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# Quarrelling women as seen by a man: The “women’s dialogues” in Neidhart’s summer songs.\*

by

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Due to a general interest in the women and the images of women in the Middle Ages, medieval “Frauenlieder” have recently been the focus of several editions and research projects.<sup>1</sup> Unlike in Romance literature, however, there are no authenticated female examples in this genre - at least according to the current academic *communis opinio* -<sup>2</sup> i.e. all stanzas and songs were created by men and/or are only expressions of women as fictional characters. Neidhart’s summer songs (“Sommerlieder” = SL) certainly constitute a special case. These are not individual songs or stanzas, but a genre of songs, the essential element of which is the dialogue between women in their social roles (as mother, daughters, friends). The transmission testifies clearly to the popularity of the genre: the Riedegger manuscript from around 1300 - generally considered to be the oldest of the more comprehensive Neidhart transmissions - already contains the best known examples both for the conversation between mother and daughter and for the companion songs (“Gespielinnenlieder”). The “Große Heidelberger Manesse” manuscript follows this example; later records, like the Berlin manuscript mgf. 799 (“C”), expand the volume of songs considerably, and even the most recent representatives of the Neidhart tradition, the Neidhart-Fuchs prints of 1491/97, 1537 and 1566, retain altercations between mother and daughter as the only examples for the genre of summer songs.<sup>3</sup>

Neidhart’s summer songs are all the more significant as representations of the behaviour of women towards each other, since medieval records for this area of human interaction are noticeably scarcer than those for relationships between mothers and sons, which are better documented, both from the point

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of view of the mother - so in Dhuoda's tract for her son - and from the angle of the sons - from Augustine to Guibert de Nogent. Moreover, from the 12th century at the latest, the intensification of the cult of adoration for the virgin Mary produced a religious prototype which shaped the (literary and autobiographical) representation of mother/son relations. The literary representation of the daughters is mirrored in the painstakingly reconstructed fragments of medieval everyday reality: girls seem to have figured highly in instances of infanticide and of abandonment after birth. Medieval judgments show some preferential treatment of mothers of sons (even wet nurses were more sought after, if they were mothers of sons), as Helene Kottanerin's *Denkwürdigkeiten* show: *wann es mainen die weisen, es sei die milch pesser von der frauen, die ainen Sun bringt denn von ainer tochter*. (The wise ones say, the milk of a woman who has borne a son is better than that of one who has borne a daughter).<sup>4</sup>

Should anyone think that these conceptions had changed radically with the beginning of the modern age, let me remind them of the *oeuvre* of Sigmund Freud, whose influence on the socio-political development of the 20th century cannot be overestimated. Although his clientele consisted predominantly of women, i.e. "mothers" and "daughters,"<sup>5</sup> Freud used male sexuality and male "family relationships" (i.e. the relationships between mother and son or father and son) as his *tertium comparationes* for all pronouncements on female sexuality and on the social role and behaviour of women. It was not until the arrival of the feminist movement that an independent and critical assessment by women of the topic "mother love" and particularly of the mother/daughter relationship became possible, both in the area of (psychoanalytical) research into gender difference (see the work of Badinter, Chodorow and most of all, Friday)<sup>6</sup> and in the area of the contemporary novel: from the bulk of Austrian contemporary literature, let me mention Jelinek, Mitgutsch, and Frischmuth.<sup>7</sup>

The following observations are quite experimental in character. First, I want to try and confront the role-specific behaviour, that can be seen in Neidhart's summer songs, with statements by Friday on the structures of mother/daughter relationships. Secondly, I want to analyze the judgmental

tendencies inherent in the medieval texts, in their implications both for the constitution of the gender roles in Neidhart's songs and, in terms of the aesthetics of reception, under the aspect of the *longue durée* of these cultural behaviour patterns.

I.

After a description of the beginning of summer and the joy it brings, the typical conflict in Neidhart's mother/daughter dialogues is triggered by the daughter asking for permission to go dancing, with both women ascribing an erotic aspect to the dance situation.<sup>8</sup> The mother understands her daughter "exactly," when she asks to be allowed to participate in the dance of the young people: this is not so much about the sportive and social enjoyment of dancing as about the opportunity for carnal contact with the other sex. In this situation, the mother takes up the role of the *huote* in "Minnesang." She admonishes her daughter not to get involved with men in any way and blackmails her into obedience with reference to her loving care, formerly a physical and psychological necessity for the child. The girl, on the other hand, demands permission and secrecy, even complicity from her mother.

*"Ich frew mich an der haide,  
der liechten augenwaide,  
die uns beginnet nahen",  
so sprach ein schon gethane maidt, "den wil ich schon  
empfahen.*

*Muter, last es on melde,  
ja will ich kumen zu velde  
und will den raien springen.  
ja ist es lang, das ich die kindt nicht newes hort singen".*

*"Naina, tochter, naine,  
ich han dich altersaine  
gezogen an meine prusten,*

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*nu thue es durch den willen mein, las dich der man nicht*

*lusten*". (c 55, II-IV; SL 2)

("Oh, how I look forward to the splendour of the heath/er, it will soon be here," a pretty girl said. "I shall merrily welcome it. Mother, don't make a fuss! I want to go outside and dance the round dance. It's been so long that I have heard the girls sing something new." "No, daughter, nevermore! I have brought you up at my breast all by myself. For my sake, do no lust after men!")

Here, of course, the mother denies her daughter precisely that, which in one form or the other she has claimed for herself.

In my psychoanalytical practice, I have found again and again that this is the basic lie. Parents tell their kids, "no, no, you mustn't" - but the little girl senses that the mother herself is doing the forbidden. It makes a certain aspect of the mother's life and personality a big secret to the girl - and yet the mother always wants to know everything about the daughter. She pries into the girl's psyche, she's always telling her daughter they are friends, they must tell each other everything, but once more the girl knows mother is keeping one big secret from her, one part of herself is out of bounds. It is a one-way-relationship, supposedly based on trust, but which the girl experiences as manipulative. She resents it. (Friday 23f.)

The mother warns her daughter with reference to what happened to other young girls, who ignored the warnings of their mothers and whose fate should serve as a deterrent, and she expressly refers to the possibility of an unwanted pregnancy:<sup>9</sup>

*"weistû, wie geschach*

*dîner gespilen Jiuten vert, alsam ir eide jach?*

*der wuohs von sînem reien ûf ir wempel,*

*und gewan ein kint, daz hiez sie lempel"* (SL 18, II,3ff.)

(“Do you remember last year, how your friend Jeute’s mother saw it coming? Her [Jeute’s] belly swelled from the dancing and she had a child which she called little lamb.”)

As to the person of the singer, who has so enchanted the girl that she no longer obeys the mother, such expressions do contribute fragments of a biography, fictitious and yet all too close to (medieval) reality. The mother warns of his sexual prowess - which at the same time acts as an advertisement for it, of course. This sexual potency is supposed to lead to twins or birth at short intervals (SL 18,5,7: “*und müezen doch zwô wiegen bî dir loufen*” [“and there will yet have to be two cradles in use”]), but in any case to an unplanned pregnancy (SL 73,3f.):

The daughter tries to act out her mother’s double message: “Be sexual and popular as I would have liked to have been,” but also, “don’t, because that is bad.” The girl often resolves the conflict by putting both halves of her mother’s message into action serially: first she stops, then she goes. The classic story that psychiatrists tell, is of the mother who repeatedly warns her fourteen-year-old daughter not to get pregnant; but the very strength of her injunction signals the girl of the intensity of forbidden delight by which pregnancy is achieved. (Friday 186f.)

The mother also warns of the negative prospect of a “poor squire existence” - work and hunger in “Riuwental” - and of the violence of the prospective husband (SL 18,7,6: “*er beginnt dich slahen, stôzen, roufen*” [“he will start to hit you, push you, fight with you”]) combined with a lack of familial cohesion caused by the difference in estate (SL 23,6,1ff.). The daughters, however, insist that the erotic charm of the man they adore - his *zouber* (magic) - is irresistible. If needed, this magic is helped by the use of aphrodisiacs:

*Diu muoter sprach zer tohter: “kumt es dir von mannes schulden?”*

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*“ja, muoter, ich muoz von der manne schulden zouber  
dulden:  
mich het ein ritter nâhen zim gefangen”.*  
*“nu sage mir, liebiu tochter mîn: ist anders iht ergangen?”*  
*“Nein dâ, liebiu muoter mîn, des ich gemelden kunde.  
er kuste mich; dô het er eine wurzen in dem munde:  
dâ von verlôs ich alle mîne sinne.”*  
*diu alte sprach: “dû bist niht magt: dich rüerent mannes  
minne”. (SL 15, VI-VII)*

(The mother said to the daughter: “Could it be that a man is to blame?” - “Yes, mother, because of the men I must suffer magic. A knight pulled me close to him.” - “Now, tell me, dear daughter, did anything else happen?” - “No, no, dear mother, nothing that I can say. He kissed me and he held a root in his mouth all the while. It made me lose all my senses/consciousness.” - “Then you are not a maiden any more, you are experi-encing man’s love.”)

It was precisely this apparently “typical medieval” argument the daughter uses, that Friday discovered in quite comparable form in the behaviour of young girls in the 20th century:

“To sum up the terrific power and longing that being Swept Away holds for women,” says Dr. Robertiello, “you have to understand that it is a method for avoiding separation. If the woman feels there are forces which took her over, she is confirmed in her role of dependency. If she had no power, then it isn’t her fault that mother’s rules were broken; therefore mother should still love her. Swept Away is an escape from freedom. It tells the girl that even if she did have sex, it wasn’t her fault. She didn’t want to go against mother. She had no choice.” (Friday 316)

The advice to abstain from sex (for now) can turn into the recommendation of a different lover with a more compatible background and financial security, who is also interested in the daughter (SL 23,6,6: “*der*

*junge meier muotet dîn*” [“the young dairy farmer is interested in you”]), but is vehemently rejected by her (ibid., 7,1ff.).

What is puzzling and frightening is, when mother says in one breath that men are bad, they aren't trustworthy, they're children who will selfishly let you down - and then in the next breath tells us of the marvellous future we will have being married to one of them! In our culture, a good mother never, never admits to her daughter that she may not marry, or that it may not be the best idea in the world. (Friday 288)

The means of imposing her wish that are open to the mother, seem to be feeble and consequently fail to work: on the one hand, she can threaten more work (SL 8,3,6), or refuse to hand over the best dress (SL 19,5,4ff.; SL 21,4,5), on the other hand, she can threaten and carry out physical punishment (SL 7,5,4; SL 8,3,2f.; SL 16,5,6), or put a curse on the daughter (SL 8,5,2ff.).

With Neidhart, no individual song can be looked at and interpreted in isolation. All songs are interlinked by hints and set pieces of epic reality. It is characteristic of the dynamics of Neidhart's songs that, because of this epic continuum which forms the basis of all his songs, all characters are shown as (partially) corrupted and thus lose their integrity and authority. This is true of the character of the Singer as much as of the *frouwe*, or, as here in the summer songs, of the mother. Songs 1 and 17 are variations on the motif of the “lascivious old woman”: the mother wants to go dancing, she is calling for her best dress (SL 1,1,3) and hopes to please “the squire from Riuwental” (ibid. 1,4f.); the daughter takes on the role of *huote*, warns of the fickleness of this lover (ibid. 2,1f.), and accuses the mother of having lost her senses (1,2,1; 17,6,5f.). Again, turning the situation upside-down is by no means confined to the Middle Ages:

Some women have always felt overwhelmed by their more glamorous friends, that other women were more sexual. Now their daughter too is more beautiful, and younger. They withdraw from the competition by letting themselves go, becoming even more of a mum. Other mothers become so sexual that the daughter doesn't dare compete. (Friday 180.)

Lastly, we must also consider how these structures were extended in those songs, which Haupt/Wießner have pronounced “unauthentic,” or rather, we must ask which criteria could have prompted the editors to exclude certain songs. As a first step, it can be noted that all stanzas, which are only included in manuscript c and other more recent paper manuscripts, seem to have fallen under this verdict, plus all those which put a violent physical altercation between mother and daughter in central place (SL 21, Str. R. 8 = c 9: the fight with the distaff; ditto c 69), and/or those which contain all too clearly erotic/sexual innuendos (HW XIV,1). Generally, the songs transmitted in ms c toy with the (for mother *and* audience) unexpected knowledge of the daughter, both about sexuality in general and about the sexual desires and “misdemeanours” of her mother: as in songs c 36 and c 40 (which are, by the way, the only summer songs to have been included in the print edition of Neidhart Fuchs), in which the daughter voices the complaint that she has had to wait far too long for a man (c 36,6) and, moreover, has no luck with men because her mother steals them all, even though she is a married woman and therefore - to quote the topic of c 64 (= HW XIV,1) - a “well-fed crow.” In both songs, an indirect alliance between father and daughter emerges: on the one hand, the daughter reminds the mother of her adultery (c 36,9,6), on the other hand, the father is more inclined to marry off his daughter early, whilst the mother’s reservations tend to prevent this (c 40,4,3ff.). Hints from the daughter to misdemeanours of the mother are also to be found in c 66 (Str. 6) and pointedly in c 38, where the mother first tries to use the father’s authority as a last attempt at putting pressure on the daughter:

*“Ich clag es deinem atte,  
der fremdt dir gute,  
das du pist als vnstete  
an deinem mute”.*

*“muterlein, ewr straff ist mir zu strenge.  
ich kann euch doch nicht mer gesagen,  
ich geb ein har vmb ewer clagen:  
mein vater fand sein vingerlein auch nicht enge”.*

“I will tell your father that you have a fickle character and he will withdraw your dowry.”- “Mother, you punish me too harshly. I can only say that I do not give a fig for your complaints. My father did not find his “little finger” tight either (i.e. you were not a virgin when you married him.)”

Friday describes a similarly schizophrenic behaviour of the mother and the effect on the daughter:

As an example of the roots of a particular kind of psychosexual masochism, take the mother who says to her child: “You’ve been naughty. Wait till your father gets home.” Says a young mother: “In our house, discipline was always handled by my father. I’d be sent to my room to wait until he got home, and I’d sit there quivering. I was terrified of my father, and I would say that my fear of rejection from men stems from him. But even more than I feared him, I needed my mother’s approval. It seemed she was the only bulwark I had against him. She dominated the household, including him. And so having established him as the fake authority figure, the bad guy, she would then use him. We would conspire together. If I were going out she’d say, ‘Be in by twelve, but if you’re really having a good time, call me and I’ll tell him it’s not as late as he thinks.’” (Friday 415f.)

Although the distribution of roles in the Neidhart songs appears to contradict other representations of mother/daughter dialogues, for instance that of the ‘Winsbeckin’, there seems to be one song which shows a common thread. These are the additional stanzas for summer song 27, transmitted in ms c and declared unauthentic by Haupt/Wießner (= R 8; c 39(38)). This song departs, in several aspects, at once from the organisation of content conventional for the summer song: Right from the start, a contrast is stated between the nature introduction - the arrival of the *wünneclîche meie* (1,1) (marvellous May) - and the social and political state of the *ôsterlande* (Austria), where *leit mit jâmer wont* (2,1) (pain lives with sorrow), because:

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*“Vrômuot ist ûz ôsterrîche entrunnen:  
wir mugen uns ir und Vriderûnen spiegel wol verkunnen.  
den spiegel solten wir verklagen,  
Vrômuot ûf den handen tragen,  
dies uns her wider gewinnen”. (Str.Rc 8)*

(“High spirits have left Austria: We must do without it and without Vriderun’s mirror. We should forego the mirror and carry the high spirits on our hands, which they would bring back.”)

The summer dance scene on the green, therefore, remains an illusion, a reference to its own genre and a concession to the expectations of the audience (Str. Rc 3-7). - The song is also at the centre of a very lively academic dispute, which I can here only refer to in passing. The questions to be settled concern the date and the political message (i.e. for or against Duke Frederic II or Emperor Frederic II).<sup>10</sup> The link between this first part and stanzas 9 to 15, which are only transmitted in c, particularly the mother/daughter dialogue of stanzas c 11 to 14, is the theme of need and long waiting, *langiu bîte*: Just as the political situation is characterized by the wait for the arrival of the emperor, who is to end the bad practices prevalent in *ôsterrîche*, so the young girl is lacking the fine clothes, which are necessary, to be able to participate in the dancing. She resolves the situation by internalising the societal norm, and thus appears morally superior to the unnamed other young woman:

*“Nu wê mir”, sprach ein altiu, “mîner swaere!  
ich hân ein kint dâ heime, daz ist rehte minnebaere,  
wan daz ich niht kleider hân.  
und sol ez mir hie heime bestân  
daz ist ein hertez maere”.*

*Diu junge sprach: “wes trûret ir sô sêre?  
hân ich niht gotiu kleider an, sô hân ich doch mîn êre.  
mangiu tregt vil liehtiu kleit*

*und ist der êre ein valschiu meit:  
diu hât ze klagen mêre”.*

*Diu alte sprach: “wes hâstû sî ze rüegen?  
si nimt ir einen, der ir mac getiuren und gefüegen;  
si nimt ir einen hübschen knaben  
oder den si mac gehalten.  
dar an lât sî sich genüegen”.*

*Diu junge sprach: “ich hân ir niht genennet:  
von mînen schulden ist si wol noch allez unerkennet.  
langiu bîte vlôs nie wert:  
ich bîte (c: beicht) hiiwer rehte als vert.  
und würde sî verbrennet”. (c Str. 11-14)*

(“Woe,” said an old woman, “what a shame! I have at home a young girl who is ideally suited to love, but I have no dresses for her. If she would have to stay at home because of this it would be a grim tale.”- The young girl said: “What are you so sad about? If I have no nice clothes, at least I have my honour. Some are wearing nice clothes and yet are ‘false’ girls, when it comes to their honour (= have none): they have more to be sad about.” - The old one said: “What are you scolding her for? She takes someone who raises her prestige and who suits her. She takes a noble young man or whoever she can get, and this is good enough for her.” - The young one said: “I have not mentioned names. As far as I’m concerned, she remains incognito. A long wait has never lost its value. I wait (ms c: I confess) this year the same as last, even if she gets burnt to death.”)

Here, a direct equivalent to the structure of the ‘Winsbeckin’ emerges: the daughter demands that traditional moral concepts be adhered to, the mother bemoans the lack of (economic) opportunities to dress her daughter fittingly and to present her adequately to society. She defends the erotic independence and unrestraint of another girl, who remains anonymous and who obviously has access to fine dresses and festive fun. The daughter, on the other hand, stresses that she does not want to name the girl in question and that

she is willing to continue in a position of waiting for the sake of her honour. Although this distribution of roles had no successors within the Neidhart genre, it clearly shows the broad spectrum for roles and possibly also the existence of a dialogue within literature between the various forms of moral didactic expression, to which I would count, in a wider sense, even Neidhart's songs as a continuation of the aspect of "Spruchdichtung," which Walther introduced into "Minnesang."<sup>11</sup>

The so-called "Gespielinnen" songs (i.e. songs with dialogue between two companions of similar age) represent a slightly less dramatic equivalent to the mother/daughter dialogues.<sup>12</sup> With one exception (SL 20), these dialogues are expressions of common desires and interests and are characterized by mutual trust. They seem to reflect a world which is competing with the parental home, like the one Friday describes, in its importance for pubescent girls:

Our adolescent ties with the other girls could provide the balance and self-confidence we need now so desperately. We know there are more pitfalls for us in sex than there are for men. Boys are stronger. They don't have to worry about their reputations. Only we can become pregnant. If anything goes wrong, it is always the girl's fault. Within our friendships with women, a larger and freer framework than the stultifying one at home, we might explore ourselves with people who are subject to our own anxieties, curiosity, and joys. We want confirmation that it is all right to go, to separate, to seek our identity on our own and with men. (Friday 212)

## II.

Contrasting the conflict constellations in Neidhart's mother/daughter dialogues with contemporary analyses of mother/daughter relationships by Friday has unearthed alarming structural parallels. The fictional concept of a male author at the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th century serves as a snapshot and shows us a quite astonishing picture of a familial web of relationships which was, at least in literary form, conceivable and receivable

in this way. The ongoing topicality of the problems here described cannot be doubted. This should alarm us all the more, since we normally tend to assume great changes having occurred in the family structures between the Middle Ages (extended family) and modern times. Following, not only, but also, Philippe Aries' ideas, it is still widely thought that, because of the high number of children, the high infant mortality and so on, the relations between parents and children in the Middle Ages had been less intensive. This seems to be contradicted, not least by the vehemence of the altercations presented. Moreover, one should not forget that - as Friday shows - a comparable behaviour of young girls cannot be understood exclusively, or primarily, as a rebellion against the home situation, but as a symptom for a wider problem, i.e. the lack of separation between daughter and mother.<sup>13</sup>

In another respect, Neidhart's summer songs and Friday's psycho-analytical studies are, of course, incomparable: i.e. in their representational and cognitive intentions. Friday tries to describe THE central female relationship configuration from the point of view of feminist partisanship, and thus hopes to assist in the coming to terms with the inherent problems - problems which are formed by the conditions of female existence in a society shaped and dominated by men. The songs of the medieval author, on the other hand, revolve around the implicit textual strategy of denigrating female desire. *Unmâze* is shown both by the young woman, who, even at the age of twelve, wants to love (*minnen*) (XLVI, 20), and by the mother, who is hoping for a young lover and has to be reminded by her daughter of the vow of chastity that she gave her dying husband (c 30[29]). The woman - regardless whether mother or daughter - is irrevocably conditioned by her sexuality and by this omnipresent sexual obsession she provokes conquest of her person by a man, all the more so, as she professes that not even the possibility of a pregnancy should be a problem. Her "independent" sexual desire is ridiculed, not least for being directed at *Riuwentaler* of all people, i.e. the role of the singer, who, in the fragments of his fictional biography, is shown as corrupt and as a distortion of the ideal of a courtly singer.

In nearly all of Neidhart's songs, the daughter remains victorious in the physical or verbal quarrels with the mother. One can see this as analogous to the seasonal change of the introductory stanzas about nature in which the "young" spring conquers the "old" winter. There remains, however, a considerable discrepancy with the picture of medieval everyday reality that historical sources seem to suggest. In questions of spatial distance from the parental home, participation in public events, choosing a future husband, let alone premarital sex, the young girl was answerable to the authority not just of her mother - even if she was possibly the main partner of discourse - but primarily that of the father or the entire family complex.<sup>14</sup> The laughs of the audience arose, therefore, from the over-the-top dispute between two women, who both assume decisions about their own fate and the behaviour of the other, but deceive themselves about their real problem: their being at the mercy of male authority, be it that of the desired lover or that of the absent father.

### Notes

\* Für die Übersetzung in das Englische habe ich Frau Dr. Brigitte Scott (Norwich, GB) sehr herzlich zu danken.

<sup>1</sup> See Mölk, Kasten, Lorenzo Gradin, Städtler, Bennewitz (1991).

<sup>2</sup> For Romance literature see Rieger.

<sup>3</sup> After all, twelve (or fourteen, if one includes the additional stanzas that are considered unauthentic) of the 29 (or 30, according to Sappler/Lomnitzer,) summer songs that are regarded as authentic, plus fifteen summer songs that are considered unauthentic in manuscripts B, C and c (and further transmitted, for instance, in ms f and in prints), as well as one winter song from the Berlin manuscript c, offer dialogues between mother and daughter. These are summer songs number 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, and 23. Strophe C 177 of summer song 24, at least implies a dialogue structure; in summer song 27, strophes c 11 - 15 offer an interesting variation of the theme. In this context one should also think of the songs by Scharfenberg

(KLD 52) and Goeli.- For this paper I have used the following editions/transcripts of Neidhart transmissions: Haupt/Wießner, Sappler/Lomnitzer, Bennewitz-Behr/Müller, Fritz, Wenzel, Jöst.

- <sup>4</sup> See Mollay (19).- As to the situation of children in the middle ages, see the contributions by Mary Martin McLaughlin and James Bruce Ross in deMause, or the studies by Leiste and Löhmer.
- <sup>5</sup> Stephan, in her newest book, tries to rectify this disparity and, at the same time, to bring out the intellectual importance of the women in Freud's circle for the emergence of his theories.
- <sup>6</sup> See also Wodak.
- <sup>7</sup> Elfriede Jelinik. *Die Klavierspielerin*. Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1983. - Waltraud Mitgutsch. *Die Züchtigung*. n.p.: Claasen, 1985. - Barbara Frischmuth. *Über die Verhältnisse*. Salzburg, Wien: Residenzverlag, 1987; however, cf. Karin Struck with a quite different perspective (*Die Mutter*. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1975). - Of the non-German literature, I would just like to mention Anja Meulenbelt (*Ich wollte nur dein Bestes*. Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1991; orig. Amsterdam: 1985) and Marilyn French (*Her Mother's Daughter*. London: Summit Books, 1987/New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), see also Betty Mahmoody's sensational success (*Not without my daughter*. Bergisch Gladbach: G. Luebbe, 1988 (orig. 1987) and the discussions this book stimulated worldwide, not least in feminist circles.
- <sup>8</sup> Here, I can only refer to Janssen's interpretations of Neidhart's summer songs and those of Herrmann.
- <sup>9</sup> As to the tradition of this motif, see for instance Grimm's folk songs (*Grimms Volkslieder*. In einer Auswahl hg. von Charlotte Oberfeld und Ludwig Denecke. Mit Zeichnungen von Ludwig Emil Grimm. Frankfurt/M.: 1986, 45): "Ach Tochter willst du freien / es wird dich schon gereuen / gereuen wird es dich / wenn alle jungen Mäderchen / mit ihr grasgrünen Kränzerchen / wohl auf den Tanzboden gehn / so mußt du schönes junges Weibchen / mit deinem feinen zarten Leibchen / wohl bei der Wiege stehn".

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(“Oh daughter, if you want to go courting, you will rue it in the end, you will rue it, when all the young maidens, with their flowers, go dancing, you pretty young woman, with your fine, delicate body, will have to stand by the cradle.”)

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Bennewitz (1987, 179ff).

<sup>11</sup> See Hahn (1979 and 1986). - In her contribution to the Düsseldorf conference “Personenbeziehungen im Mittelalter” (1992), Miklautsch attempts a comparison between the treatment of mother/daughter roles in Neidhart with those in Gottfried’s *Tristan* and Veldeke’s *Eneide*. I am grateful to the author for letting me have her manuscript.

<sup>12</sup> See Joldersma.

<sup>13</sup> See Friday (326): “Psychoanalytic theory used to say that, if a girl entered into premarital sex, especially if it were an unhappy experience or ended with pregnancy, it was an expression of rebellion. Sex was seen by the girl as a way of getting back at the restrictor, doing exactly the opposite of what mother wanted. That is still often the case, but nowadays psychiatrists have come to see that rebellion is one of the symptoms, not the complete statement of the overall problem - which is lack of separation.”

<sup>14</sup> Viz the documentary sections in the two volumes by Ketsch and *Frau und spätmittelalterlicher Alltag*. - One should also bear in mind Ruh’s misgivings, who doubted that a medieval audience would have found the literary challenging of maternal authority by a young girl funny.

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