genug gegeben. Durch die Wand wurde ich gezwungen, ein ganz neues Leben zu beginnen, aber was mich wirklich berührt, ist immer noch das gleiche wie früher: Geburt, Tod, die Jahreszeiten, Wachstum und Verfall. Die Wand ist ein Ding, das weder tot noch lebendig ist, sie geht mich in Wahrheit nichts an, und deshalb träume ich nicht von ihr. (Haushofer 2005, 130-131)

After the appearance of the wall and her slow acceptance of it as a part of her life, the nameless protagonist also realises how wholly unfulfilling her former life was:

Viel zu oft und viel zu lange hatte ich schon gewartet auf Menschen oder Ereignisse, die niemals eingetroffen waren oder so spät, daß sie mir nichts mehr bedeutet hatten.

Während des langen Rückwegs dachte ich über mein früheres Leben nach und fand es in jeder Hinsicht ungenügend. Ich hatte wenig erreicht von allem, was ich gewollt hatte, und alles, was ich erreicht hatte, hatte ich nicht mehr gewollt. (Haushofer 2005, 54)

The above quote underlines women's lack of freedom to follow their own destiny, constrained by their roles as wives, mothers and housewives, and how, as a consequence thereof, they are doomed to lead an unsatisfactory life. It also recalls what de Beauvoir says on the topic of women's desire to acquire meaning and legitimacy in their lives, and the continuous disappointment women experience when no "external event to renew and justify their lives" (De Beauvoir 2011, 552) transpires.

As the female protagonist reflects on her former life, she also acknowledges the opportunity the wall has given her, especially in terms of leaving her former, limited and imprisoned self, behind.

Wenn ich heute an die Frau denke, die ich einmal war, die Frau, mit dem kleinen Doppelkinn, die sich sehr bemühte, jünger auszusehen, als sie war, empfinde ich wenig Sympathie für sie. Ich möchte aber nicht zu hart über sie urteilen. Sie hatte ja nie eine Möglichkeit, ihr Leben bewußt zu gestalten. Als sie jung war, nahm sie, unwissend, eine schwere Last auf sich und gründete eine Familie, und von da an war sie immer eingezwängt in eine beklemmende Fülle von Pflichten und Sorgen. Nur eine Riesin hätte sich befreien können, und sie war in keiner Hinsicht eine Riesin, immer nur eine geplagte, überforderte Frau von mittelmäßigem Verstand, obendrein in einer Welt, die den Frauen feindlich gegenüberstand und ihnen fremd und unheimlich war. (Haushofer 2005, 72-73)

The above excerpt also contains an accurate diagnosis of woman's situation in patriarchal society. Firstly, it addresses the inability of women to wilfully determine their own fates, as well as the burden that is placed upon them as soon as they marry and start a family. With her role as wife, mother and housewife, also come the duties and worries – expressed through the caregiver role woman is socialised toward – that will from now on impede woman's life and confine her within the domestic sphere, thereby epitomising her immanence. De Beauvoir (2011) accurately describes the above as “a gilded mediocrity with neither passion or ambition, days leading nowhere, repeating themselves indefinitely, a life that slips toward death without looking for answers” (468). This description is only reinforced by the female protagonist's own words about how inadequate and disappointing her former life, with husband and children, was; the typical fate of a woman in patriarchal destiny, according to de Beauvoir.

Secondly, when she speaks about her old self's efforts to look younger, the female protagonist refers at the same time seems to emphasise the object status women occupy in patriarchal society, given that a woman's concern with her appearance may be linked back to her status as the “object and prey” (De Beauvoir 2011, 723) of the male species. Woman must consistently present herself as sexually desirable in order to receive some form of legitimation, as “being-for-men is one the essential factors of her concrete

condition” (De Beauvoir 2011, 156). This is instilled in girls from the very beginning by the inanimate doll given they are given to play with, which reinforces this passivity and imparts on them the desire to be a prized possession and exist for others needs and gratification alone. (De Beauvoir 2011)

Thirdly, Haushofer correctly diagnoses woman as man’s “Other”, when she refers to a world in which women are viewed as abnormal and uncanny, as well as the inherent violence patriarchy exhibits toward women. De Beauvoir (2011) highlights how only “the mediation of another can constitute an individual as an *Other*” (283), that is, it is through man, and patriarchy at large, that woman becomes and is constructed as the “Other”. The differentiation man/woman, in which the latter has an inferior status, thus has nothing to do with biology and everything to do with culture and the construct of femininity. It is therefore realistic to assume that this space behind the wall would offer woman a place in which to pursue her own wishes and destiny, while preventing her demotion to a secondary status that would result in her internment in a life that is not wholly hers to determine in the first place. As far as living a life as an active subject goes, the space behind the wall typifies a feminist utopian condition.

The protagonist also evolves as a human being during her tenure within this feminist utopian space. As she is faced with the task of surviving on her own, she begins to see herself and her body in an entirely different light. Her hands, previously adorned with rings – symbolising both her object status and the bonds of matrimony – have now become the tools to her survival:

Meine Hände, immer mit Blasen und Schwielen bedeckt, waren meine wichtigsten Werkzeuge geworden. Ich hatte die Ringe längst abgelegt. Wer würde schon seine Werkzeuge mit goldenen Ringen schmücken. Es schien mir absurd und lächerlich, daß ich es früher getan hatte. (Haushofer 2005, 72)

As her identity as a human being is no longer determined along gender lines, and the construction of femininity, as described by de Beauvoir, begins to fall away, as does her previous location in the category of the “Other”. An even more pivotal change is thus the female protagonist casting off the artificial label *woman*, instead classifying herself as simply a human being:

Gleichzeitig kam mir das Bewußtsein abhanden, eine Frau zu sein. Mein Körper, gescheiter als ich, hatte sich angepaßt und die Beschwerden meiner Weiblichkeit auf ein Mindestmaß eingeschränkt. Ich konnte ruhig vergessen, daß ich eine Frau war. Manchmal war ich ein Kind, das Erdbeeren suchte, dann wieder ein junger Mann, der Holz zersägte, oder, wenn ich Perle auf den mageren Knien haltend auf der Bank saß und der sinkenden Sonne nachsah, ein sehr altes, geschlechtsloses Wesen. (Haushofer 2005, 72)

This almost androgynous state of being the protagonist experiences seems to point toward a rather feminist utopian environment, in which a female individual is free to develop and exist without imposed notions of gender. It is at the same time also reminiscent of Verena Stefan’s feminist work *Häutungen*, which the author ends with the statement: “der mensch meines lebens bin ich” (Stefan 1986: 124). That Stefan uses “human being” instead of “woman”, underlines all the restrictions that come with being defined as a woman, the subordinate gender. This label prevents a woman from freely pursuing her own destiny. The above therefore serves to highlight the need for the abolishment of such hampering notions and a revolt against the patriarchal system as a whole.

#### **A ROOM OF HER OWN**

It is also interesting to note how, within this realm behind the wall, the female protagonist *writes*. In her biography of Haushofer, Strigl (2009) describes how the author battled to find time to write between looking after her sons and husband, and

keeping up with her domestic chores, stating how she could only work “wenn ich ganz allein bin”(Strigl 2009, 245). In *Die Wand*, the female protagonist, separated from patriarchal society and her previous existence as mother, wife and housewife, is also author and narrator, writing down how she came to be behind the wall and describing the years that have passed since then. The protagonist gives the following as the reasons behind her choosing to write down her story:

Ich möchte wissen, warum der fremde Mann meine Tiere getötet hat. Ich werde es nie erfahren, und vielleicht ist es auch besser so.

Als im November der Winter hereinbrach, beschloß ich, diesen Bericht zu schreiben. Es war ein letzter Versuch. Ich konnte doch nicht den ganzen Winter am Tisch sitzen mit dieser einen Frage im Kopf, die mir kein Mensch, überhaupt niemand auf der Welt, beantworten kann. Ich habe fast vier Monate gebraucht, diesen Bericht zu schreiben.(Haushofer 2005, 238)

The reasons behind her writing are however more existential than the desire to uncover the reason the unknown man had to kill her animals. The protagonist, according to Strigl (2009), has much in common with the novel's author, both of whom seem to write as part of a type of survival strategy; Haushofer to escape the madness associated with the banality and limitations of being a woman, and the female protagonist to escape the madness that comes with her isolation and lack of human contact behind the wall:

Ich schreibe nicht aus Freude am Schreiben; es hat sich eben so für mich ergeben, daß ich schreiben muß, wenn ich nicht den Verstand verlieren will. Es ist ja keiner da, der für mich denken und sorgen könnte. Ich bin ganz allein, und muß versuchen, die langen dunklen Wintermonate zu überstehen. Ich rechne nicht damit, daß diese Aufzeichnungen jemals gefunden werden. Im Augenblick weiß ich nicht einmal, ob ich es wünsche.(Haushofer 2005, 7)

Venter (1994), also sees this survival strategy as forming part of the female protagonist's mission to keep her sanity within her isolation, but goes one step further by interpreting

the decision to write as a way of overcoming the fear patriarchy instils in her. Venter thus views the female protagonist's writing as an instrument against the fear that comes with the presence of patriarchy, which is unleashed by the intrusion of the unknown man – seen as Christianity's punishing principle, on which patriarchy itself rests – into the space behind the wall, as a result tainting the established utopia.

When on the topic of women, writing, and spaces to write, Virginia Woolf's 1929 essay, entitled "A Room of One's Own" comes to mind, which is based on a series of lectures she gave at two Cambridge women's colleges. Woolf spoke about how women, more specifically women authors, needed "five hundred a year and a room with a lock on the door [...] to write fiction or poetry" (Woolf 1929, 64). She uses the hypothetical example of Shakespeare's sister, whom she names Judith, to illustrate this point. Judith, who, even if she had as brilliant mind as her brother, would never have written the most famous plays in literature, let alone attained the status he did, simply because she was a woman and not given the time nor place to follow her own desires and destiny:

I told you in the course of this paper that Shakespeare had a sister; but do not look for her in Sir Sidney Lee's life of the poet. She died young – alas, she never wrote a word. [...] Now my belief is that this poet who never wrote a word and was buried at the cross-roads still lives. She lives in you and in me, and in many other women who are not here to-night, for they are washing up the dishes and putting the children to bed. But she lives; for great poets do not die; they are continuing presences; they need only the opportunity to walk among us in the flesh. [...] For my belief is that if we live another century or so [...] and have five hundred a year each of us and rooms of our own; if we have the habit of freedom and the courage to write exactly what we think [...] then the opportunity will come and the dead poet who was Shakespeare's sister will put on the body which she has so often laid down. (Woolf 1929, 69)

In *Die Wand*, the female protagonist, for all intents and purposes, is given "a room of her own", as she is totally alone within the confines of the wall and is no longer

forced to fulfil her role as mother and housewife, allowing her to the time and energy to freely note down her story of female experience. De Beauvoir also highlights how the lack of “great” women, ones that could stand next to the likes of Van Gogh, Kafka or T. E. Lawrence, are absent exactly because of the limiting situation woman finds herself in and the resulting inferiority complex that makes her question her own abilities, in turn leading to her resigning herself to a mediocre life instead of pursuing greatness. Though the female protagonist does indeed take the opportunity to put pen to paper – she writes down the events that have come to pass since living behind the wall, as well as makes a comparison to her former life – her writing will never reach the outside, “[e]s ist ein merkwürdiges Gefühl, für Mäuse zu schreiben” (Haushofer 2005: 74), let alone other women, where it could perhaps effect some form of change or contribute to women literature at large.

Though this is actually as a result of her running out of paper to write upon, in effect cutting the narrative off long before she dies, its incompleteness, and the fact that it will not reach the general public, may in turn be linked back to the inferiority complex de Beauvoir posits, at least on a symbolic level. That is, the lack of faith the female protagonist has in herself and her ability, in turn prevents her from proudly standing by her work, instead leaving it to the mice, an anonymity underscored by her remaining nameless throughout the novel. Furthermore, Vansant’s argument (see p. 16) about female authors having to write against an “imaginary line”, namely male projections of femininity, which keep women from achieving true self-realisation, also applies here. Stuck behind the wall, which may in this case be interpreted along patriarchal lines, the female protagonist is prevented from exposing her work of female experience to the world, just like the woman in the real world is stymied from creativity by her roles as wife, mother and housewife.

## A FAILED EXPERIMENT

Though the environment of the experiment is regulated by Haushofer, she fails to account for the female protagonist's previous socialisation within patriarchal society, which ultimately leads to the experiment's failure. That is, despite being put in an environment where she is free to escape the construct of femininity and the roles and expectations that accompany it and is thus free to become a subject in her own life, the female protagonist never truly escapes patriarchy. Though she does gain much in terms of independence through this radical form of self-assertion— she is forced to learn to survive on her own in the woods as well as freed from having to dedicate her own life to caring for other human beings – she cannot rewire her mind, that is to say, she cannot undo patriarchal socialisation and its unconscious effects upon her, most keenly seen in her nurturing and sacrificial relationship toward the animals. (Strigl 2009) The nameless protagonist has not learnt to nurture herself, if one can put it that way. This means that as was the case before the wall and in patriarchal society, she puts everyone and everything else before herself, making this a failed feminist experiment from the very beginning.

With the animals as her only companions, the protagonist soon finds herself as head of this “merkwürdigen Familie” (Haushofer 2005, 42), spending the majority of her time worrying about their well-being: “Wenn ich an den ersten Sommer zurückdenke, ist er viel mehr von der Sorge um meine Tiere überschattet als von meiner eigenen Lage” (Haushofer 2005, 65). Thus, despite being freed from patriarchal binds, the protagonist finds a replacement for her role in the traditional patriarchal family, in the form of her caregiver role toward her animal family: “Die Katastrophe hatte mir eine große Verantwortung abgenommen und, ohne daß ich es sogleich merkte, eine neue Last auferlegt” (Haushofer 2005, 65-66).



Many parts of the novel concern the protagonist's thoughts regarding her animals, almost always tinged with fear and worry ["Ich lag wach und machte mir Sorgen um Perle" (Haushofer 2005, 106), "Etwas war mir eingepflanzt, das es mir unmöglich machte, Anvertrautes im Stich zu lassen" (Haushofer 2005, 174) and "Ich war nicht allein, und ich durfte sie nicht verlassen" (Haushofer 2005, 214)]. The protagonist explains this behaviour as part of "einem Trieb, der mir eingepflanzt war und den ich nicht bekämpfen konnte, wenn ich mich nicht selbst zerstören wollte" (Haushofer 2005, 66). Yet, as has been proven by de Beauvoir, the maternal "instinct" is a farce and has no biological foundation, given that it has everything to do with the construction of femininity within patriarchy. Woman is made to believe that the maternal "instinct" is a part of the very fibre of being, in order to make her feel like her immanence is warranted, and that it is only she who can properly fulfil the role of the homemaker, as opposed to the man, who is delineated in the role of the breadwinner.

Haushofer's protagonist is thus seen to regress in terms of a feminist utopia, as she manifests the characteristics and behaviour of woman as defined by patriarchy, which, according to Tabah (2000), in turn reinforces patriarchy's oppression of women. The protagonist fails to truly cast off feminine stereotypes and roles patriarchy previously imposed on her, replacing her previous human family with an animal one, and taking on another burden to give her life *meaning*, as was the case with her duties as mother, wife and housewife in her former life. In the following quote, in which the protagonist reflects on her role as a mother, it is highlighted how motherhood, which, according to de Beauvoir, is the natural vocation of woman, "completes" woman's identity as an individual, and how woman experiences a resultant sense of loss once her children no longer need her like they used to:

Meine Kinder waren fortgegangen; Hand in Hand, die Schultaschen auf dem Rücken, mit wehendem Haar, und ich hatte nicht gewußt, daß das der Anfang vom Ende war. Oder vielleicht hatte ich es geahnt. Später war ich nicht mehr glücklich gewesen. Alles veränderte sich auf eine trostlose Weise, und ich hörte auf, wirklich zu leben.(Haushofer 2005, 176)

The “return to nature” and the duplication of patriarchal gender roles are fundamentally regressive and undermine and fracture the initial utopia established in the novel, a feature that has been critiqued by other Haushofer scholars. (Tabah 2000, Hofman 2000, Gnüg and Möhrmann, 1985) Littler also illustrates how the novel represents “not the dissolution of the subject, but the emergence of a new subject-object relation” (Littler 1998, 219). Despite becoming independent by being forced to survive on her own, it is thus interesting to note how the female protagonist simultaneously develops a symbiotic relationship with the natural world surrounding her, becoming more and less of a distinct self, as Markotic (2008) explains, again underlining the regressive aspect of the novel’s heroine:

Es fällt mir schwer, beim Schreiben mein früheres Ich und mein neues Ich auseinanderzuhalten, mein neues Ich, von dem ich nicht sicher bin, daß es nicht langsam von einem größeren Wir aufgesogen wird.(Haushofer 2005, 161)

It has been shown how the novel, initially utopian, is in fact largely of a dystopian nature, and nowhere does this become clearer than toward the end of *Die Wand*, where the female protagonist mercilessly murders a male intruder after he has just killed two of her animals [“Ich beachtete ihn gar nicht, als ich neben Luchs hinkniete” (Haushofer 2005, 235-236)]. This unknown man is probably the last of the male species alive and so the only possibility of salvaging the human race, which has been wiped out by some kind of catastrophe, yet the female protagonist kills him without hesitation, overtaken by her emotions for her animals. This, though an understandable act considering the context, is problematic, seeing as she seals the fate of the human race in the process, which is now doomed to end with her, the last woman.

Though this may be seen as part of a warped version of the caregiver role woman is socialised toward, it has largely also been interpreted as regressive, in that the female protagonist replicates violent male behaviour through the murder, thereby legitimating and stabilising patriarchy. That is, if within matriarchy it is man who is the “Other” and this female-centred societal system can only exist if all male species are eradicated, it is no different than its dominating counterpart, patriarchy. This is explicitly illustrated in Heinrich von Kleist’s play *Penthesilea*, as the queen of the Amazonians mauls her romantic interest, Achilles, as well as in Elfriede Jelinek’s *Die Klavierspielerin*, in which Erika is systematically dominated by her mother, and both women exhibit traditionally male aggressive and violent behaviour in a reversal of traditional gender roles.

Furthermore, the female protagonist’s description of her female friends, who, like her, were aware of the injustices women face in patriarchy, but still chose not to talk about it or challenge it head-on, underlines how the women themselves are also responsible for the lack of change:

Von vielen Dingen wußte sie ein wenig, von vielen gar nichts; im ganzen gesehen herrschte in ihrem Kopf eine schreckliche Unordnung. Es reichte gerade für die Gesellschaft, in der sie lebte, die genauso unwissend und gehetzt war wie sie selbst. Aber eines möchte ich ihr zugute halten: sie spürte immer ein dumpfes Unbehagen und wußte, daß dies alles viel zu wenig war. (Haushofer 2005, 72-73)

#### **MELANCHOLY – A SYMPTOM OF DYSTOPIA**

Within the framework of this feminist utopian experiment, there is a further aspect of *Die Wand* that disbars a utopian interpretation of the novel. This is the depression or melancholy that the female protagonist seems to suffer from throughout. If she were really living under utopian conditions, she would not be depressed. In the passage below, the female

protagonist highlights the melancholy and feeling of emptiness she experiences once her children no longer needed her as a mother. This “empty nest syndrome” may in turn be linked back to the constructed nature of woman, whose role as wife, mother and housewife are what give her life meaning and through which she attempts to legitimise herself, seeing as she is prevented from freely pursuing her own destiny. De Beauvoir highlights how woman will be disappointed time and time again as she does not attain the level of meaning and legitimisation of self she expected. In this case, the protagonist’s husband takes the place of her children, the word “schien” in turn emphasising how this is a projection – given that her children are no longer there to receive her attention – and also part of her own socialisation within the patriarchal system, in which she, as a woman, plays the role of the caregiver.

Damals wandte ich mich wieder sehr meinem Mann zu; er schien mich nötiger zu brauchen als sie. Meine Kinder waren fortgegangen; Hand in Hand, die Schultaschen auf dem Rücken, mit wehendem Haar, und ich hatte nicht gewußt, daß das der Anfang vom Ende war. Oder vielleicht hatte ich es geahnt. Später war ich nicht mehr glücklich gewesen. Alles veränderte sich auf eine trostlose Weise, und ich hörte auf, wirklich zu leben (Haushofer 2005, 176)

This in turn begs the question: why is the female protagonist depressed? This inquiry is especially pertinent seeing as she finds herself in a space in which she may, basically, freely determine her destiny, without patriarchy’s interference. One might assume that her depression has to do with her total isolation in the aftermath of the catastrophe on the other side of the wall.

Markotic (2008) claims that the protagonist is the least melancholic of all Haushofer’s female characters, an assertion she supports through Kristeva’s view of melancholy – outlined in her work on female depression *Black Sun*. Markotic sees the protagonist of *Die Wand* as suffering a *specific* loss – that is, the end of the world and all the

people she loved that were in it, which is also the reason she posits for believing this protagonist to be the least melancholy of all Haushofer's female characters:

Ich schlief ein und glitt hinunter zu meinen Toten, und es war anders als in den Träumen zuvor. Ich hatte keine Furcht, ich war nur traurig, und diese Trauer erfüllte mich bis zum Rand.(Haushofer 2005, 118)

Nevertheless, it is my belief that not only is the female narrator of *Die Wand* depressed, and not even as a result of the world as she knew it ending – though this and memories of her previous life do augment her depression – but rather as a result of a previous, even, to use Kristeva's term, *primordial* loss, in contrast to Markotic's claim that the female protagonist's melancholy or loss have to do with the catastrophe that occurred. Within the context of Haushofer's work as a whole, it is evident how roles, expectations and mind-sets, which are shown to profoundly differ between men and women, are at the root of her female protagonists' melancholia, and it is no different in *Die Wand*. (Strigl 2009)

The following extract from the novel serves to shed light on the root causes of the protagonist's depression and will be elaborated below:

Sosehr ich mich auch bemühte, diesen Vorstellungen zu entfliehen, gelang es mir doch nie wirklich. Ich glaube auch nicht, daß sie wahnhaften Charakter hatten, denn es war viel unwahrscheinlicher, daß ich mitten im Wald die Tiere durchbringen würde, als daß sie starben. *Ich habe an derartigen Ängsten gelitten, solange ich mich zurückerinnere, und ich werde darunter leiden, solange irgendein Geschöpf lebt, das mir anvertraut ist. Manchmal, schon lange ehe es die Wand gab, habe ich gewünscht, tot zu sein, um meine Bürde endlich abwerfen zu können. Über diese schwere Last habe ich immer geschwiegen; ein Mann hätte mich nicht verstanden, und die Frauen, denen ging es doch genau wie mir.* Und so tratschten wir lieber über Kleider, Freundinnen und Theater und lachten, *die heimliche verzehrende Sorge in den Augen. Jede von uns wußte darum, und deshalb redeten wir nie darüber. Es war eben der Preis, den man für die Fähigkeit bezahlte, lieben zu können.*(Haushofer 2005, 62) [Italics added by author for emphasis]

Firstly, the protagonist states that she has been suffering from these fears – that is anxiety that may be linked back to the caregiver role – since she can remember. The root causes of the

female protagonist's depression seem to be almost pre-birth, going much deeper and further back than anything she could have lost or experienced in her lifetime, that is, the roots of her depression may be seen as linked to culture, and so patriarchal society itself. My argument is further supported by the protagonist's usage of the term "Bürde" – indicating the burden placed upon women when "loving"<sup>20</sup> a man and having a family, as well as the duties and roles that accompany them.

Even more crucial to the inquiry into the causes behind the female protagonist's depression, is her previous wish to die because of this burden, as well as her description of the negative impact it has had on her life. This leads me to believe that her depression is intrinsically linked to the construction of gender roles within patriarchy, more specifically the burden and limitations this societal system and culture place upon women, as it has them lead "a life that slips toward death without looking for answers" (De Beauvoir 2011, 468). The female protagonist's depression may thus be read according to Kristeva's "primordial" interpretation, indicating the loss of a "former oneness", as Markotic phrases it, when woman was not inferior to man or beleaguered with and divided by patriarchal roles and expectations. Strigl (2009), in her comprehensive biography of the Austrian author, also speaks about this loss and how it may be found in many of Haushofer's protagonists:

Haushofers Heldinnen trauern alle einem früheren Ich nach, dem sie untreu geworden sind, das sie verraten und preisgegeben haben. In ihnen hat sich die Autorin selbst abgebildet. (191)

Furthermore, though both the protagonist and her female friends are aware of this burden, they would rather make idle chatter or go to the theatre than talk about the limitations placed upon their lives. Yet, as de Beauvoir rightly asserts, these diversions do not break the

---

<sup>20</sup> I have used quotation marks in order to emphasise the affected meaning behind this word and emotion within patriarchal society, seeing as an institution based on convention, as this is what marriage is, cannot produce love, nor can husband and wife, inhibited by practical, social, and moral conventions, satisfy each other sexually for the rest of their lives. (De Beauvoir 2011)

constraints of marriage, as they are “only artificial escapes that in no way authentically allow the woman to take her destiny into her own hands. (De Beauvoir 2011, 598) That the protagonist’s female friends dismiss the burden as part of the ability to “love” and resign themselves to the loss of their former, undivided selves, instead of doing anything to challenge it, is also problematic. In Haushofer’s case, this meant giving up her independence and fully dedicating her life to looking after her husband and children:

Ich koche ja überhaupt nur meiner Familie zuliebe. Wäre ich allein, würde ich mich mit einem Butterbrot begnügen. Der ganze Aufwand eines bürgerlichen Haushalts ist nur für Männer gut, und die plagen sich ihr Leben lang ab, um diesen Aufwand bezahlen zu können. (Strigl 2009, 192)

The fact that the protagonist’s depression continues beyond the wall indicates that nothing has really changed in terms of the burdens she has to bear as a woman. Instead of her former family, she now sacrifices and devotes her life to the animals. The depression thus continues on into the illusory utopian space behind the wall, as the conditions have not actually been transformed, nor has patriarchy been fully abolished, as it lives on in the female protagonist’s socialisation and the construct of femininity as a whole.

#### **DIE WAND – AN APOCALYPTIC DREAM**

Gregor Samsa, of Franz Kafka’s *Metamorphosis*, awakens as an insect; Josef K., from *The Trial*, by the same author, is woken up to find himself already under arrest; and Haushofer’s female protagonist in turn wakes up to the existence of the wall and the negation of all life beyond it. The parallels between Kafka’s and Haushofer’s protagonist(s) waking up to a *fait accompli* are undeniable. As in the case of Kafka, Haushofer also does not explain to the reader how this situation came to be, in this case

how and why the wall appeared in the first place. The female protagonist of *Die Wand*, having arrived at the hunting lodge with her cousin and the cousin's husband, goes to bed after having waited for the other two to return from a trip to the village earlier that afternoon. Upon waking up, she finds that they have still not returned, and, when she goes out to look for them, she encounters an invisible barrier, apparently of glass, that seems to have enclosed the entire area and trapped her in it:

Ich war so müde, daß ich trotz der feuchtkalten Steppdecke einschlief. [...] Ich erwachte davon, daß die Sonne auf mein Gesicht fiel, und erinnerte mich sofort an den vergangenen Abend(Haushofer 2005, 12)

Verdutzt streckte ich die Hand aus und berührte etwas Glattes und Kühles: einen glatten, kühlen Widerstand an einer Stelle, an der doch gar nichts sein konnte als Luft. Zögernd versuchte ich es noch einmal, und wieder ruhte meine Hand wie auf der Scheibe eines Fensters(Haushofer 2005, 13)

References to falling asleep, waking up and dreaming appear throughout the novel, and may be seen as proof that *Die Wand* can be interpreted as an apocalyptic dream by the female protagonist, who, disillusioned by her life as a wife, housewife and mother, seeks for a way out in the realm of dreams<sup>21</sup>, only to be confronted by a rather dystopian situation instead. Though there is no evidence to suggest that Marlen Haushofer engaged with studies of psychoanalysis, and this research report is by no means a psychoanalytic study, Sigmund Freud's view of the dream is of relevance here. According to Freud, "[a] dream is a (disguised) fulfilment of a (suppressed or repressed) wish" (Freud 1953, IV, 160). This statement may in turn be referred back to the female protagonist's dream, which materialises as a way of fulfilling her repressed/suppressed desire to live a life unburdened by family and unrestrained by social convention.

---

<sup>21</sup> The female protagonist's dream may thus also be interpreted as an "abstract" utopia, namely a wish-fulfilment strategy, as opposed to a "concrete" utopia, which provides a viable blueprint for change in the future, and is exactly what Haushofer fails to do in this novel. (Bloch 1986)



Also, within the structure of novel, there is a clear separation between the protagonist's thoughts (these prominently concern criticisms of her former life within the system of patriarchy) and minutiae (namely the chores surrounding the hunting lodge, the animals, as well as tending to her garden and scouring for food to survive). The above separation between subjective thought and the everyday seems to indicate a necessary separation, perhaps between dream and reality. Unsatisfied with her quotidian reality, the female protagonist could be said to escape into her dreams, thereby necessitating the two spheres, one the housewife's everyday reality – represented by her daily efforts at survival in the space behind the wall – and the other her thoughts concerning her former life, containing her rebellion against the patriarchal system. The wall itself may also be seen as a manifestation of the barriers the female protagonist has encountered and accepted in real life, as they too limited her movements, and not as a utopian protective barrier, as originally assumed. The following statement by Haushofer also lends itself to this interpretation of the wall:

Aber, wissen Sie, jene Wand, die ich meine, ist eigentlich ein seelischer Zustand, der nach außen plötzlich sichtbar wird. Haben wir nicht überall Wände aufgerichtet? Trägt nicht jeder von uns eine Wand, zusammengesetzt aus Vorurteilen, vor sich her? [...] Man sitzt rund um einen Tisch und ist – so viele Menschen, so viele Wände – weit, sehr weit von einander entfernt. (Strigl 2009, 264)

As in Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* and *The Trial*, where the *fait accompli* is above-all of an irrational, disturbing and unsettling nature, as well as is never fully elucidated, Haushofer's *Die Wand* comes across as a dream that essentially turns into an apocalyptic dystopian nightmare, as a woman's wish for liberation from patriarchal binds reveals the deep-rootedness and inescapability of patriarchy itself. A dream would also explain, or at least justify, the female protagonist killing the male intruder, as instead of

her murdering a man in cold blood and thereby dooming the human race to extinction, she could be seen as symbolically killing patriarchy.

However, a dream, like utopia, is both unreal and illusory; neither can ever be realised unless one does something concrete to make them a reality. Haushofer does not seem to believe in the reality of a time in which woman can truly become an active subject in her own life, underscored by the protagonist's own thoughts on the subject:

Nein, es wäre doch nicht das Paradies gewesen. Ich glaube, es hat nie ein Paradies gegeben. Ein Paradies könnte nur außerhalb der Natur liegen, und ein derartiges Paradies kann ich mir nicht vorstellen. (Haushofer 2005, 68)

That paradise, or utopia, cannot exist in the natural world, is already denoted by the term's Greek meaning: "no place". Haushofer therefore seems to be aware that the wish for an end to patriarchy is just a utopian wish, one that cannot ever be truly realised. This is in turn evinced by the material of the barrier – glass – which is a very breakable substance, thereby denoting the fragility of the utopia, as well as through the symbolic white crow.

Markotic (2008) interprets the white crow as embodying the intolerance of difference, which she sees as similar to the problem of domination within patriarchy, possibly even its source:

Fremd und böse sind für mich noch immer ein und dasselbe. Und ich sehe, daß nicht einmal die Tiere davon frei sind. In diesem Herbst ist eine weiße Krähe aufgetaucht. Sie fliegt immer ein Stück hinter den andern und läßt sich allein auf einem Baum nieder, den ihre Gefährten meiden. Ich kann nicht verstehen, warum die anderen Krähen sie nicht mögen. Für mich ist sie ein besonders schöner Vögel, aber für ihre Artgenossen bleibt sie abscheulich. Ich sehe sie ganz allein auf ihrer Fichte hocken und über die Wiese starren, ein trauriges Unding, das es nicht geben dürfte, eine weiße Krähe. [...] Sie kann nicht wissen, warum sie ausgestoßen ist, sie kennt kein anderes Leben. Immer wird sie ausgestoßen sein und so allein, daß sie den Menschen weniger fürchtet als ihre schwarzen Brüder. [...] Aber ich will, daß die weiße Krähe lebt, und manchmal träume ich davon, daß es im Wald noch eine zweite gibt und die beiden einander finden werden. (Haushofer 2005, 218)

The protagonist calls the white crow “Unding” – indicating that it is unnatural and should therefore not exist. Utopia, furthermore, is Greek for “no place” [“Etwas wie die Wand dürfte es einfach nicht geben“ (Haushofer 2005, 26)]. The emphasised non-existence of both these things leads me to believe that Haushofer herself realised her utopian wish would most likely never come about, but silently hoped for its realisation anyway. The novel also ends with the protagonist stating how she will go feed the white crow after its kin have flown off to roost: “Sie wartet schon auf mich” (Haushofer 2005, 238). The fact that *Die Wand* ends with this scene and not with the murder of the unknown man – which has mostly overshadowed the actual ending – makes me think that Haushofer, despite the overly pessimistic nature of her novel, still stresses the need for hope. Despite the dystopian nature of the novel, utopia, Haushofer seems to say, is something that needs to be nurtured and not given up upon so that something new may be born out of it: “Stier, Perle, Tiger und Luchs wird es nie wieder geben, aber etwas Neues kommt heran, und ich kann mich ihm nicht entziehen” (Haushofer 2005, 238).

## CONCLUSION

This research report has situated Marlen Haushofer's post-war novel *Die Wand* within the utopia-dystopia spectrum. It was demonstrated how this speculative novel, though initially thought to be utopian due to the liberating situation the female protagonist finds herself in (she is forced out of passivity as she learns to survive on her own and also has room to write about her experiences), is in actual fact predominantly dystopian. Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* was in turn incorporated as part of the theoretical framework, given that her work on the construction of femininity and woman's socialisation toward her role in patriarchal society, are especially important to the analysis of the dystopian side of the novel, namely how patriarchy controls women. The claim that *Die Wand* is over-all dystopian was supported by both the female protagonist's regressive behaviour, that is, her maternal and sacrificial relationship toward her animals, which only served to stabilise patriarchy, as well as the depression she suffers from even after her supposed liberation behind the wall. The melancholia of the female protagonist was, moreover, analysed in terms of Julia Kristeva's work on female depression *Black Sun*, as it amplified the impact that the construct of femininity has upon women. The interpretation of the novel as an apocalyptic dream by the female protagonist further functioned to underline the illusory utopia symbolised by the environment behind the wall. This dream interpretation may also be put forward as a fruitful future area of research, given that a comprehensive Freudian interpretation of the novel would have been beyond the scope of this research report. The same can be said of the interpretation of the female protagonist as a melancholic, given that a thorough and psychoanalytic analysis of her depressive state could not be incorporated here.

*Die Wand* was also simultaneously presented as a feminist experiment by Marlen Haushofer, meant to observe what would happen if woman were free of patriarchal binds. Yet the experiment fails, above-all due to Haushofer's oversight regarding woman's socialisation, that is, the construction of femininity and its enduring effects upon woman and her psychological make-up. Though *Die Wand* represents a contribution to feminist literature in terms of diagnosis, in that it names the problems encountered by women in patriarchy and how they are hard pressed to escape its binds, the novel misses the mark when it comes to looking toward the future. What I mean is that there is no vision of a different and better life within *Die Wand*, which is what a "concrete" utopia would have done, nor is there an attempt to break out of or challenge this oppressive system. Instead, there is a certain feeling of resignation<sup>22</sup>, mirrored in Haushofer's own life by her remarrying her adulterous husband.

Nevertheless, the lack of change evinced by the female protagonist's dystopian situation within the novel pinpoints the problem that even present-day, predominantly Western, society displays. What I mean to say is that like in the novel, where the protagonist is removed from patriarchy and placed within an environment created to eliminate her inferior status, so too is it when it comes to gender equality today. There exist a range of legal measures and policies, meant to ensure equality between the sexes.<sup>23</sup> Yet these efforts at legal equality, as well as Haushofer's attempt to cut woman out of patriarchy by creating a "utopian" space in which woman could thrive, seem to neglect, or perhaps even purposely ignore, the elephant in the room: patriarchy. This societal structure that is so embedded in our

---

<sup>22</sup> This resignation or quiet acceptance by woman of an otherwise unendurable situation may in turn be put down to Haushofer's upbringing in conservative roman-catholic Austria, where woman played the role of "stille Dulderin", shouldering her burden in life without complaint or challenge. (Strigl 2009) This view of woman is still prevalent today among the religious, specifically roman-catholic circles. This is exemplified by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger's 2004 acclamation of women through the worshipped figure Maria, whom he described as "ein Vorbild, auf das wir schauen müssen, was Geduld und Vertrauen angeht und die Fähigkeit zuzuhören" (quote as it appears in Spiegel Online 2004, 1).

<sup>23</sup> Gender legislation typically involves ensuring equal opportunities and equal treatment for men and women, as well as to combat any form of discrimination on the grounds of gender. This will often include "gender mainstreaming" (the integration of the gender perspective into all other policies) and the introduction of specific measures for the advancement of women. (European Commission 2013)

everyday lives and psychological make-up is continually disregarded when it comes to gender equality. The fact is, equity between men and women cannot be achieved through legal equality. One can wax philosophical about the need for universal childcare<sup>24</sup> or extended paternity leave<sup>25</sup>, yet although these factors may contribute to greater equality, they do not challenge the patriarchal state enough for there to be a renewal of the societal structure, one in which men and women could truly exist as equals, which itself can only ever be the case if patriarchy is abolished. Haushofer's novel *Die Wand* demonstrates how ingrained patriarchy is within us and our society, especially women, thus engendering awareness about this issue. Yet it is also part of the realisation that the attainment of true gender equity necessitates change that goes beyond the surface and into the very make-up of society itself, where the binary man/woman is created in the first place.

---

---

<sup>24</sup>The UK Institute for Public Policy Research think tank states that universal childcare can assist over-burdened parents from being pushed into the traditional breadwinner (husband) and homemaker (wife) division of roles. (McVeigh 2012)

<sup>25</sup>According to McVeigh (2012), the goals of modern feminists must pass through fathers, who should demand and take advantage of paternity leave, thereby playing a greater role in welfare of their children and in turn presenting their offspring with a semblance of equality on the parental front.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bachmann, I. 1971. *Malina*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

Barr, M. S. 1993. *Lost in Space - Probing Feminist Science Fiction and Beyond*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press

Bartkowski, F. 1989. *Feminist Utopias*. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press.

Blau, F. D. and Kahn, L. M. 2006. The U.S. Gender Pay Gap in the 1990s: Slowing Convergence. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 60: 45-66.

Bloch, E. 1986. *The Principle of Hope*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Booker, M. K. 1994. *The Dystopian Impulse in Modern Literature: Fiction as Social Criticism*. Westport and London: Greenwood Press.

Burnett, M. G. 1991. Review: Feminist Utopias by Frances Bartkowski. *Qui Parle* 4: 140-146.

Caberta, U. 2012. *Schwarzbuch Feminismus: vom Mythos der erreichten Gleichberechtigung*. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus.

Campo, N. 2009. *From Superwomen to Domestic Goddesses: The Rise and Fall of Feminism*. New York: Peter Lang.

Cixous, H. 2008. *The Newly Born Woman*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

De Beauvoir, S. 2011. *The Second Sex*. New York: Vintage Books.

Echte Männer Gehen in Karenz. 2011. Warum die Frauenministerin die Kampagne macht (consulted February 2013): <http://www.maennerinkarenz.at/kampagne.html>

European Commission. 2013. Gender Equality (consulted February 2013): [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/index_en.htm)

Freedman, E. B (ed.). 2007. *The Essential Feminist Reader*. New York: The Modern Library.

Freud, S. 1933. *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*. New York: W. W. Norton & company, inc.

\_\_\_\_\_. 1953. The Interpretation of Dreams, IV and V. In: *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works (24 vols)*. London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis.

Gerber, R. 1955. *Utopian fantasy: A Study of English Utopian Fiction since the End of the Nineteenth Century*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Gerdzen, R. and Wohler, K. 1991. *Matriarchat und Patriarchat in Christa Wolfs "Kassandra"*. Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann.

Gibson, M. 2011. I am Woman, hear me roar: SlutWalk (consulted February 2013): [http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2088114\\_2087975\\_2087963,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,2088114_2087975_2087963,00.html)

Gnüg, H. 1983. *Der utopische Roman*. München and Zürich: Artemis-Verlag.

Gnüg, H. and Möhrmann, R. (eds). 1985. *Frauen Literatur Geschichte: Schreibende Frauen Vom Mittelalter Bis Zur Gegenwart*. Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler.

Hanman, N. 2009. A vindication that Mary Wollstonecraft was right (consulted February 2013): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/apr/27/equality-wollstonecraft-harman-feminism>



Haushofer, M. 2005. *Die Wand*. St. Pölten: Residenz.

Heilbrun, C. G. 1988. *Writing a Woman's Life*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Helsing, E. K. 1989. *The Woman Question: Social Issues, 1837-1883*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hofmann, M. 2000. Verweigerte Idylle. Weiblichkeitskonzepte im Widerstreit zwischen Robinsonade und Utopie: Marlen Haushofers Roman *Die Wand*. In: Bosse, A. and Ruthner, C. (eds) »Eine geheime Schrift aus diesem Splitterwerk enträtseln...«: *Marlen Haushofers Werk im Kontext*: 193-205. Basel and Tübingen: A. Francke Verlag.

Jelinek, E. 1983. *Die Klavierspielerin*. Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag.

Kafka, J. 1983. *The Trial and The Metamorphosis*. London: Heinemann.

Kristeva, J. 1989. *Black Sun*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Lerner, G. (ed.). 1992. *The Female Experience: An American Documentary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Littler, M. 1998. The Cost of Loving: Love, Desire, and Subjectivity in the Work of Marlen Haushofer. In: Fiddler, A. (ed.) 'Other' Austrians: *Post-1945 Austrian Women's Writing*: 211-224. Bern: Peter Lang.

Markotic, L. 2008. Melancholy and Lost Desire in the Work of Marlen Haushofer. *Modern Austrian Literature* 41: 65-93.

McVeigh, T. 2012. Forty Years of feminism – but women still do most of the housework (consulted January 2013): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2012/mar/10/housework-gender-equality-women>

\_\_\_\_\_. 2013. North Dakota battle over reproductive rights begins with anti-abortion hearing (consulted February 2013): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jan/31/north-dakota-anti-abortion-bill-hearings>

Moessner, V. J. 2010. Review: Gender and Culture. *Modern Austrian Literature* 43: 111-112.

Moi, T. 1985. *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory*. London and New York: Routledge.

Neville, S. and Treanor, J. 2012. Research highlights lack of women in executive roles (consulted February 2013): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2012/dec/12/research-lack-women-executive-roles>

News 24. 2012. Miniskirts paralyse Johannesburg (consulted February 2013): <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Miniskirts-paralyse-Johannesburg-20120217>

PFAW. 2012. The War on Women (consulted February 2013): <http://www.pfaw.org/media-center/publications/war-women>

Plath, S. 1971. *The Bell Jar*. New York: Harper and Row.

Podgornik, L. 1993. Erinnern und Überleben. In: Reichart, E. (ed) *Österreichische Dichterinnen*: 51-76. Salzburg and Wien: Otto Müller Verlag.

Preusser, H. 2003. *Letzte Welten: Deutschsprachige Gegenwartsliteratur diesseits und jenseits der Apokalypse. Beiträge zur neueren Literaturgeschichte*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter.

Reese, J. 2010. *Leaders of Second-Wave Feminism - Betty Friedan, Helen Gurley Brown, Simone de Beauvoir, et al.* Webster's Digital Services.

Rosenberger, S. K. 1998. Politics, Gender, and Equality. In: Bischof, G., Pelinka, A. and Thurner, E. (eds.) *Women in Austria*: 104-119. New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers.

Ross, A. 1991. *Strange Weather: Culture, Science, and Technology in the Age of Limits*. London: Verso.

Russ, J. 1981. Recent Feminist Utopias. In: Barr, M. S. (ed.) *Future Females: A Critical Anthology*: 71-85. Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Press.

Sargent, P. 1995. *Women of Wonder, the classic years: Science Fiction by women from the 1940s to the 1970s*. New York: Mariner Books.

Schwickert, M. 2012. Film "Die Wand": Gefangen in sich selbst (consulted February 2012): <http://www.zeit.de/kultur/film/2012-10/film-die-wand>

Spiegel Online. 2004. Katholische Kirche: Papst kritisiert Feminismus (consulted February 2013): <http://www.spiegel.de/panorama/katholische-kirche-papst-kritisiert-feminismus-a-310954.html>

Stefan, V. 1986. *Häutungen*. München: Verlag Frauenoffensive.

Strigl, D. 2009. »Wahrscheinlich bin ich verrückt...« *Marlen Haushofer – die Biographie*. Berlin: List Taschenbuch.

Tabah, M. 2000. Nicht gelebte Weiblichkeit. Töchter und (Ehe-) Frauen in Marlen Haushofers Romanen. In: Bosse, A. and Ruthner, C. (eds) »Eine geheime Schrift aus diesem Splitterwerk enträtseln...«: *Marlen Haushofers Werk im Kontext*: 177-192. Basel and Tübingen: A. Francke Verlag.

Vansant, J. 1988. *Against the Horizon: Feminism and Postwar Austrian Women Writers*. New York, Westport and London: Greenwood Press.

Venter, F. 1994. Haushofer's *Die Wand* als écriture féminine. *Acta Germanica* 22: 57-66.

Von Kleist, H. 1986. *Penthesilea: Ein Trauerspiel*. Stuttgart: Reclam.

Voßkamp, W. 1996. Utopie. In: Ricklefs, U. (ed) *Das Fischer Lexikon: Literatur Band 3: 1931-1951*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag.

Weinberger, H. 2012. Where are all the millennial feminists? (consulted February 2013): <http://www.cnn.com/2012/11/09/living/millennials-feminism>

Wood, L. M. 2010. The Women's Movement (consulted February 2013): <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pdf/the-womens-movement-p6055.pdf>

Wright, E. 1984. *Psychoanalytic Criticism: Theory in Practice*. London and New York: Methuen.

Zeyringer, K. 2008. *Österreichische Literatur seit 1945. Überblicke, Einschnitte, Wegmarken*. Innsbruck, Wien and Bozen: Studienverlag.