Preface

1. Steven Erlanger, “Germany Sits in with a New Team,” New York Times, April 12, 1998. In the same issue of the Times, it is reported that total German spending on tourism is a close second to that of the United States, making the Germans by far the biggest spenders per capita in travel abroad. This means that while some Germans—the ones discussed in this study—are turning inward, many others are seeking solace and stimulation outside the borders of the country. See Barbara Crossette, “Surprises in the Global Tourism Boom,” New York Times, April 12, 1998.


3. Gooch, vii. Compare this image of the Germans with the recent one from Thomas Sowell: “In the long view of history, few peoples have made such cultural and economic contributions to so many lands in so many parts of the planet as the Germans.” Thomas Sowell, Migrations and Cultures: A World View (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 104.

4. Gooch, viii. Compare the following statement: “Despite the bluster of recent advocates of ‘structural’ analysis, the evidence returns us to the view that political ideas and cultural traditions are not of lesser significance than structures of classes or states.” See Jeffrey Herf, Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), x.

1990), and *Reworking the Past: Hitler, the Holocaust, and the Historians’ Debate*, ed. Peter Baldwin (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990).


7. A not unrelated phenomenon is the emigration of Germans to other countries. In 1995, the number of those willing to begin a new life abroad had reached 130,000, and it has stayed at that level since then. See Burkhard Riedel, “Woanders sein Glück versuchen,” *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, June 13, 1998.


   What conditions of cognition and value made genocidal motivations plausible in this period of German history? . . . The structure of cognition and value was located in and integral to German culture. (24)

   This book is ultimately not only about the perpetrators of the Holocaust. Because the perpetrators of the Holocaust were Germany’s representative citizens, this book is about Germany during the Nazi period and before, its people and its culture. (456)

   The reception that this book has received tells us a great deal about what is positive in Germany today. For Germans to confront this horrific part of their past is unpleasant in the extreme. That so many are willing to do so is yet another indication of how radically transformed democratic Germany has become in the second half of the twentieth century. (466; my emphasis)

10. Rudy Koshar, *Germany’s Transient Pasts* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 330. The author speaks of “the indeterminacy, the quality of not leading to a definitive end or result, of German national identity” (330).

11. Sigrid Schultz, *Germany Will Do It Again* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1944). This book was published in the U.S. during World War II. Like the British volume mentioned above, it was “produced in full compliance with the government’s regulations for conserving paper and other essential materials.” The journalistic account contains the following conclusion: “We will have to remember that Nazism will retain a great appeal for the Germans, even in defeat. . . . Their decent, humanitarian in-
distincts have been buried in decades of wrong teaching, wrong thinking” (238). Echoes and permutations of this teaching and thinking are the subject of this book.

12. The Eastern border, once dubbed the “peace border” (Friedensgrenze) by the East German communists, is being—quietly—put into question again. This will be discussed below. For a description of postwar debates about the nature of that border, see Timothy Garton Ash, In Europe’s Name: Germany and the Divided Continent (New York: Random House, 1993), 224–227.


14. After writing this, I discovered a very similar description of the New Right in the U.S. and Britain: “The New Right represents that section of the right wing distinct from both traditional conservatism and from more extreme Far Right groupings.” Amy Elizabeth Ansell, New Right, New Racism: Race and Reaction in the United States and Britain (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 30. The ideology that Ansell analyzes is, however, somewhat different from the German version.


16. The difficulties involved in finding an accurate term to describe the conservative intellectuals discussed in this book are reflected in Anthony Giddens’s Beyond Left and Right: The Future of Radical Politics (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994). The German neoconservatives that he refers to (31) are close to what I have called the German New Right; Giddens, however, uses this term to describe Thatcherite neoliberalism, which is quite different.

Elliot Neaman has divided the “generation of 1989” into four groups: 1) the “ethnopluralist New Right”; 2) the “theorists of a strong state” influenced by Carl Schmitt; 3) the “spiritual reactionaries” (a term taken from Diederich Diederichsen); and 4) promoters of “neonationalist historiography” such as Ernst Nolte. See Elliot Neaman, “A New Conservative Revolution? Neo-Nationalism, Collective Memory, and the New Right since Unification,” Antisemitism and Xenophobia in Germany after Unification, ed. Hermann Kürthen et al. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 192–197. Botho Strauß is found in the third group—the focus of the present study—along with filmmaker Hans Jürgen Syberberg. These two figures are actually quite different, and the term “spiritual reactionary” is, in my view, too narrow as a characterization of the cultural tradition described in chapter 1 below. Neaman’s categories are useful nonetheless.

In 1999, Neaman published an important book on Ernst Jünger, A Dubious Past: Ernst Jünger and the Politics of Literature after Nazism (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press). I was not able to read it until after finishing
the present study, but I recommend it highly as a thought-provoking complement to my own work. Whereas I am a literary scholar examining the interplay of cultural history and politics, Neaman is a historian who takes seriously the impact of the cultural sphere on political developments. He goes into more depth regarding figures such as Gehlen, Heidegger, and Schmitt (see chapter 2 below), but does not discuss contemporary literary figures like Handke or Walser. As his title indicates, he provides much more detail with respect to Jünger than I do here. Our intentions are similar, but our conclusions are not always the same.

17. John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1980–1939* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993). Carey’s book has been translated into German as *Haß auf die Massen. Intellektuelle 1880–1939* (Göttingen: Steidl, 1996). Given the topic, Carey may well have more readers in Germany than in Britain or the U.S.

Chapter 1

1. Ricarda Huch, *Die Romantik* (1899–1902), *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Wilhelm Emmerich (Köln, Berlin: Kiepenheuer and Witsch, 1969), 6:619. Huch of course views this as an injustice, since in her eyes, it was the ideal of German Romanticism “to encompass everything, the North Pole and the South Pole, within and without, the historical and the radical” (619). Hans Joachim Mähl, speaking of the recent overcoming of this one-sided reception, has said that he is skeptical of contemporary attempts to transform Novalis into a predecessor of postmodern theories and post-structural methods. Cf. Mähl, *Die Idee des goldenen Zeitalters im Werk des Novalis. Studien zur Wesensbestimmung der frühromantischen Utopie und zu ihren ideengeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen* (1965; Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1994), vii–viii.


4. This is possibly a prefiguration of Hofmannsthal’s notion of “preexistence” (Präexistenz), and the inability—or unwillingness—of poets to “grow up” is a topos of Western modernism.
5. No. 61 contains a disturbing prophecy about the Germans: “The German has long been the little guy. Soon, however, he is likely to become the king of the hill. His fate is that of many dumb kids: he will be alive and clever and head of the household long after his precocious siblings have decayed.” (“Der Deutsche ist lange das Hänschen gewesen. Er dürfte aber wohl bald der Hans aller Hänse werden. Es geht ihm, wie es vielen dummen Kindern gehn soll: er wird leben und klug seyn, wenn seine frühklugen Geschwister längst vermodert sind, und er nun allein Herr im Hause ist” [251].) This is very close to a prophetic poem by Heinrich Heine, although Heine is not enthusiastic, but rather concerned by his prophetic vision. Cf. H. Heine, “Deutschland” (1840), Heines Werke in fünf Bänden, ed. Helmut Holtzhauer (Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau Verlag, 1974), 1:154f. Heine’s third stanza reads as follows: “He is a clumsy little giant, / [who] tears the oak out of the ground, / and beats your backs until you’re sore / and your heads till they’re soft.” (“Es ist ein täppisches Rieselein, / Reißt aus dem Boden die Eiche, / Und schlägt euch damit den Rücken wund / Und die Köpfe windelweiche.”) Both poetic texts refer to the “belated nation” (verfallene Nation) described much later by Helmuth Plessner.

6. The idea that “commendable housewives” (verdienstvolle Hausfrauen) should be given a medal (Glaube und Liebe, no. 26, 297) became the “Mutterkreuz” in the 1930s. The description of the role of women in no. 27 is also very close to “Kinder, Kirche, Küche.” Similarities to the Soviet system should not be ignored either.

Interestingly, Novalis is also not “soft on crime,” as evidenced by the comments in Blüthenstaub, no. 100: “A criminal cannot complain about injustice when he is treated harshly and inhumanely. His crime was an entry into the realm of violence and tyranny. There is no measure or proportion in this world, thus the disproportionateness of the countermeasure should not surprise him.” (“Ein Verbrecher kann sich über Unrecht nicht beklagen, wenn man ihn hart und unmenschlich behandelt. Sein Verbrechen war ein Eintritt ins Reich der Gewalt, der Tyranny. Maß und Proporz gibt es nicht in dieser Welt, daher darf ihn die Unverhältnismäßigkeit der Gegenwirkung nicht befremden” [273].) The less than harsh treatment of Hitler by the justice system of the Weimar Republic unfortunately did not fit into this model.

7. The role of the child has been described as “a seed that has become visible between nature and the mind.” Mähl, Die Idee des goldenen Zeitalters, 366.

8. A similar passage is found at the end of the Politische Aphorismen (no. 68, 309). At the end of this section, Novalis calls for political and religious tolerance, and in doing so, he sounds more like a representative of the Enlightenment than the quintessential Romantic.

9. Hermann Kurzke, Romantik und Konservatismus. Das “politische” Werk Friedrich von Hardenbergs (Novalis) im Horizont seiner Wirkungsgeschichte (München: Fink, 1983), 260 and 171. Kurzke has been criticized for going beyond Novalis’s own intentions in his interpretation. Such criticism is extremely problematic, because it assumes that it is only such intentions that determine the way in which a work may be used—or abused. Cf. Herbert Uerlings, Friedrich von Hardenberg, genannt Novalis. Werk und Forschung (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1991), 591–593. It is telling that Uerlings
puts the term “political” between quotation marks when referring to Novalis. His final chapter is thus called “‘Politisches’ Werk und Geschichtsphilosophie.” One has the impression that Uerlings wishes to eliminate any considerations that would stand in the way of a canonization of the author. Kurzke of course uses quotation marks in his own title, but for a different reason: He views Novalis as a political dilettante whose writings did, however, have real political impact. This impact is more significant than the fact that he might have been misread.

George Mosse begins the first chapter of his book on German ideology with a broadside (“The intellectual and ideological character of Volkish thought was a direct product [my emphasis] of the romantic movement of nineteenth-century Europe. Like romanticism, Volkish ideas showed a distinct tendency toward the irrational and the emotional . . .”), but he does not refer to any Romantic writers by name. George Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1964), 13.


At the other extreme, the “poetic” Novalis has been portrayed as a revolutionary opposed not to the ideas of 1789 but rather to the political methods used to realize them. Cf. Wilfried Malsch, “Europa.” Poetische Rede des Novalis. Deutung der Französischen Revolution und Reflexion auf die Poesie in der Geschichte (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1965). The author undertook his study to counter the “common misjudgment” of Novalis and his epoch as reactionary (vi–vii).


12. *Die politische Romantik in Deutschland. Eine Textsammlung*, ed. Klaus Peter (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1985), 31–35, 42–47. In the first English-language collection of this kind, Novalis is a relatively minor figure. The editor provides only the essay “Christendom or Europe.” Most of the volume is taken up with excerpts from Fichte. Cf. H. S. Reiss, *The Political Thought of the German Romantics 1793–1815* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955). In his introduction, however, the editor does state the following: “The work of Novalis constitutes a quarry from which others, such as Adam Müller and Friedrich Schlegel, have hewn stones with which to build their systems” (27).

13. One notable exception is the Thomas Mann of *Reflections of a Non-Political Man*. To enlist Stifter in his version of the conservative cause, Mann had to ignore Stifter’s complete lack of irony—a major feature of Mann’s own work.

15. Erich Heller is one who makes such a claim. He is, however, quite selective when it comes to determining what is true literature. In his *The Importance of Nietzsche* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1988), he makes the following statement: “Name almost any poet, man of letters, philosopher, who wrote in German during the twentieth century and attained to stature and influence—Rilke, George, Kafka, Thomas Mann, Ernst Jünger, Musil, Benn, Heidegger or Jaspers—and you name at the same time Friedrich Nietzsche” (2). Peter Pütz has said basically the same thing: “Nietzsche has left the clearest traces in literature and existential philosophy,” in *Friedrich Nietzsche* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1967), 58.


17. Lukács, 313.


24. Nietzsche, *Philosophical Writings*, 235. This is not the kind of productive suffering that Nietzsche went through himself: “Only great pain is the ultimate liberator of the spirit . . .” *The Portable Nietzsche*, 680.


34. One of George’s early poems could be read as an elaboration of the Novalis aphorism on hunger and freedom (see page 5 above): “You learn: only the house of privation knows melancholy- / Now see in the splendor of the columns the more bitter melancholy . . .” [My emphasis.] (“Ihr lernt: das haus des mangels nur kenne die schwermut- / Nun seht im prunke der säulen die herbere schwermut . . .”) George, Werke, 1:139. It is always dangerous to generalize from individual passages, but it is also problematic to ignore such passages. Unfortunately, George’s defenders tend to view a “reverence” for the entire work as a necessary prerequisite for the interpretation of any one idea or image. See for example Dominik Jost, Stefan George und seine Elite. Eine Studie zur Geschichte der Eliten (Zürich: Speer-Verlag, 1949), 9.

35. With good cause, George’s contemporary Soergel begins his chapter on George and his circle with reference to the oft-quoted Horatian dictum: ”Odi profanum vulgus et arceo.” (“I hate and avoid the base people.’) Albert Soergel, Dichtung und Dichter der Zeit. Eine Schilderung der deutschen Literatur der letzten Jahrzehnte (1911; Leipzig: R. Voigtländer, 1921), 557.

36. In the introduction to the third Jahrbuch für die geistige Bewegung, one finds a passage in which the “Amerikawelt” is equated with both the world of Satan and the world of ants. This passage, which has drawn the attention of many critics, can be found in Christian Graf von Krockow, Die Deutschen in ihrem Jahrhundert 1980–1990 (1990; Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1992), 56–57.

Krockow also provides the reader with a quote from Rilke decrying the “illusions” (“Schein-Dinge”) emanating from superficial America (389).

37. For a fascinating presentation of George’s fate in the Third Reich, see Michael Petrow, Der Dichter als Führer? Zur Wirkung Stefan Georges im “Dritten Reich” (Marburg: Tectum, 1995). In one of the first exercises in German cultural studies in English, the name Stefan George is not found in the index, although the “George-Kreis” is included as “perhaps the most notable, but most exclusive, manifestation of cultural-conservative opposition” in the Wilhelmine period. This truncation misleads the reader into believing that the group was insignificant after 1918. German Cultural Studies. An Introduction, ed. Rob Burns (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 20.

In a widely-read survey of German history, the “Kreis” is omitted, but George is listed as a famous poet. Cf. Mary Fulbrook, A Concise History of Germany (1990; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 169.


39. The term Sonderweg has been called into question by a number of historians. There
is no doubt that similar ideas can be found beyond the borders of Germany, but nowhere else were they put into practice with such rigor. (It is not surprising that the present-day media image of Italians is not intimately linked to the fascist era, current neofascist political successes notwithstanding. There is a difference in degree that cannot be overlooked.) Thomas Mann’s biographer Klaus Harpprecht entitles his chapter on Mann’s Reflections of a Non-Political Man “On the German Special Path” (“Auf dem deutschen Sonderweg”). Klaus Harpprecht, Thomas Mann (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1995), 400.

The main points of the Sonderweg model have been summarized as follows: “...the belief in direct continuities between Bismarck and Hitler; the idea of a fundamental contradiction between economic modernity and political backwardness leading to the empire’s structural instability; the view that Germany lacked the emancipatory experience of a successful bourgeois revolution, falling prey instead to the continued dominance of old-style ‘preindustrial elites’ in the political system; the notion that these elites exercised their power by repressive forms of social control and manipulative techniques of rule; and the belief that German history was the site of an exceptional ‘misdevelopment’ by comparison to the healthier trajectories of the societies of ‘the West.’” All this amounts to a “teleology of German exceptionalism.” See Geoff Eley, “Introduction 1,” Society, Culture, and the State in Germany, 1870–1930, ed. Geoff Eley (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 3. This summary does not address itself directly to cultural concerns, which are the focus of the present study.


42. Thomas Mann, Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen (1918; Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1983). All citations will be made from this edition. The Betrachtungen are also in volume 12 of the Gesammelte Werke (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1960).

43. Mann claims that he “almost slept through” the transformation of the German Bürger into a bourgeois. Betrachtungen, 130.

44. This does not stop him from criticizing the imperialist British for using the term “nigger”. Betrachtungen, 441.

46. Despite his protestations to the contrary, Mann does, incredibly, indulge in the glorification of war as a path to ennoblement (453), claim that suffering brings forth true grandeur (451), and comment sarcastically that it can be as horrible to die in bed as on the field of battle (450). We are all condemned to “bitter death” anyway, he philosophizes (450).


48. It has been pointed out that Mann already used the term “Third Reich” in 1912. At that early stage, it was defined as “the reconciliation of the mind ["Geist"] and art, of knowledge and creativity, of intellectualism and simplicity, of rationality and the demonic, of asceticism and beauty.” Thomas Mann, *Gesammelte Werke*, 11:564. The passage is discussed in Hermann Kurzke, *Auf der Suche nach der verlorenen Irrationalität. Thomas Mann und der Konservatismus* (Würzburg: Könighausen und Neumann, 1980), 141.

49. Michael Rupprecht, *Der literarische Bürgerkrieg. Zur Unpolitik der Unpolitischen in Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main: Josef Knecht, 1995), 48. The subtitle of this study applies Mann’s term to a large group of twentieth-century German writers.


52. Characteristically, a new introduction to today’s Germany contains multiple references to Thomas Mann, but not a single one to Hofmannsthal. Cf. Stuart Parkes, *Understanding Contemporary Germany* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997). The first reference to Mann is at the very beginning of a chapter on the political system—not in one on literary history. And what work is mentioned there? None other than the *Reflections* (33).

In a weighty anthology about the Weimar Republic, readers are provided with a four-page excerpt from Thomas Mann’s *On German Democracy*, whereas the passage from Hofmannsthal’s speech is less than one page long. *The Weimar Republik Source-


54. These pieces have been described as “embarrassing.” Cf. Mathias Mayer, Hugo von Hofmannsthal (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1993), 161. For a detailed analysis, see Heinz Lunzet, Hofmannsthal’s politische Tätigkeit in den Jahren 1914–1917 (Frankfurt am Main, Bern, and Cirencester: Peter Lang, 1981), esp. 179–181.


56. Although Hofmannsthal promoted the idea of Austria, he did not believe that there was such a thing as an Austrian literature. The Reader includes authors from all of the German-speaking countries, and Austrians are a distinct minority.


58. French literature is described as “full of life,” but also “devoid of dreams” ["traumlos"]. Hofmannsthal, “Das Schrifttum,” 395.

59. Despite such rhetoric, there is no trace of anti-Semitism in the speech (in contrast to the Reflections). The German Reader includes selections from the German Jews Heinrich Heine and Ferdinand Lassalle. Hofmannsthal was himself part Jewish, but that is of course no barrier to anti-Semitism. One of the most conservative “German” writers in the first half of the twentieth century, Rudolf Borchardt (who corresponded with Hofmannsthal), was also Jewish.

60. As Hans Kohn has put it: “In the Europe after 1918 he [Hofmannsthal] no longer felt at home. The democratization of the world which set in after the First World War was beyond Hofmannsthal’s perceptive powers.” If one were to replace 1918 with 1945 or even 1989, a similar statement could be made about the contemporary heirs of the Conservative Revolution. Cf. Kohn, The Mind of Germany, 250.


64. In 1900, Thomas Mann served a total of two and one-half months in the infantry (*Leib-Infanterieregiment*). He was released from the military for medical reasons, thanks to the intervention of a friend of his mother. Hofmannsthal served a full year as a cadet (*Einjährig-Freiwilliger*) in 1894–95. He was called up in 1914 and sent to Istriia, but after a few weeks, he was sent back to Vienna to work in the War Ministry.


   *My own copy of In Stahlgewittern was a 1943 Christmas present from the commander of the “4.Pion.Lehr.Batl.4” to his men. The title page has the inscription “Kriegs-Weihnacht 1943,” the signature of the company commander, and the Wehrmacht symbol.*


67. When away from the front, Jünger can fantasize about “women’s hands and a good thousand super¶uous things . . . that make our lives colorful”! *Der Kampf als inners Erlebnis, Sämtliche Werke*, 7:24. Further citations in the body of the text.

68. Jünger, *Der Kampf*, 13. To ward off criticism, Jünger asserts that only those who have directly experienced combat have the right to speak about it (22).

69. Like Nietzsche and George, Jünger was neither anti-Semitic nor racist. He was also too much of a connoisseur of French culture and savoir vivre to be a true German nationalist. Richard Herzinger speaks of an “intellectual” anti-Semitism in Jünger: “Jünger’s anti-Semitism was not based on race, but rather on ideas. He considered the Jews to be representatives, not creators, of liberalism. For him, the ‘Jewish question’ was thus not the central problem of the ‘national revolution.’ Just the same, he believed that Jewishness and ‘Germanness’ were irreconcilable.” See Richard Herzinger, “‘Der Sieg der Deutschheit über die Erde.’ ‘Die Nation’ zwischen Mythos und Utopie im Denken der politischen Romantik, der Konservativen Revolution und der Neuen Rechten,” *Neonationalismus. Neokonservatismus. Sondierungen und Analysen*, ed. Michael Kessler et al. (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1997), 31, n. 27.

Although this is not the place for a research report, it is difficult not to respond to one of the most recent essays on Jünger. The author is concerned that the reader might not perceive the true complexity of the material, but he ends by justifying both Jünger’s pessimism and his positive attitude toward the near-apocalyptic effects of World War II by pointing out that many others held similar views. One of these was supposedly Bertolt Brecht, who wrote in 1944 that he was ready to support Hitler in his liquidation of the aristocratic officers who attempted to assassinate him. This is indeed “complex,” but not in the way intended by the author of the essay. One small footnote to this is that Jünger spent his twilight years in a house owned by the Stauffenberg family, one of whose members was in fact executed as one of the aristocratic plotters. Cf. Helmuth Kiesel, “Zwischen Kritik und Affirmation. Ernst Jüngers Auseinandersetzung mit dem Nationalsozialismus,” Literatur in der Diktatur. Schreiben im Nationalsozialismus und DDR-Sozialismus, ed. Günther Rüther (Paderborn, München, Wien, and Zürich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1997), 163–172, esp. 170–172. Since Kiesel’s title does not follow the alphabet (“criticism” is placed before “affirmation”), one must assume that Jünger was mainly critical toward the Third Reich. His wartime service in the Wehrmacht was apparently not related to the “ideals” that he spoke of in his early writings.

71. Jünger’s own self-image—at least the one for public consumption—was that of a passive observer rather than an activist. See the famous passage in the preface to his wartime diaries: “After the earthquake, one strikes out at the seismograph. However, one cannot make the barometer atone for the typhoons, unless one wishes to be considered a primitive.” Ernst Jünger, “Vorwort,” Strahlungen. Erster Teil. Werke (Stuttgart: Klett, 1960), 2:13. The “primitive” was hardly a negative term in the earlier Jünger.

72. After a riding accident, Nietzsche was not able to finish his one year of military service (1867–1868). In the Franco-Prussian War, he briefly volunteered as a medic until turning ill himself. Hemingway volunteered as a Red Cross ambulance driver in Italy in World War I. During a brief stint as an officer in 1918, he sustained shrapnel wounds.

73. Karl Heinz Bohrer has described how the post-1945 German middle class could bring Jünger into the cultural fold by concentrating on the later works and ignoring the early ones that contained attacks on the morality and politics of their parents. See Karl Heinz Bohrer, Die Ästhetik des Schreckens. Die pessimistische Romantik und Ernst Jüngers Frühwerk (München and Wien: Hanser, 1978), 13.

74. Jünger was also saluted by Helmut Kohl, but this was clearly a misunderstanding on Kohl’s part! Jünger accepted the respectful greetings from the head of state just the same, as they could only enhance his aura as a kind of conservative Voltaire.

75. For example, see the following: Peter de Mendelssohn, “Das Verharren vor dem Unvereinbaren. Versuch über Gottfried Benn,” Der Geist in der Despotie. Versuche über die Möglichkeiten des Intellektuellen in der totalitären Gesellschaft (1953; Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1987), 236–282; Jürgen Schröder, “Benn in den
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76. Dieter Wellershoff, the editor of Benn’s collected works, criticizes the irrationalism that led Benn to sympathize with the Nazis, but he also asserts that Benn is “an exemplary figure of recent German intellectual history” whose œuvre is “a concentrated expression of the nature of the era.” Cf. Wellershoff, *Gottfried Benn. Phänotyp dieser Stunde* (1958; Frankfurt am Main and Berlin: Ullstein, 1964), 8.


78. Benn, “Rede auf Heinrich Mann,” *Gesammelte Werke*, 1:410–418. The epigraph of this speech is “Nihilism is a feeling of happiness” (!).

79. Benn, *Gesammelte Werke*, 1:440. Further citations in the body of the text. The “higher form” of collectivity can be characterized as National Socialism or the system described in Ernst Jünger’s *Der Arbeiter* (1932), according to Benn. This passage must not have pleased Jünger, who believed that his system was “higher” than that of the Nazis.


In 1937, Klaus Mann published an article about Benn (“The History of an Aberration”) in the émigré journal *Das Wort*. Even in this text, Mann confesses that he still has a weakness for certain verses by Benn. He goes on to say: “His ‘case’ is still interesting, only because he was the only [my emphasis] German writer of any stature who seriously and with no little intellectual resolution went astray into the camp of National Socialism.” KM, “Gottfried Benn. Die Geschichte einer Verirrung,” *Die Expressionismusdebatte. Materialien zu einer marxistischen Realismuskonzeption*, ed. Hans-Jürgen Schmitt (1973; Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1976), 39–40.

81. De Mendelssohn, 237.


83. Despite such attacks, Benn was actually defended by none other than Heinrich Himmler. In a 1937 letter, Himmler stated: “From a national point of view, Benn’s behavior has been absolutely beyond reproach since 1933 and even earlier. I consider it to be unnecessary and nonsensical to now run amok against this man who has—especially in the international arena—represented Germany impeccably. I have prohibited all of my subordinates from getting involved in the Benn case.” Heinrich Himmler, “Letter to Wolfgang Willrich, Sept. 18, 1937,” *Literatur und Dichtung im
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84. Benn, *Doppelleben*, 74. Further page references in the body of the text.

85. His lack of insight was, characteristically, no hindrance when it came to “placing his name at the disposal” of the anticommunist crusade during the Cold War.


87. Those interested in this other tradition could begin by perusing the works of G. E. Lessing, G. C. Lichtenberg, Georg Forster, Georg Büchner, Bettine von Arnim, Ludwig Börne, Heinrich Heine, Georg Herwegh, Ferdinand Freiligrath, Gottfried Keller, Heinrich Mann, Karl Kraus, Kurt Tucholsky, Ernst Toller, and Bertolt Brecht. This particular stream of German literature is not devoid of contradictions, but it clearly represents a view of the human condition and a concept of history which I, for one, find much more appealing. For a critical assessment of the initial phase of this tradition, see W. Daniel Wilson and Robert C. Holub, eds., *Impure Reason: Dialectic of Enlightenment in Germany* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993).

Chapter 2


3. The form that Jünger declined to fill out was the basis for a postwar novel (Der *Fragebogen* [1951]) by the former militant right-wing author Ernst von Salomon.


Keith Bullivant has asserted that conservative writing, i.e., "the German idealist tradition," exhibited great staying power even after 1945. He is one of the few observers to postulate that "the apparent gulf between an older, apparently conservative generation of writers and critics and the younger, post-war one was far less than it seemed then and has since been perceived." (*The Future of German Literature* [Oxford and Providence: Berg, 1994], 23 and 28).

7. Those who wished to enlist postwar youth in the anticommunist crusade were not pleased with such skepticism. Cf. Helmut Schelsky, *Die skeptische Generation. Eine Soziologie der deutschen Jugend* (Düsseldorf and Köln: Diederichs, 1957). For a (surprisingly) sympathetic portrayal of such youthful skepticism, see the character Manfred Herrfurth in Christa Wolf’s first novel, *Divided Heaven*.


The volume by Neske and Kettering contains, in English translation, the 1933 Freiburg speech “The Self-Assertion of the German University” as well as the legendary 1966 interview with *Der Spiegel*.


11. Historian Heinrich August Winkler has said the following about this path: "The anti-Western ‘special path’ of Germany definitively ended with the 1945 collapse of the German Reich. . . . The process of ‘Westernization’ that has taken place in the ‘Bonn Republic’ will continue in the ‘Berlin Republic,’ because historically speaking, there is only one political culture of democracy, and that is the Western one": “Zwei Zusammenbrüche,” *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, October 15, 1997. The wr...
ings of the New Right intellectuals discussed in this study demonstrate that, at least in the cultural sphere, the "special path" is by no means a thing of the past.


13. Krockow, Entscheidung, 54. The quote is taken from the 1932 edition of Der Arbeiter that appeared in Hamburg (p. 201). The emphases are mine.

14. One of the readers at the Universität Basel (where Nietzsche had taught in the 1870s) was Karl Jaspers, a leading critic of the intellectual right.


16. Mohler discovers similarities to the German movement in Russia, France, Spain, Italy, England (like John Carey, he discusses D. H. Lawrence), and the U.S. Even in the African liberation movements, he maintains, one finds "the mixture of national liberation struggle, social revolution, and rediscovery of identity characteristic of the Conservative Revolution." Mohler, Die Konservative Revolution (1972), 13.

17. This quotation and all those which follow come—unless otherwise noted—from the 1972 edition.

18. Krockow also devotes a large section of Die Entscheidung to an analysis of Romanticism.


21. In his 1989 third edition, Mohler provides some interesting autobiographical background: "First of all, I wanted to correct a personal error: When I got to know the Third Reich in 1942 [under what circumstances one wonders!], I still naïvely identified National Socialism with the Conservative Revolution. Soon, however, that turned out to be wrong, and I wanted to discern the difference between the two mentalities. Secondly, my book was meant to be of help to the right-wing ["rechte"] intellectuals in Germany. I had become acquainted with a number of them personally or by reading their works. The way in which they were discriminated against across the board disgusted me—especially since these men had no opportunity to defend themselves. I was always on the side of the people who had the 'compact majority' against them." Vol. 2, 7. There were of course other underdogs to defend, but that is another story.
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It was reported in *Die Zeit* that Mohler, a Swiss citizen, volunteered for the Waffen-SS. (He was not accepted.) See Marko Martin, “Stramm zur Sache,” *Die Zeit*, no. 33, 1993. The article is about the right-wing newspaper *Junge Freiheit* and the emergence of a new generation of right-wing intellectuals whose models are not “Hitler or Himmler, but rather Carl Schmitt and Oswald Spengler.” For a biographical profile of Mohler, who has been a sort of mentor for Alain de Benoist and the French New Right, see *Antifa Reader*, ed. Jens Mecklenburg (Berlin: Elefanten Press, 1996), 104.


23. Schwarz criticizes Krockow (*Die Entscheidung*) for describing Jünger as a passive figure (e.g., one unwilling to actively support the attempts of the resistance to assassinate Hitler on July 20, 1944). According to Schwarz, Jünger used his pen as a weapon, acting as an “extremely uncomfortable critic” of three successive political systems (300 n. 12). One can only accept such a statement if it is made clear that Jünger’s critiques had an incomparably more devastating effect on the Weimar Republic than on the Nazi state or West Germany. If Jünger had been such a thorn in the side of the Nazis, his books would not have appeared until the early 1940s. (Even the “resistance parable” *Auf den Marmorklippen* was actually printed in an edition for the Wehrmacht in 1942!) If he had shaken things up so much in the Federal Republic, he hardly would have been presented with the prestigious Goethe Prize in 1982 or the *Bundesverdienstkreuz* in 1985.

24. A fascinating sketch of Jünger’s postwar “character” is provided by the poet Stephen Spender, himself an admirer of Jünger’s works. When Spender, then on duty in Germany purging the libraries of Nazi literature, met with him in 1945 in his study (“a comfortable room with leathern armchairs and lined with beautiful books”), Jünger not only held forth about the childishness of the French but also spoke of war as “a necessary stage of my experiences.” Cf. Stephen Spender, *European Witness* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1946), 215 and 219. Contrast this with the sickeningly sweet portrait of Jünger presented by historical dramatist (!) Rolf Hochhuth in his *Und Brecht sah das Tragische nicht. Plädoyers, Polemiken, Profile* (München: Knesebeck, 1996), 83–101. Hochhuth pays homage to Gottfried Benn in the same volume.

25. In the definitive biography of Jünger, which appeared after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a similar perspective can be found. The author quotes an infamous phrase from *Copse 125* (“We cannot be national, yes, nationalistic enough.”), pointing out that Jünger was reformulating the ideas of Spengler, Niekisch, and Moeller van den Bruck for a reading public “for whom democracy had long since become obsolete.” He goes on to say: “For the work in its literary physiognomy, such speculations, no matter how alarming they might be in their politicization effect, remain inconsequential [nicht entscheidend].” Cf. Martin Meyer, *Ernst Jünger* (München and Wien: Hanser, 1990), 83.

26. In the Weimar Republic, the judiciary dealt much more harshly with politically motivated crime from the left than that from the right. The classic example is the nine-month imprisonment of Hitler in relatively comfortable quarters and the five-year prison ordeal of poet-dramatist Ernst Toller.

In West Germany, the state often played down the activities of the extra-parliamentary right, while investing considerable resources to counter such activities emanating from the left. The scales have tipped in the other direction since the early 1990s, simply because the number of incidents of xenophobic violence perpetrated by the right has skyrocketed, whereas leftist terrorists like the Baader-Meinhof group have all but disappeared from view. The “Soviet threat” is also no longer relevant (whether most West German leftists were ever attracted to the Soviet model is another question).

27. One explosive factor in this equation lies in the fact that a great number of leftist writers—Heine, Kraus, Tucholsky, Benjamin, and many others—were Jewish. Cf. Bernt Engelmann, Deutschland ohne Juden. Eine Bilanz (Köln: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1988). One historian has portrayed the German Jews as the “outsiders” who unexpectedly became the “insiders” of Weimar culture. These “new insiders”—“foreign and irrepressibly modernist”—became the prime target of the reactionary forces. Cf. Avraham Barkai and Paul Mendes-Flohr [said historian], Aufbruch und Zerstörung 1918–1945, Deutsch-jüdische Geschichte in der Neuzeit, vol. 4, ed. Michael A. Meyer (München: C. H. Beck, 1997), 167.

The archetypal German leftist writer Bertolt Brecht was not Jewish (although his wife and collaborator, Helene Weigel, was), but the attempts to devalue his literary production by delving into his private—especially sex—life would be inconceivable vis-à-vis a conservative writer. (One example: Jünger’s experimentation with mind-altering drugs does not seem to bother his German disciples, although they would certainly castigate President Clinton for his “no-inhaling” rhetoric.)

28. “8. Mai 1945—Gegen das Vergessen,” Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, April 7, 1995, 3. The FAZ published a front-page editorial with the telling title “Überwunden, nicht befreit” (“Overcome, not Liberated”) on April 11. In that editorial, Ignatz Bubis, the then leader of the German Jewish community, was criticized for implying that conservatives are “Nazis minus genocide.”

Bubis answered with his own letter to the editor on April 19. (In a radio interview, he had stated that the signatories “were consciously or unconsciously laying the intellectual groundwork for the rise of a dangerous German nationalism.” Cf. the Reuters news dispatch by Michael Shields from April 8, 1995.) Additional letters about the affair were published on April 20. On May 6, the FAZ published a statement by
Helmut Kohl about the fiftieth anniversary of the capitulation ("Jedem einzelnen Schicksal schulden wir Achtung"). Although Kohl expressed his respect for the human dignity of every person, he lumped together those sent to concentration camps, soldiers, and those driven from their homelands after the German defeat. This was reminiscent of Ronald Reagan’s comments in Bitburg in 1985. Rudolf Scharping, then the SPD Chairman, said that it was “intolerable” that cabinet ministers had signed the advertisement published on April 7. Cf. “Scharping: Der 8. Mai 1945 war die Geburtsstunde der Freiheit,” FAZ, May 5, 1995. Scharping did not mention that Hans Apel (SPD) had been one of the original signatories.

29. This omission was attacked in the counter-advertisement “WIDER DAS VERGESSEN, denn wie sollte man vergessen,” placed by the prominent German-Jewish Brauner family in the May 5 edition of the Frankfurter Allgemeine. In this text, three figures are singled out for sharp criticism, namely the historian Ernst Nolte, the journalist and historian Rainer Zitelmann, and the Christian Democrat politician Alfred Dregger.

30. The one Social Democrat on the list, former defense minister Hans Apel, removed his name after its presence had caused him — and his party — considerable embarrassment.

31. For more information about this and other advertisements, including the 1994 Berliner Appell, see Weber, Nation, Staat und Elite, 96–97.

32. This does not imply that the two faces of totalitarianism are identical in the view of the New Right. Brown is still better than red, an argument forcefully presented by historian Ernst Nolte. In his controversial opus on National Socialism and Bolshevism, Nolte describes the Nazi seizure of power (“Machtergreifung,” the standard term) as an “anti-Marxist takeover of power” (antimarxistische Machtübernahme), a much more positive formulation. Cf. Ernst Nolte, Der europäische Bürgerkrieg 1917–1945. Nationalsozialismus und Bolschewismus (Frankfurt am Main and Berlin: Propyläen/Ullstein, 1987), 28. For a contemporary German review of totalitarianism theories, see Wolfgang Wippermann, Totalitarismustheorien. Die Entwicklung der Diskussion von den Anfängen bis heute (Darmstadt: Primus Verlag, 1997).


35. Although it is problematic to judge literature using the criteria of the secret police, one Stasi informant did opine that Schacht’s poems were “very abstract” and would probably not have any “mass appeal.” This assessment is found in Stasi documents provided by Schacht himself. Cf. Ulrich Schacht, “Versteinernte ‘Quellen.’ Fragmenten zu einer politischen Fossilienkunde im Fundhorizont des Elbe-Oder-Gebietes,” Aktenkundig, ed. Hans Joachim Schädlich (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1993), 212. At least in this publication, Schacht’s tone is humorous and ironic rather than bitter.
36. The young Schacht did nonetheless write quite a bit in the East. The circulation of these writings was limited to showing them to a few trusted friends, however. Some of these “friends” later turned out to be Stasi informants. A detailed list of the preprison writings can be found in court documents relating to the justification of sentencing him to prison. Cf. “Dissidenten? Texte und Dokumente zur DDR—‘Exil’—Literatur,” Deutschunterricht 43.10 (Sonderheft 1990):522–526. According to the documents, Schacht was viewed as a “democratic socialist” in the tradition of the Prague Spring. One ironic twist: one of the confiscated writings, “The country in which I live,” was not held against him, because it was only meant for his diary!

37. These included poets Sarah Kirsch, Günter Kunert, and Reiner Kunze and novelists Jurek Becker, Erich Loest, Hans-Joachim Schädlich, and Rolf Schneider. Jurek Becker may be the only former East German writer who was completely accepted in the West and achieved broad popularity.

38. “Among Western leftists, criticism of the GDR had been seen since the 1950s as an activity engaged in by Christian Democrats, as a theme of the Cold War that did not mesh with détente, as an anti-Communist argument.” Jürgen Große, “Politische Verantwortung und moralische Schuld: Aspekte des intellektuellen Diskurses,” German Studies Review, special issue on “Totalitäre Herrschaft—totalitäres Erbe” (Fall 1994), 176.

39. The only serious attempt to introduce the poet Schacht to the reading public is found in Birgit Lermen and Matthias Loewen, Lyrik aus der DDR. Exemplarische Analysen (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1987), 404–424. Schacht himself is probably not, however, enthusiastic about being categorized as a GDR poet, since most of his poems have been written in the West. In a 1989 letter, Schacht said himself that he could not live well if the money from his book publications in the West were his only source of income. An excerpt from the letter is printed in Sie kommen aus Deutschland. DDR-Schriftsteller in der Bundesrepublik (Worms: Stadtbibliothek, 1989), 112. It is of course true that before and after 1989, very few East or West German writers could devote themselves exclusively to their writing careers.

40. Deutsche Literatur 19–, Jahresüberblick, ed. Franz Josef Görtz, Volker Hage et al. (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1981–.) The volume printed in any given year covers the literature of the previous year.


43. No fewer than twenty of the pieces were published in Die Welt, the newspaper that has employed Schacht since 1987.

44. See John Torpey, Intellectuals, Socialism, and Dissent: The East German Opposition and Its Legacy (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).

45. Or rather, the “GDR.” The Axel Springer newspapers routinely placed the abbreviation for the “other” German state in quotes.
46. In a speech given less than a month before the fall of the Berlin Wall, Schacht described a reunified Germany made up of the FRG and GDR as “the smallest possible Germany” (Kleinst-Deutschland). Gewissen ist Macht, 96. In the same speech, he said that Germany should be reunified even if “a majority of Europeans” were against it. (97)

47. Schacht does not hesitate to use the word “liberation” to describe how he was released from prison in the GDR and allowed to settle in West Germany (Conscience is Power, 26), but he and his group now refuse to use it vis-à-vis 1945.


49. Schacht does not always make a clear distinction between the two: “Homeland is, to be sure, always less than the nation, but it is not worth less to the individual. Oftentimes it is more essential and valuable to him. . . . Homeland is the foundation of the individual. The nation is the foundation of all the people: in that regard, homeland awareness is foundational, and national awareness is liberating.” Gewissen ist Macht, 164.

50. Ironically, the SED often put up propaganda posters with the phrase “The human being is at the center [of our endeavors]” (Im Mittelpunkt steht der Mensch).

51. The major decision—at least for most males—was whether to move to West Berlin to avoid induction into the Bundeswehr.


53. Heimo Schwilk, Wendezeit—Zeitenwende. Beiträge zur Literatur der achtziger Jahre (Bonn, Berlin: Bouvier, 1991). Page references in the body of the text. The title is a play on words: “Wende” is the term denoting the collapse of the GDR and the beginning of reunification, whereas “Zeitenwende” is any turning point in history.

54. The word reminds one of the leftist term “late capitalism.”

55. In place of cruise missiles and the like, Schwilk recommends national defense centered around popular resistance, a model based on Ernst Jünger’s “Der Waldgang.”

56. An essay in which the growing influence of Germany and its link to the so-called “post-Auschwitz paradigm” are discussed was written from a perspective far to the left of Schacht and Schwilk. See Andrei S. Markovits and Simon Reich, “Should Europe Fear the Germans?” German Politics and Society 23 (Summer 1994). Reprinted in Germany, Volume II, ed. Klaus H. Goetz. The International Library of Politics and Comparative Government, ed. David Arter (Aldershot: Dartmouth and Brookfield, Vt.: Ashgate, 1997), 1–20. The authors state: “We agree with the optimists that the Federal Republic’s greatest achievement is its eradication of most factors that could lead to yet another Auschwitz. Where we part ways with the optimists is in their view of a democratic Germany with virtually no exercise of power in Europe.
and the world.” (1–2; my emphasis.) This is similar to Goldhagen’s view of today’s Germany.


58. In his lengthy bibliography, Armin Mohler lists only one group of seven women associated with the Conservative Revolution. He calls them “weibliche Völkische,” i.e., women who believed in the movement to return the German people to their true “pure” origins. See Mohler, Die Konservative Revolution, 3rd ed. 1989, 1:361–362. Mohler makes a point of mentioning that one of the women, Gertrud Prellwitz (1869–1942), was a “true philosemitic” (361). The other women on his list are Edith Gräfin Salburg (1868–1942), Leonore Kühn (1878–?), Sophie Rogge-Börner (1878–?), Maria Grunewald (1875–?), Marie Eckert (no dates), and Ursula Zabel (1908–?).


60. The word used is actually “Selbstverfehlung,” which contains the word for transgression (“Verfehlung”). Together with “selbst” (self), it means something akin to “alienation from one’s true self.”

61. Did the editors consciously choose the term “degenerate” (entarten) in this context? It was an often-used word in the Third Reich, for example in the title of the infamous exhibition of “degenerate art” (entartete Kunst) staged by the Nazis.

62. This word (“Selbstbefriedigung”) also means masturbation.

63. See Antonia Grunenberg, Antifaschismus — ein deutscher Mythos (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1993).


65. In Schacht’s words, Auschwitz was “not unique, but a human possibility” (66).
66. See his *Ein Schmäppchen namens DDR. Letzte Reden vorm Glockengeläut* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1993). The first piece (from February 1990) in this collection, entitled "Brief Speech by a Man without a Fatherland," begins with a description of how Grass was accosted by a young man at the Hamburg train station. The man not only called him a "traitor to the fatherland" but also warned that it was time to get rid of people like him (7). Grass goes on to say: "That's the way it is: I not only fear the Germany that has been simplified out of two states into one, I also reject the unified state" (7).

67. In calling for German defense of Israel as a true atonement for the Holocaust, Schacht is echoing the line of the late conservative publisher Axel Springer.


72. Without comment, Schwilk offers a quotation from Carl Schmitt about the horrors of a world without metaphysics and "existential enmity" (401).

73. Many of the authors speak of this, but no one offers any empirical evidence for it. My suspicion is that it is more prevalent among intellectuals than among the masses of the people. This would not bother the authors of *Die selbstbewußte Nation*, however, since they are speaking to an elite, at least a potential one.

74. See Jünger, "Über die Linie," *Sämtliche Werke*, 7:237–279. Jünger dedicated this text to Heidegger on his sixtieth birthday. The final section contains a brash rewriting of Jünger's biography: "He who has not experienced the overwhelming power of nothingness ("das Nichts") in himself and resisted the temptation knows the least about his time" (279). Heidegger answered with a 1955 essay also entitled "Über die Linie." A slightly expanded version of this essay can be found in the *Complete Works*: Martin Heidegger, "Zur Seinsfrage," *Gesamtausgabe*, Abt. 1, Bd. 9 (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1976), 385–426. At one point, Heidegger relates the following: "In the Winter of 1939–40, I discussed the *Arbeiter* [i.e., Jünger's *Der Arbeiter*] in a small group of professors. They were amazed that such a perceptive book had been around for years" (390).

75. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and The Last Man* (New York: The Free Press, 1992). Fukuyama does not envision any "special paths" for the Germans: "After the great events of the fall of 1989 in Eastern Europe, a significant number of Germans had doubts about the wisdom of reunification because it would cost too much. These are not the hallmarks of a civilization wound tight like a spring, ready to im-
molate itself on the pyre of new and unforeseen fanaticisms, but rather of one quite satisfied with what is and will be” (337). Maurer—and he is not alone in this belief—clearly believes that “what will be” will not be a cause for celebration.

76. Röhl was once publisher of the leftist journal *konkret*, and he was married to Ulrike Meinhof of the Baader-Meinhof terrorist group. His rantings are clearly related to his autobiography or rather his attempts to come to terms with it.

77. Bergfleth praises Tieck, Kerner, and Eichendorff as well as their supposed heirs Gustav Fechner, Johann Bachofen, and Ludwig Klages.

78. As a non-Jewish reader of Bergfleth’s essay, I can only imagine what a Jew might feel when reading these words.

The British would surely be astonished to learn that liberalism is of “maritime origin” and is tied to a “disdain for the earth,” which in turn leads to a disdain for “homeland, Volk and fatherland” (105–106). It is certainly a mystery that the seafaring British insisted on defending their own patch of earth against the Germans.

79. This might sound like a rehashing of the Literature Debate, but Syberberg is actually not at all judgmental regarding the writers from the former GDR. He has no desire to take Christa Wolf (referred to in the essay as Christa W.) to task for her role as a leading GDR author. Perhaps this is because he senses more vestiges of an acknowledgment of the tragic in the East than in the West.

80. With reference to the “Literature Debate” (the term itself is not mentioned directly), Krause calls Wolf’s critics “conservative and left-liberal opinion leaders” (137). What might Krause’s own stance be? Perhaps that of a cultural conservative and political liberal? This is a rare breed. Although Krause and Syberberg feel no need to condemn Wolf, Heimo Schwilk does so with relish, devaluing her entire œuvre as the work of a totalitarian collaborator. See Schwilk, *Wendezeit—Zeitenwende*, 177–182.


82. Safranski sees similar mechanisms at work in East and West Germany. He refrains from using the totalitarianism theory to analyze the former GDR, since he is concerned more with ethical questions and psychological states.


84. Bubik writes for the most provocative and unorthodox right-wing newspaper, *Junge Freiheit*, that has been under observation by constitutional police. See Burkhard Schröder, “Falsches Kaliber. NRW—Verfassungsschutz observiert ‘Junge Freiheit,’” *tageszeitung*, May 29, 1996. Schröder makes a connection between the newspaper and Armin Mohler, whom he dubs “the Nestor of the ‘new’ fascists.” See
also Bubik’s “generational manifesto” *Wir ’89er. Wer wir sind und was wir wollen* (Berlin and Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein, 1995).

85. See also his attempt to define the differences between right and left: Michael Wolffsohn, “Rebellion der konservativen Querköpfe der Nation,” *Hamburger Abendblatt*, June 16–17, 1994. In this article, Wolffsohn asserts that the “New Right” is antitotalitarian and includes people like Armin Mohler and Botho Strauß, who are not associated with the Old Right. It is unlikely that Strauß was pleased to be grouped together with Mohler.

86. Wolffsohn, the only Jewish contributor to the anthology, does not believe in the singularity of the Holocaust. He compares it to similar state-controlled genocides in the Soviet Union, China, and Cambodia (273). (In 1998, the French parliament passed a resolution officially recognizing the 1915 massacre of the Armenians at the hand of the Turks as “genocide.”) In doing so, he functions as a token Jew in more than one sense. See his book *Meine Juden—Eure Juden* (München and Zürich: Piper, 1997).

87. Zitelmann is one of the conservatives who have tried to push the FDP to the right (see the preface to this study). In his biography of Hitler, Zitelmann states: “An image of Hitler freed from . . . legends and prejudices can possibly contribute to making it more understandable why not only millions of people, but also intelligent persons from the areas of politics, the military, and even the cultural sphere succumbed to him.” See R. Z., *Adolf Hitler. Eine politische Biographie* (Göttingen and Zürich: Muster-Schmidt, 1989), 9.

Zitelmann was also one of the editors of a volume that might be viewed as a “trial run” for *Die selbstbewußte Nation*. See Rainer Zitelmann, Karlheinz Weißmann and Michael Großheim, eds., *Westbindung. Chancen und Risiken für Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main and Berlin: Ullstein/Propyläen, 1993). The cultural considerations that are emphasized in *Die selbstbewußte Nation* are peripheral in *Westbindung*.

88. Recent biographies of Helmut Kohl, written before his defeat in the 1998 national elections, suggest that he is very close to the mind-set of most contemporary Germans (at least those who vote), and a reviewer cites Margaret Thatcher’s pronouncement after a visit with Kohl in his home at Oggensheim: “Oh, this man is sooo German!” See Richard Meng, “Der Kanzler und die Macht, die Macht und der Kanzler. Vier Journalisten widmen sich in vier Büchern der Geschichte und den Geschichten des Dauerregenten Helmut Kohl,” *Frankfurter Rundschau*, April 2, 1998.

89. “Rockefeller Republican” might be an equivalent term in the context of U.S. politics.

90. Also in *Die selbstbewußte Nation*, Jochen Thies makes the case for the formation of new national elites in Germany. These would not be antinationalistic. Compare this to Christopher Lasch’s *The Revolt of the Elites* (New York: Norton, 1995). Michiko Kakutani’s review of the book in the *New York Times* (January 13, 1995) denigrates Lasch by placing him on a level with Dan Quayle. Many of the problems that bother Lasch are the ones that bother the German New Right. This does not mean, however, that Lasch is an archconservative. The ideological blinders worn by critics like Kakutani will be discussed at the end this study.
91. Given the recent controversies involving the National Endowment for the Arts, it is clear that Lange’s comments do not apply to the American form of mass democracy.

92. Solzhenitsyn’s dim view of Western decadence and moral decline was only accepted by the far right.

93. Martin Doerry, “Lehrmeister des Hasses,” Der Spiegel, October 17, 1994, no. 42, 239–243. The German word “Lehrmeister” includes the meaning of “mentor,” making the title even more provocative than it is in English.

94. The German word is “Blindgänger,” the term for an unexploded shell. It is ironic that a word taken from military parlance would be used against people accused of an infatuation with militarism and war.

Doerry also offers a critique of the antifeminism in the anthology. The irony here is that even though Der Spiegel is generally sympathetic toward feminism and women’s rights, it regularly uses female nudity to boost sales among its—mainly male—readers.

95. When I attended a lecture by one of the contributors to Die selbstbewußte Nation in the fall of 1997 in Berlin, an acquaintance from the local cultural scene opined that the speaker “probably was sorry that he ever had allowed his essay to be published in that collection.”

96. Already in 1994, a “Berlin Appeal” was published as a complement to the appearance of Die selbstbewußte Nation. It first was printed in the Süddeutsche Zeitung of September 28, 1994, and then reprinted in other newspapers. The text of the appeal is found on page 220 of Für eine Berliner Republik. In it, attention is called to a new generation, the conservative ’89ers,” who strive to take over cultural hegemony from the ’68ers. As has been mentioned above, a number of the ’89ers belong to the same generation as the ’68ers.


98. For a Western discussion of this question, see Timothy Garton Ash, In Europe’s Name: Germany and the Divided Continent (New York: Random House, 1993).

99. The German word is “Häuflein.” In English, this would be akin to “Robin Hood’s merry men,” and Templin is thinking of a group of outsiders upholding the ideals of freedom and justice.

100. Schwilk does however, praise Enzensberger as “one of the few writers critical of Europe” (74).

Schacht criticizes Enzensberger for misinterpreting the “Prague Spring” as an attempt to democratize socialism instead of seeing it for what it—allegedly—really was, namely an attempt to introduce Western European democracy (82).

101. This refers to famed novelist Günter Grass, minor West German writer Hermann Peter Piwitt, who was associated with the orthodox Marxist journal konkret, former East German literature czar Klaus Höpcke, and GDR author Hermann Kant, long a cultural functionary (and still unrepentant). Placing Grass in this company is no less than scandalous.
102. I do not agree with those who would like to see the works of Maron and others like her pulped, but I do believe that those works must be read in a different light given the revelations about collaboration with the Stasi. For Maron’s (pre-revelation) critique of the East German mentality, see Monika Maron, “Das neue Elend der Intellektuellen,” tageszeitung, 6 February 1990 and “Peinlich, blamabel, lächerlich,” Der Spiegel, no. 35, 1992. Maron’s later explanation of her own activities—“Man hat manches Bekloppte gemacht in dieser DDR”—was printed in Der Spiegel, no. 32, 1995. GDR dissident Wolf Biermann reacted to this article with his own: “Verlogene Treue,” Der Spiegel, no. 43, 1995. For an assessment of the options open to GDR intellectuals, see Wolfgang Engler, “Jenseits des Machtprinzips,” Die Zeit, no. 15, 1993.

103. The successful (left-liberal) theater director Peter Stein, who has staged many of Botho Strauß’s plays, recently made a statement guaranteed to raise the hackles of the New Right: “I have always had problems with being German. Like all Germans. I don’t like the Germans.” (My emphasis.) See Wolfgang Kralicek, “Ich mag die Deutschen auch nicht,” Der Tagesspiegel, June 6, 1998.

104. In this passage, Schwilk mentions that “it is considered to be historically proven” that the Poles were partially to be blamed for German aggression against them in 1939 (154).

105. The discussion is documented in Deutsche Literatur 1995. Jahresrückblick, 288–359. The first review printed there is the one by Ulrich Schacht, who sees the book as a novel against reunification. Tilman Krause and Hartmut Lange (cf. Die selbstbewußte Nation) are also among the reviewers. For an example of the kind of prose by Grass that irritates Schacht and Schwilk the most, see Günter Grass, “Schreiben nach Auschwitz,” Die Zeit, no. 9, 1990.

106. He does manage to include a stab at Grass as one of the “poets of West German special consciousness” (150). In another essay in the same volume, Schacht characterizes Grass as “this spiritus rector of the intellectual version of the classic German movement for self-hatred” (80). It is noteworthy that in this passage, Schacht admits that Grass has been esthetically innovative as a novelist. This separation of content and form was not typical of the “Literature Debate.”

107. A thought-provoking analysis and summary (one which is scholarly and subjective at the same time) is provided by Wolfgang Wippermann in his book Wessen Schuld? Vom Historikerstreit zur Goldhagen-Kontroverse (Berlin: Elefanten Press, 1997). One of the first collections of Germans reactions to Goldhagen was edited by Julius H. Schoeps: Ein Volk von Mördern? Die Dokumentation zur Goldhagen-Kontroverse um die Rolle der Deutschen im Holocaust (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1996). The liberal weekly Die Zeit and Der Spiegel loomed large in the debate. See the following articles from Die Zeit: Volker Ullrich, “Hitlers willige Mordgesellen,” no. 16, 1996 (prepublication excerpts from the German edition of Goldhagen's book are found in the same issue); Christopher Browning, “Dämonisierung erklärt nichts,” no. 17, 1996; Julius H. Schoeps, “Vom Rufmord zum Massenmord,” no. 18,


In 1997, *Der Spiegel* continued the debate with the following publications: “Ein Anschein von Unsauberkeit.” Interview mit Christopher Browning,” no. 31, 164–165; “Goldhagen—ein Quellentricker?” no. 33, 156–158; “Alles und nichts erklärt,” [excerpts from an article by Norman Finkelstein criticizing Goldhagen], no. 34, 56–62; various letters to the editor about Finkelstein’s theses in no. 35, 12, and “Holocaust als Andachtsbild.” Interview mit NS-Expertin Ruth Bettina Birn über Goldhagens Attacken auf Kritiker,” no. 46, 266–267.

On September 4, 1997, the Berlin *Tagespiegel* published a long essay—“Angerührt und aufgerührt”—written by Goldhagen himself to his German readers.

108. It is of course extremely difficult to gauge the reaction of the public as a whole. When I attended a lecture by historian Wolfgang Wippermann in Berlin in October 1997 (the title was “People or Structures? The ‘Goldhagen Effect’ and the
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Crisis of German Historiography”), I was amazed to hear that literally everyone in the room agreed with Wippermann that Goldhagen’s thesis was correct. (Wippermann also spoke of some of the problems with Hitler’s Willing Executioners, but this did not change his overall assessment.) Most of the members of the audience were under fifty. In a discussion with young Germans published by the weekly Der Stern, on the other hand, many of the young people felt that Goldhagen’s portrayal of the Germans was too one-sided and even racist. See “Ich fühle mich durch dieses Buch angegriffen. Fünf junge Deutsche über Goldhagen, Antisemitismus und die Zukunft,” Der Stern, no. 40, 1996.


109. Walters says that one should not overlook the rest of German history when concentrating on the “twelve years of the National Socialist reign of terror” (15).

110. This phrase provides a taste of Schacht’s often impenetrable style, which is almost more of a hindrance than the supposed leftist media monopoly.

111. Actually, Schacht sees some good in the Goldhagen debate, namely that it demonstrated the self-hatred and anti-German sentiment of the leftist intellectuals (36).

112. CSU politician Peter Gauweiler, who, as a public figure, has access to the media, does not shy away from drastic formulations. In the CSU newspaper Bayernkurier, Gauweiler called Goldhagen a “judge of the [German] people” and accused him of “reverse racism.” Incredibly, he mentioned that the book had provided Goldhagen with “over a million Deutschmarks in profit.” In a country where the image of Shylock has not disappeared, such statements keep alive the Nazi portrayal of the Jews. The Bayernkurier article is summarized in “Für Gauweiler ist Goldhagen ein ’Volksrichter.’ Der CSU-Politiker beschimpft den Historiker auch als antideutschen ’Rassisten,’” tageszeitung, October 10, 1996.

113. Compare this to Federal President Herzog’s 1996 statement at a meeting of the Germans driven from their homes in the East: The territories now part of Poland and Russia belong “to our historical and cultural legacy, but no longer to our state.” Cited in “Herzog: Kein Anspruch auf frühere Ostgebiete,” Süddeutsche Zeitung, September 9, 1996.

114. The speech had originally been planned as part of the May 7, 1995, program in the Munich Philharmonic Hall that was linked to the newspaper campaign “Against Forgetting” (see above). That program was canceled, and Schacht then delivered the speech in more friendly territory, namely at the conservative think tank in Weikersheim near Stuttgart.

115. For example, Schacht criticizes the legendary 1985 speech by Federal President Richard von Weizsäcker—a Christian Democrat—without naming the speaker (49–50). The speech is contained in Richard von Weizsäcker, Von Deutschland aus (Berlin: Siedler, 1985), 13–35. In his speech, Weizsäcker spoke of the 8th of May as
“a day of liberation” for the Germans (15), one that freed them from the National Socialist system of terror. This implies that not all Germans were Nazis, something with which Schacht agrees. The problem is that Weizsäcker commemorated not only the victims of Nazism but also the German resistance, and he dared to include the Communist resistance. This was and is not acceptable to the former East German Schacht.


117. Schacht calls Honecker one of the most “horribly petit bourgeois figures” (113) ever to exercise power in German history. One wonders if he could produce a list of other representatives of the German petite bourgeoisie who have been given major political responsibility. By referring to the proletarian Honecker as a petit bourgeois, Schacht unwittingly concurs with Lenin, whose skepticism about the possibility of revolution in Germany stemmed from his view that the German workers were too tame, i.e., petit-bourgeoisified.

118. In another essay, Schacht refers the reader to journalist Henryk M. Broder’s book *The Eternal Anti-Semite* (193). Schacht asserts that anyone who does not embrace Zionism “loves dead Jews, in order to be able to hate the living ones” (192).

119. This phrase is also found on p. 73.

120. One other example of the traces of Jünger in Schwikl’s essays: Helmut Kohl is referred to as the “Head Forester” (“Oberförster” [175]), the title of the brutal leader in Jünger’s *On the Marble Cliffs*.

121. In contrast to this, leading left-liberal critic Ulrich Greiner, a key figure in the “Literature Debate,” declared in 1992 that the left no longer exists. See Ulrich Greiner, “Flucht in die Trauer,” *Die Zeit*, no. 39, 1992.

122. National pride, for example, does not mesmerize the upper two-thirds of Germany society. It does, however, hold an attraction for the “losers” of the present system. Whoever asks about the attraction of the New Right must simultaneously ask how many more “losers” there might be in the future.


124. Contrast this with Peter Gauweiler’s skewed assessment: ‘Like the ’68ers, the Greens are the party of generational conflict and of disagreement with everything that was learned and lived before them.” See Gauweiler’s “‘Ich will kein Held sein!’ oder Machtgestöber,” *Die wilden 40er. Porträt einer pubertären Generation*, ed. Peter Roos (Düsseldorf: Econ, 1992), 304.

126. This is of course not the only interpretation of the relationship between National Socialism and modernity. Jeffrey Herf speaks of a “reactionary modernism” that “incorporated modern technology into the cultural system of modern German nationalism, without diminishing the latter’s romantic and antirational aspects.” See Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 2. One of the representatives of this movement as described by Herf is Ernst Jünger. In general, Herf’s analysis of Jünger’s works rings true, but it is difficult to accept his admiration for the latter’s “unmatched literary flair” (70).

127. In a recent 1968 commemorative edition of the leftist *Tageszeitung* (April 11, 1998), the ’68ers’ lack of political success was discussed. On April 9, the paper had published an article by Peter Gauweiler (“Kleiner großer Bruder”) in which the conservative CSU politician claimed that the ’68ers were no longer radical, or only verbally so. Instead of transforming the establishment, they have become part of it, said Gauweiler. In the same article, Gauweiler called the members of the ’68 generation who were conservative back then “contras.”

128. Herzinger’s ideas will be scrutinized in the *Excursus* below.

129. Even Tilman Krause, a critic associated with the New Right, admits that the outlook is bleak: “No one has come forward. Many left, but no one came. Rightist authors have been rare since 1945. The irrational Brehms and Grimms, the Beumelburgs and Kolbenheyers—they simply died off. The German intellectual landscape has been redistributed [flurbereinigt].” Tilman Krause, “Der Sehnsüchtige im Fahndungsraster,” *Deutsche Literatur 1994*, 299. Krause’s article originally appeared in *Der Tagespiegel* on September 25, 1994.

130. Some that come to mind are Syberberg’s *Hitler*, Wolfgang Petersen’s *Das Boot*, or Joseph Vilsmaier’s *Stalingrad*. They all lend themselves more to ambivalence than one-dimensional interpretations, however.
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5. Robert Leicht, “Vom Bockshorn und vom Bocksgesang,” *Die Zeit*, no. 41, 1994. The subtitle of this editorial is “The ’89ers against the ’68ers—a new generational conflict or the old battle between myth and enlightenment?”

6. “Hausmitteilung: Betr.: Intellektuelle,” *Der Spiegel*, no. 26, 1993, 3. The Strauß essay is found in no. 6 (202–207), Enzensberger’s is in no. 25 (170–175), and Walser’s concluding piece is in no. 26 (40–47). “Anscheinender Bocksgesang” is a “Polemik” listed under the rubric “Kultur,” “Ausblicke auf den Bürgerkrieg” is categorized as “Zeitkritik,” also under “Kultur,” whereas “Deutsche Sorgen” is in the section “Deutschland” under the subheading “Intellektuelle.” Page numbers of specific citations are provided in the text.

7. Analogous to this constellation, right-wing Republicans of the Gingrich stripe in the U.S. House of Representatives portray themselves as revolutionaries, whereas the liberal establishment is branded as an obstacle to change.


12. H. M. Enzensberger, *Aussichten auf den Bürgerkrieg* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1993). For a wide-ranging discussion of Enzensberger’s comments on the
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14. In actuality, Enzensberger meant to say that the Germans should refrain from demonizing Saddam and his followers as some kind of foreign, premodern barbarians, since they themselves had engaged in the same behavior not long ago. This line of reasoning can be traced to traditional leftist internationalism and anti-imperialism, although the conclusion does not seem to fit into such a mode of thinking.

15. Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Diderots Schatten (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1994). In the afterword to this collection, he writes of Diderot: “He was responsible for everything and got involved in everything. . . . Diderot plunged into the adventure of helping not out of an ideological sense of duty or because of party discipline, but rather out of naive curiosity” (382–383).


In his essay “Im Fremden das Eigene hassen?”, Enzensberger refers to the Aryan as “an absurd construction” and speaks of Germany’s “especially fragile national identity.” Der Spiegel, no. 34, 1992, 176.

17. Martin Walser, “Treten Sie zurück, Erich Honecker!” Der Spiegel, no. 20, 1974, 136. In this letter, Walser is reacting to the Guillaume affair and Willy Brandt’s resignation. He is upset that the rapprochement between the two German states has suffered a setback. In a way, he is calling for a kind of socialist nationalism, so this is clearly a foreshadowing of later developments in his thinking.

18. Martin Walser, Dorle und Wolf (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1987), 54. In his review of this book, Martin Lüdke wrote: “Walser confronts a problem that we, almost without exception, have repressed. . . . No one is still having sleepless nights over the division of Germany.” “Nichts Halbes, nichts Ganzes. Martin Walsers deutsch-deutsche Novelle,” Die Zeit, no. 13, 1987. In Peter Schneider’s The Wall Jumper (Der Mauerspringer, 1982), the division of Berlin and Germany is really little more than a curiosity.

19. Martin Walser, “Über Deutschland reden. Ein Bericht,” Über Deutschland reden (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988), 88–89. It is interesting that Walser praises Enzensberger for pondering the German question in his “Katechismus zur deutschen Frage,” which appeared in Kursbuch 4.

Enzensberger’s fellow intellectuals are criticized sharply: “Leftist intellectuals and rightist ones are at the moment in agreement about nothing more than in the belief that the division [of Germany] is acceptable” (92). The inclusion of intellectuals on the right is worthy of note in the face of the New Right program of the 1990s.
20. “Viel Gefühl, wenig Bewußtsein. Der Schriftsteller Günter Graß über eine mögliche Wiedervereinigung Deutschlands,” *Der Spiegel*, no. 47, 1989, 80: “I am no stranger to these feelings either, but that does not seduce me into breaking out in mawkishness.” In the same interview, Grass describes several surprising flip-flops in Walser’s world view: “When I met him, he was an enlightened conservative from Lake Constance with a certain careful leaning toward the SPD that became an affinity with the DKP [the orthodox West German Communist Party] via the student movement. He moved away from that later, and now he is chatting with Waigel [CSU member and cabinet minister]—there are one too many unexplained turns there that I don’t like.” (80) It is of course Grass himself who has remained steadfast in his support of the “Kulturnation” Germany as opposed to the geographically and politically unified version. Walser also used the term “feeling for history” in his article “Zum Stand der deutschen Dinge,” which was published in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on December 12, 1989.

21. Walser defended himself in the *tageszeitung* of January 16, 1989. Excerpts from his text were reprinted in *Die Zeit*, no. 4, 1989. He claimed there that he had maintained his independence: “I don’t see any chance of being co-opted by someone as an author or intellectual.” In the meantime, even ex-Communist poet and singer Wolf Biermann has participated in political discussions at the CSU retreat, and he seemed to feel more comfortable there than when mixing with the leftists who heap “totalitarian scolding” upon him like “pseudo-leftist Tartuffes.” See Wolf Biermann, “Freundschaft mit dem Klassenfeind,” *Der Spiegel*, no. 3, 1998, 32. The Berlin *Tagespiegel* editorialized: “One would like to be there when the former anti-communist devourer Biermann and the former communist devourer Stoiber [the Bavarian premier] and his devotees encounter each other in January in Kreuth.” See “Kreuther Kaminwunder,” *Der Tagespiegel*, December 12, 1997.

22. Some years ago, poet Erich Fried—hardly a conservative nationalist!—was vilified by Henryk M. Broder for daring to speak with skinheads.

23. Cf. Walser’s letter “Lieber Herr Kinkel,” *tageszeitung*, July 16, 1994. In this endeavor, Walser found himself in the company of Salman Rushdie and Elfriede Jelinek, among others. He inveighed against religious terror and “orders to kill given by fanatical monotheists,” adding that “Europe has put its religious calamities behind her.” Walser’s support for Nasreen is exactly the kind of activity that A. Glucksmann had in mind when he criticized Enzensberger for his inactivity and cynicism (see note 13).

24. It should be emphasized that Enzensberger has a very different attitude toward Strauß than Walser does. The following quote from the 1995 interview (see note 16) illustrates this: “God, he [i.e., Strauß] is a very talented man, but his preoccupations are not mine. I find it indecent to portray oneself as a tragic figure. It is difficult to speak correctly of the tragic, since that can lead all too easily to self-stylization, self-heroization, and kitsch. I don’t like any of these poses. . . . [A]ll this stuff from the ’20s that he is constantly referring to, Ludwig Klages, Rudolf Borchardt, all of these leftover, faded motifs . . . I don’t know why he keeps hanging on to these things. A gifted person has to recognize that those are no longer relevant themes.”
25. Martin Walser, “Vormittag eines Schriftstellers. Über Deutschland reden—
und die Folgen: Warum einer keine Lust mehr hat, am Streit der Meinungen teil-
Schriftstellers (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1994), 9–26. Walser is quoting from
Botho Strauß, Diese Erinnerung an einen, der nur einen Tag zu Gast war (München
and Wien: Hanse, 1985), 48. Here is the original German: “Kein Deutschland ge-
kannt zeit meines Lebens. / Zwei fremde Staaten nur, die mir verboten, / je im Na-
men des Volkes der Deutsche zu sein. / Soviel Geschichte, um so zu enden?”

26. I have discovered numerous parallels in the following editions: Rumor
(München: Hanse, 1980); Paare, Passanten (München and Wien: Hanse, 5th edi-
tion, 1982); Der junge Mann (München: Hanse, 1984); Fragmente der Undeutlich-
keit (München: Hanse, 1989); Beginnlosigkeit. Reflexionen über Fleck und Linie
(München: Hanse, 1992); Wohnen Dämmern Lügen (München and Wien: Hanse,
1994); Schlußchor in Theaterstücke II (München and Wien: Hanse, 1991), and Das
Gleichgewicht (München and Wien: Hanse, 1993). These works demonstrate that
the development of Strauß’s ideas has been a gradual one, not a sudden eruption.

27. One might also include Alice Schwarzer’s afterword to the legendary volume
Frauen gegen den ¶218 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971), although Schwarzer
is a journalist rather than an imaginative writer.

Texte über Theater 1967–1986, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag der Autoren,
1996).

29. In another essay, he uses the word “totalitarian” to describe both the left and
right avantgarde of art. Versuch 37.

30. “Internal Memo (“Hausmitteilung”) Concerning Intellectuals,” Der Spiegel,
no. 26, 1993, 3. The “entire critical intelligentsia,” the memo goes on to say, “is on
the lookout for new values and orientations.” If that were true, then the texts by En-
zensberger, Strauß, and Walser would hardly have been criticized so sharply. (Some
observers of course consider the opponents of the three to be “uncritical,” i.e., dog-
matic intellectuals.)

31. Der Pfahl. Jahrbuch aus dem Niemandsland zwischen Kunst und Wissenschaft 7

32. In Schiller’s poem “Dividing Up the Earth” (“Die Teilung der Erde,” 1795–
96), the artist was still depicted as a dreamer who had no possessions on earth and was
thus allowed to live with Zeus in the heavens. Such modesty has been ebbing away
for the past two centuries.

33. Those with a historical memory or at least consciousness would also think of
Nazis or Communists. Their heirs are less given to “orderly” marching.

34. In “Hitler Reincarnated,” Enzensberger theorized early in 1991 that the Iraqis
would willingly die for Saddam Hussein. The reality turned out to be quite different.

In the U.S., it is interesting to observe that not a restriction, but rather a limitless
expansion of material needs is undergirded by religious beliefs ("God’s own country"). There is no other country in the world where a widespread belief in God (demonstrated by regular attendance at church services) coexists so peacefully with the consumer society. A few conservative churches or sects have recognized the contradiction, but their criticism of it remains peripheral.

35. This has a problematic ring to it in German, since the verb “sich wehren,” to defend oneself, contains the root of both “Wehrmacht” and “Wehrertüchtigung” (readying soldiers for battle). The present German army is the “Bundeswehr,” perhaps named in such a way as to remove the term “Wehr” from initial position.

36. Historian Robert Darnton offers a refreshing and stimulating assessment of the “little” Enlightenment: The Enlightenment “has been blown up to such a size that it would not be recognized by the men who first created it.” See “George Washington’s False Teeth,” New York Review of Books, March 27, 1997, 34. Defending the Enlightenment in this manner is more fruitful than attacking anyone who criticizes the West. It is possible to oppose the perversion and cooptation of the Enlightenment at the hands of the ruling classes without distorting the origins of the movement. This theme will be taken up in the Excursus.

37. For stylistic reasons, I have not translated this passage literally. Instead of “mocking, ridicule, and derision,” Strauß uses the word “Verhöhnung” three times in one phrase. His version sounds more fanatical than mine.

38. Thirty years after 1968, the rise in youth crime has made antiauthoritarian pedagogy once again a target of criticism. See Rudolf Wassermann, “Wenn die moralischen Hemmschwellen fehlen. Das Versagen der Erziehung als entscheidender Grund für die wachsende Kinderkriminalität,” Die Welt, April 23, 1998. Wassermann finds an “ethical vacuum” in society, with “little egotists” ignorant of the difference between “good and evil, right and wrong, yours and mine.” According to Wassermann, much of the crime is committed by the children of immigrants, and those who speak openly about this are accused of antiforeigner sentiments. Der Spiegel has also weighed in with a lengthy report advertised in comic-book style on the cover of the magazine. See “Der Krieg der Kinder,” Der Spiegel, no. 15, 1998, 126–137. A second article, discussing the psychological problems of today’s youth (“Das Drama beginnt früh,” 138–141), appeared in the same issue. The Spiegel journalists seem absolutely shocked that the kind of brutal acts that occurred in Jonesboro, Arkansas are also possible in Germany.

39. It seems inevitable that Joschka Fischer of the Greens will be immortalized in a novel or polemic entitled something like From Sneakers to Double-Breasted Suits: The Transformation of a ’68 Icon.

40. I have translated “das Unsere” as “existing conditions.” The German term, not really a political one, means “that which is ours,” i.e., our civilization. The possessive is misleading, for it implies that there is consensus about what the civilization should be. There is no place for multiculturalism in Strauß’s choice of words.

41. It is inexplicable that a sensitive person like Strauß could use a word like this
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one. Anyone who has not forgotten the history of this century must be horrified by
the author’s callousness.

42. In this passage, Strauß speaks of scapegoats as objects of reverence rather than
hate. When Green politician Antje Vollmer attempted to mediate in the debate about
“Impending Tragedy,” she discovered new, modern scapegoats: “Anyone who is clever
can come out in Germany these days as anything—but not as a writer, filmmaker, and
intellectual. The creative people are the noble animals, the scapegoats.” “Woher kommt
diese Wut?” Der Spiegel, no. 46, 1993, 255. German politicians, who are increasingly
subjected to an American-style glare of publicity, might well dispute that statement. Re-
sentments against the elite are, however, characteristic of contemporary Germany (al-
though the economic and financial elite seems to be often disregarded).

43. This statement should not be interpreted to mean that it would be advisable
to return to the old ubiquitous epithets “fascist” or “protofascist,” but Strauß’s char-
acterization of antifascism as “ordered from above” or even “libertarian to the point
of becoming psychopathological” (26) is the kind of frivolous rhetoric that could
lead to Germany’s stigmatization by the international community. That would be in
no one’s interest.

44. The following sentence recalls Nietzsche’s disdain for the “semieducated:”
“The illiterate with good writing skills is the typical paradox in today’s newspapers”
(29). Nietzsche, however, would not have expected anything else from journalists.

45. This particular sentence was—understandably—omitted from the
Spiegel
version of the essay.

46. At least one must hope that they were not his goal. If the opposite were true,
one would have to write off Strauß completely as a political thinker (or a writer with
an interest in politics). On the day after I wrote this footnote, the following sentence
appeared in a German newspaper: “It is said of the Germans that in politics, they are
receptive to everything that is nebulous, incomprehensible, and bombastic” (“ver-
schwimmt”). Michael Winter, “Triebkraft Angst. Über deutsche Nationaldenkmä-

47. Assuming that Strauß believed his own depiction of the German media as a left-
ist bastion, he must have known that “Impending Tragedy” would cause an outcry.

48. Others might turn to alternate pairs like Bettine von Arnim and Rachel Varn-
hagen, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff and Fanny Lewald, Marieluise Fleißer and Else
Lasker-Schüler, or Ingeborg Bachmann and Christa Wolf.

und Intellektualität als Ereignis bei Handke, Born und Strauß,” Monatshefte 73.2
(Summer 1981):189.

50. Lothar Pikulik, “Mythos und 'New Age' bei Peter Handke und Botho Strauß,”
Wirkendes Wort, no. 2 (1988), 236.

51. Pia Janke, Der schöne Schein. Peter Handke und Botho Strauß (Wien: Verlag
Holzhausen, 1993), xi. Janke discovers several differences between the two figures,
but in the end, she emphasizes—in her conclusion, for example—the common ele-
ments: “If in the works of Handke a new age is introduced, then in the works of Strauß the old one that once again is to reign is preserved. In the case of both authors, however, it is the sphere of literature that makes possible this (varied) invention of meaning” (214).


53. With regard to Handke, there are two exceptions to this rule. As a thirty-year-old, he published four so-called “political exercises” (“politische Versuche”) from the years 1967 to 1969. Topics included socialism and the Springer publishing empire. *See Ich bin ein Bewohner des Elfenbeinturms* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1972). It is noteworthy, however, that Handke attempted to depoliticize these texts in the preface that he wrote for this volume: “It would be nice if one could read most of these texts as stories.” He added that it would not be possible to extract a coherent world view from the collection. “Vorbemerkung,” 7–8.

In 1986, Handke published a polemic against Kurt Waldheim at the end of the latter’s (successful) campaign to become president of Austria. This was not a real attempt to influence the outcome of the election, since Handke assumed that the “hideous dwarf” would be victorious. It is interesting that Handke emphasized at the time that he wanted to speak for the “real people of Austria.” His text was first published in the Austrian journal *profil*. An English translation (from which the two citations were taken—cf. p. 177) can be found in Bernard Cohen and Luc Rosenzweig, *Waldheim*, trans. Josephine Bacon (New York: Adama Books, 1987). This volume is an English translation from the French original: *Le Mystère Waldheim* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1986). I am grateful to Matthias Konzett for making me aware of this episode in Handke’s career.


55. In addition, one cannot assume that any insights that the imaginative writer might have will be formulated in such a way that the average reader, i.e., citizen, will be able to gain access to them.


The essays will be cited in the text using the following editions: Peter Handke, *Eine winterliche Reise zu den Flüssen Donau, Save, Morawa und Drina oder Gerechtigkeit für Serbien*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1996) and *Sommlericher Nachtrag zu einer winterlichen Reise* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1996). The first volume will be abbreviated as “WR,” the second as “SN.”


59. ‘Ich bin nicht hingegangen, um mitzuhassen.’ Peter Handke antwortet seinen Kritikern. Ein ZEIT-Gespräch mit Willi Winkler, Die Zeit, no. 6, 1996. In the heading printed above the interview, the Zeit editors placed emphasis on the significance of the controversy: “Since ‘Impending Tragedy’ by Botho Strauß, no text has stirred up the public like Peter Handke’s philippic (‘Kampfschrift’) ‘Justice for Serbia.’ Is this a political scandal or just a literature debate?”

60. Compare for example Handke’s Der kurze Brief zum langen Abschied (1972) with his Abschied des Träumers vom Neunten Land [i.e., Slovenia] (1991).

61. The island Krk, formerly Croatian/Yugoslavian, is now Croatian. While on the island, Handke did not have the impression that the culture of then multiethnic Yugoslavia was a product of coercion. See his comments in the interview with Die Zeit (see note 59).


Handke has traveled through Slovenia on many occasions. Before greater Yugoslavia broke apart, he regarded the region as part of a larger country. It was the Slovenian contribution to the multicultural potpourri that fascinated him.

63. The phrase “need not continue to read” is also used on page 36. One Croatian reader who did not put the book down and went on to call for justice for all of the ethnic groups—including the Serbs, but not granting them special status—was journalist Branimir Soucek. See Branimir Soucek, Eine Frühlingsreise zum Gedankenfuß eines verirrten Literaten oder Gerechtigkeit für Peter Handke (Thaur, Wien, and München: Druck- und Verlagshaus Thaur, 1996), 31.

64. Already on the first page of WR, one finds the word “I” four times, “my” twice, and “me” once. In the Spiegel version of “Impending Tragedy,” the word “I” appears only six times.

65. “Handke has always had two faces: the brooder and observer buried in the world of books and landscapes and the rebel and madman (‘Amokläufer’) . . . Handke was always good for a surprise. Sometimes he was a bit ahead of everyone else, but sometimes he was simply way off the mark.” Volker Hage, “Dichters Winterreise. Peter Handkes Serbien-Reportage und die Intellektuellen,” Der Spiegel, no. 6, 1996, 193.

66. Handke traveled with two companions (and, for a time, with his new wife—although that was not emphasized in the text).

67. A third volume about a journey to the Albanian region Kosovo is in the works. This would be an opportunity to work through some of the narrative difficulties described above. If the second volume is any indication, though, skepticism is in order.


69. Even the editors of Der Spiegel refer to “Impending Tragedy” as a “seismography” of the “growing tragedy . . . of a present shocked by xenophobia and disorien-

70. Bubis’s Tagesspiegel interview was summarized in the article “Die gewaltige Schuld” in Der Spiegel, no. 16, 1994, 168–170.


72. As was discussed above, Enzensberger and Strauß are both critical of the status quo, but they have little else in common.


74. It is surely not coincidental that Strauß was moved to self-reflection after viewing a production of Goethe’s play Torquato Tasso in 1969. That play thematizes the gap between real life in society and the esthetic sphere. Strauß comments on the plight of the title figure as follows: “Maintaining the consciousness of genius while producing in reality decorations for the status of the rulers must end in debilitating confusion.” Botho Strauß, Versuch, 166.


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84. Dietz Bering, who hopes to use “Impending Tragedy” to motivate the left to think about the destruction of the humanities and the general crisis of education in Germany, rejects the content of Die selbstbewußte Nation completely. He thus counsels his readers to forget about Strauß as a person (those who reprinted his essay were “usurpers,” he claims) and to concentrate on his ideals. This stance is the opposite of the one that led to the “Literature Debate”: “Die linke Lehre des Bocks,” Der Spiegel, no. 29, 1995, 149. Here Strauß appears to be a naif who was hoodwinked.


88. Sigrid Berka, ed., Das Werk von Botho Strauß und die ‘Bocksgesang’-Debatte, Weimarer Beiträge 40.2 (1994). Berka provides a bibliography of the discussion of “Impending Tragedy” at the end of her introduction (175–177). She sees the essay as an integral part of Strauß’s production, albeit with a different accent: “What is new in the ‘Bocksgesang’-Essay is the articulation of that which was always present in Strauß’s works in hermetic, allegorical, or parabolic form. The only partial translation of the coded message into the journalistic, i.e., polemical context and thus into the political context was at its conception thus doomed to failure” (167). This is in my view a problematic definition of the role of journalism in a democratic society.

Page references from the special issue of Weimarer Beiträge are provided in the text.

89. In the May 7, 1993, edition of Le Monde, Jünger is quoted as saying: “il faudra que les élites deviennent puissantes, petites et puissantes” (203). (The elites will have to become powerful, small and powerful.)


92. Strauß believes, according to Krause, that it was only in the early 1960s that German intellectuals played “a decisive role in changing consciousness.”

93. One example: when the New York Times took up the Handke story, it was described as “a full-scale literary and political uproar.” This is accurate, but the reporter went on to assert—referring indirectly to the “Historians’ Debate”—that “[n]either comparable has been seen here since a decade ago.” In other words, Botho Strauß and his provocative essay were simply not noticed. See Stephen Kinzer, “German Writer Sets Off Storm over Balkan War,” New York Times, March 18, 1996. Handke’s works are definitely part of German literature, but he is an Austrian.


95. “Ich bin nicht hingegangen, um mitzuhassen. Peter Handke antwortet seinen Kritikern.” Handke later says that anyone who thinks that his description of Serbia
is “bucolic” or “idyllic” is simply an “oaf” (“Trottel”). In this regard, the affinity with Strauß is quite apparent.

In a preface written especially for American readers, Handke emphasized that his new work was no different from anything else that he had written: “I wrote about my journey through the country of Serbia [!] exactly as I have always written my books, my literature: a slow, inquiring narration; every paragraph dealing with and narrating a problem, of representation, of form, of grammar—of aesthetic veracity; that has always been the case with what I have written, from the beginning to the final period.” Peter Handke, A Journey to the Rivers: Justice for Serbia (New York: Viking, 1997), vii–viii. The change in the title may reflect the publisher’s belief that Americans are generally not very interested in geography.


98. Peter Schneider, “Ritt über den Balkan,” Der Spiegel, no. 3, 1996, 163. Schneider also reminds his readers that Handke—“courageously and at the time almost alone” (164)—spoke out against German recognition of an independent Croatia at the beginning of the Balkan conflict. In the letters to the editor published in no. 5, 1996, Handke is both supported and criticized. One of Handke’s supporters was the well-known Austrian writer Elfriede Jelinek. Schneider was one of the European writers sent to Sarajevo in 1994 to describe conditions there for European newspaper readers. In his report, Schneider railed against European “hypocrisy” in general and German denial in particular. See Peter Schneider, “Der Sündenfall Europas,” Der Spiegel, no. 7, 1994, 140–146.

In 1992, the Viennese daily Der Standard asked Handke to write a reportage about Bosnia, but the author declined. See Michael Cerha, “Anregung einer gemeinsamen Erinnerung,” Der Standard, March 20, 1996. Handke did, however, write an article for the Paris daily Libération (“My Slovenia in Yugoslavia,” August 22, 1991) in which he denied that Serbia was oppressing the other ethnic groups in Yugoslavia. This article is mentioned in Mariam Niroumand, “Ils ne regrettent rien. Frankreichs Intellektuelle über ihr Engagement für Bosnien,” tageszeitung, September 18, 1996.

99. It is perhaps not coincidental that Handke uses this word as a means of depersonalization, just as Strauß does in “Impending Tragedy” (see above). This is clearly not what one would expect from a sensitive artist and self-appointed peace ambassador. See Winter Journey, 47.


103. Michael Schaarang, “Erfahrung schrecklicher Fremdheit,” Der Standard, January 24, 1996. This text was later reprinted in the German journal konkret, no. 3 (1996), 50–51.


107. The discussion took place on March 19, 1996. The comments by Turri­ni and Handke were excerpted in “Die vierte Lesung und immer dasselbe,” Der Standard, March 20, 1996. Already in 1995, Turrini had expressed sympathy with the viewpoints of Strauß and Handke, but not without reservations with regard to the former: “[T]he political right that he and others are getting close to has in the end just speculated about violence. The intellectual curiosity of the German rightists was always minimal, but the desire to murder great. It [the right] has never put up a program of thinking, but rather a program of acting — of violence. Sooner or later, any writer who sympathizes with the rightists will be hit on the head by rightists who are not at all sympathetic to him.” See “‘Wir sind explosive Wesen’” (Interview with Peter Turrini), Der Spiegel, no. 18, 1995, 196.


112. Marcus Pucnik, “Die Beleidigung der Opfer,” Der Standard, January 29, 1996. A lawyer friend of Pucnik’s told him that there were only two explanations for Handke’s “Schreibtischärtetum,” either that he was crazy (“ein Spinner”) or trying to increase his market value by starting a nonsensical discussion.


115. Rainer Stephan (see note 108) called Handke a fitting “guru” for the “irrationalist gang.”

116. “‘Es gibt kein literarisches Leben’” (Interview with Gustav Seibt), tageszeitung, October 12, 1996.

117. Seibt makes a point of saying that he is not critical of the role that his predecessor Frank Schirrmacher played in the “Literature Debate.”


After this study was completed, a new collection of material on the Handke/Serbia controversy appeared in Germany: Thomas Deichmann, ed., Noch einmal für Jugoslawien: Peter Handke (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1999).

119. See Peter Schneider, Lenz ([West-]Berlin: Rotbuch, 1973), 79.

120. Grass has always treated historical and political themes in his works, and his political activity was tied for years to the left wing of the Social Democratic Party. Unlike Handke, he has never been a “politicized poet.” He is a writer engaged with the society in which he lives. One may criticize his engagement, but not because it is one undertaken by a writer.

121. Caspary’s own sense of history is a questionable one, since Handke describes not only homemade bread and home-brewed drinks, but also the necessity of filling gasoline tanks from plastic canisters—hardly a “medieval” activity.

122. Even Volker Hage, who defended Christa Wolf during the “Literature Debate” and, as we have seen, empathized with Strauß, has become impatient with Handke’s posturing: “How naive can a writer in the prime of life (“im reifen Mannesalter”) be?” “Dichters Winterreise. Peter Handkes Serbien-Reportage und die Intellektuellen,” Der Spiegel, no. 6, 1996, 190.

123. Compare this to the recent statement by theater director Claus Peymann, who took over Brecht’s Berliner Ensemble in 1999: “Theater must be a place for political debates. . . . Theater keeps an eye on the powerful and speaks for the powerless.” Cited in “Peymann kündigt politisches Theater für Berliner Ensemble an,” dpa/eu dispatch distributed by the online service Germany Live on May 1, 1998.


125. Karahasan claims that Handke does not know “a single word” of the languages spoken in the area. He deduces this from the fact that Handke needs a dictionary. Actually, the author read aloud (for forty-five minutes!) parts of the Serbian translation of Winter Journey in Serbian when he visited Belgrade. This was reported by Andrej Ivanji in his article “Belgrad feiert Peter Handke,” Der Standard, May 18–19, 1996.

126. This passage was misprinted in the book version—the preposition “of” (“von”) was omitted. The problem might be the translation into German. I say “examples of” because the German phrase “Beiträge von” is incorrect. It would have to read either “contributions to” (“Beiträge zu”) or examples of (“Beispiele für”).


129. For insight into Grass’s view of the Enlightenment, see his contributions to the symposium *Der Traum der Vernunft. Vom Elend der Aufklärung*, Eine Veranstaltungsreihe der Akademie der Künste, Berlin, 2 vols. (Darmstadt und Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1985–1986). In his speech “Der Traum der Vernunft,” Grass sounds like an advocate for the “third path” between “a capitalism producing misery” and “a Communism ruling by force,” 1:7. In his introductory remarks in the second volume, he mentions Gottfried Benn’s “cowardly cynicism” (8).

130. In his rather positive review, Volker Hage takes it as a given that it is no longer possible to write a cohesive text with a clear structure. See “Vor allem die Liebe,” *Der Spiegel*, no. 32, 1994, 158.


132. Reported by Volker Hage in “Dichter nach der Schlacht,” *Der Spiegel*, no. 30, 1993, 143. In the same article, it is reported that Claus Peymann, the then director of the Vienna Burgtheater, found the play a bit too nationalistic (“Das Stück riecht ein bißchen sehr nach Schwarz-Weiß-Rot.”). Hage himself is amazed by Peymann’s remark, as he views *Equilibrium* as “almost a summery play . . . devoid of the mystical” (143–146).

133. *Equilibrium* was not a great success in the former East Germany. Its diction was apparently too Westernized, too postmaterialistic for those whose lives of necessity continue to revolve around the basics of everyday life. See Ronald Richter, “Zen oder Die Kunst des hohen Klagetons,” *Theater der Zeit*, July–August 1995, 66–68.


136. See Wolfgang Höbel, “Ende einer Dienstfahrt,” *Der Spiegel*, no. 30 (1996), 150. The title of this article is an allusion to a 1966 novel by Heinrich Böll about the
burning of a Bundeswehr jeep. The reference is meant to contrast Böll’s pacifism with Strauß’s alleged glorification of war.

137. It is ironic that the antimaterialist Strauß should echo Marx by using this phrase. Compare the following passage from Marx about the culture of ancient Greece: “Why should the historical childhood of humanity, where it had obtained its most beautiful development, not exert an eternal charm as an age that will never return?” Karl Marx, *Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy*, excerpted in *Marx and Engels on Literature and Art*, ed. Lee Baxandall and Stefan Morawski (St. Louis and Milwaukee: Telos Press, 1973), 135.


139. Playwright Gerhart Hauptmann covered similar ground in his 1914 drama *Der Bogen des Odysseus* (Odysseus’s bow). The early Hauptmann had been a naturalist interested in social problems. His “turn” was somewhat like that of Strauß.

140. Penelope is capable of resisting “the sirens of slime and passion” herself, but Odysseus must be tied to his ship’s mast when passing by the Sirens and hearing their seductive song (14).

141. This reaction was quite clear when I attended a performance of the play at Berlin’s Deutsches Theater in September 1997.


143. Wolfgang Höbel (see note 136), 151.


145. See the dpa dispatch “Bruno Ganz gefeierter Star in ‘Ithaka’—Fast ungeteilte Zustimmung,” July 21, 1996. The dispatch was distributed by *Germany Live*.


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149. Eric Bentley gives Jeffers only a passing reference in his study A Century of Hero Worship, 2nd ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), 3. For a sympathetic portrayal of Jeffers, see Radcliffe Squires, The Loyalties of Robinson Jeffers (1956; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963). Squires’s readers are called upon to make a leap of faith: “Eventually, when people cease to take his [Jeffers’s] impersonal view of the species Homo sapiens as an assault on humanity, he will be seen as one of our master poets” (vii). Another critic will have us believe that “the question whether Jeffers is pessimist or misanthropist . . . is really of no importance whatever.” See William H. Nolte, Rock and Hawk: Robinson Jeffers and the Romantic Agony (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978), 15. For a broad selection of Jeffers’s verse, see The Selected Poetry of Robinson Jeffers (New York: Random House, 1937). In his introduction, Jeffers compares his hideaway near California’s Monterey coast mountains to “Homer’s Ithaca” (xvi). If Strauß adapted the Odyssey, he was following in the footsteps of Jeffers, who produced a verse adaptation of Euripides’ Medea in 1946. See Robinson Jeffers, Cawdor and Medea (New York: New Directions, 1970).

150. Compare Martin Heidegger’s lament: “Perhaps never before was the necessity of the pure work [i.e., œuvre] greater than today and in the future—for never before was the deforming and destructive force of announcing and chatting, of extolling and noise, of the addiction to spiritual dissection and dissolution greater and more unimpeded and more conscious than [it is] today. How much and [how] surely one succumbs to the illusion that one has comprehended and taken possession of the work if one knows the ‘letters’ and utterances of its creator and his psychology,” “Ein Rückblick auf den Weg” (1937–38), Besinnung, Gesamtausgabe, vol. 66 (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1997), 416.


154. In his newest play, Die Ähnlichen (The Similar One), which had its premiere in the summer of 1998, people have become indistinguishable “androids.” See Ronald Pohl, “Das Menschen-Ballett der Androiden,” Der Standard, May 2–3, 1998. In The Copyist’s Error, these creatures are described as technical intellectuals who may eventually eliminate all of the problematic and yet enriching aspects (“consolation, desperation . . ., reflection and blind rage”) from life (55). It may be that Strauß is
not offering these glimpses into his private life to the masses, but rather to the “sec-
ond-class intellectuals,” whose number, he claims, has grown tremendously. See The
Copyist’s Errors, 88.

155. Peter Handke, Zurüstungen für die Unsterblichkeit. Ein Königsdrama (Frank-
furt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997). Page references from this edition in the text.

156. The program for the performance at Berlin’s Deutsches Theater has the follow-
ing words printed on its back cover: “ Remain true to the words of your childhood; / ev-
ery other word would be false.” Peter Handke. Zurüstungen für die Unsterblichkeit. Ein
Königsdrama (Berlin: Deutsches Theater und Kammerspiele, 1997).
The Deutsches Theater marketed the plays by Handke and Strauß as a weekend
package in fall, 1997. Participants in the “Strauß Handke Wochenende: Die Rück-
kehr der Könige II” had the opportunity to not only attend performances of the two
plays on successive evenings, but also to hear a lecture by a professor, hear readings
of other works by the two authors, and discuss the productions with the ensemble.

157. Peter Handke, Mein Jahr in der Niemandsbucht—Ein Märchen aus den Neuen
Zeiten (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1994).


159. The character Felipe Vega in Preparations refers to himself as a “ Taugenichts,”
i.e., a good-for-nothing (79). Handke is of course familiar with Eichendorff’s fa-
mous 1826 novel Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts.

160. “‘Gelassen wär’ ich gern.’ Der Schriftsteller Peter Handke über sein neues

161. It is the women’s father who says this of his “idiotic” (9) daughters, who con-
firm its accuracy later. Why Handke felt the need to include such sarcasm is unclear.

162. In German leftist culture, this sentiment is reflected in the popular bumper
sticker “Foreigners! Don’t leave us alone with the Germans!” (Ausländer! Laßt uns
mit den Deutschen nicht allein!) Space permitting, it would be interesting to discuss
how the purchasers of that bumper sticker explain to themselves and others that
they are not “German.” The New Right intellectuals would surely wish to participate in
such a discussion.

163. This is a favorite term of Handke’s (“ Zwischenräume”) denoting the spaces
between “ normal” perceptions that are the homeland of the writer. See the volume
‘Aber ich lebe nur von den Zwischenräumen.” Peter Handke im Gespräch mit Herbert
Gamper (Zürich: Ammann, 1987).

164. See the recent scholarly book on the ideology of childhood: Yvonne-Patricia
Alefeld, Die Kindheitsideologie in der Romantik (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1996). In his
review of this book, Karl Menges states the following: “Childhood utopia . . . coinci-
des with poetic visions of the sovereignty of the poet who, incidentally, does not re-
treat from the world but embraces it with an advanced consciousness that combines
‘universal’ Romantic sensuality with contemporary (Kantian) transcendentalism.”

165. Why must this be stated and repeated in both German and Spanish?
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(“Traum und Arbeit. Arbeit und Traum. Sueño y trabajo. Trabajo y sueño.”) This is, once again, excess ballast. Similarly, why must we be told that the storyteller’s festive garb is that of a “Landarbeiterin oder labradora” (66)?

166. She does repeatedly say how “ugly” the Space Eliminators are, and she systematically goes about erasing their ugliness (102–103). Antinoos (see above) used the same word in *Ithaka*.

167. One critic described *Preparations* as a mixture of fairy tales, the magic plays (“Zauberstücke”) of the Austrian *Biedermeier*, the *commedia dell’arte*, and Samuel Beckett. The eclecticism apparently did not disturb him, since he spoke of “the production of the year.” See Lothar Schmidt-Mulisch, “Abenteuer im Zaubergarten der Phantasie,” *Die Welt*, February 10, 1997. In the fall of 1997, this observer found the Berlin production of *Preparations* absolutely deadening. The mass of verbiage overwhelmed the audience in the Deutsches Theater.


175. Thomas Assheuer, “Die Ornamente der Ordnung” (see note 168). Richard Herzinger (see note 147) portrays the author of *Ithaka* as the major heir of Ernst Jünger. See Strauß’s own paean to Jünger, “Refrain einer tieferen Aufklärung,” Magie der Heiterkeit. Ernst Jünger zum Hundertsten, ed. Günter Figal and Heimo Schwilk (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1995), 323–324. Strauß asserts here that Jünger is becoming a prototype of the art of the future for the younger generations, an art that will replace the “subversive radical, the Jacobin–‘Hölderlinian’ hero of the age” (324).


Notes to Excursus

1. Theodor Fontane, Der Stechlin (1898; Leipzig: Reclam, 1973), 323. [34. Kapitel] The title character in this novel is a traditional conservative who does not automatically reject anything that is new.


7. “The Bildungsbürgertum as a hegemonial social stratum may have died off. However, the Bildungsbürger, in his ethos and habits dedicated to knowledge and cultural experience, lives on. And here's to him!” Tilman Krause, “Ohne Arbeit kein Genuß,” Der Tagesspiegel, October 25, 1996. Krause credits these people for helping to transcend the gap between high and low culture, overcoming nationalistic narrow-mindedness (by often traveling abroad), and combining a sense of esthetics with the work ethic and a capacity to broaden one’s horizons. This portrait applies more to the liberal Bildungsbürger than his conservative counterpart.


10. Richard Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture Since World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), xiv, 41, 239. In the fall of 1997, Prof. Pells was a Fulbright American Studies professor at the Universität Bonn. In an article entitled “Cinéma Vérité in Europe: Rejecting U.S. Culture” (International Herald Tribune, December 16, 1997), he described how European students reacted to his book and lectures. He was disappointed about “European youth’s continuing apathy to the marketplace mentality of American culture” and observed that the “hostile attitudes” of students were still linked to “a Marxist analysis of capitalism.” Although he hoped that his audiences would still “grow up to be dedicated capitalists,” he stated that “policymakers in London, Paris, and Bonn have failed to convince large numbers of people crucial to the future economic health of Europe that the American model is worth following.” (He should have known that it is dangerous to make generalizations about all of Europe on the basis of encounters with students interested in the humanities, who are hardly a representative group in Europe or the U.S.) The *IHT* printed highly critical letters responding to Pells’s laments on December 19 and 24–25.


11. Rob Kroes, *If You’ve Seen One, You’ve Seen the Mall: Europeans and American Mass Culture* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996), 178. In Kroes’s view, European intellectuals “turned feelings of envy and inferiority toward America, the country that had twice saved Europe from its worst excesses, into a sense of intellectual superiority” (182).


18. For some Germans, the possibility has already become reality. One study done for the European Commission shows that there are now approximately 490,000 homeless people in reunified Germany. See Henning Lohse, “Deutschland hat die...


20. See for example the following two volumes edited by Diner: *Ist der Nationalsozialismus Geschichte? Zu Historisierung und Historikerstreit* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1987); *Zivilisationsbruch. Denken nach Auschwitz* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1988).


22. It is interesting to contrast this analysis with another observer’s comment that in France, anti-Semitism and anti-intellectualism are “never far apart.” [My emphasis.] See Jeremy Jennings, “Of Treason, Blindness and Silence. Dilemmas of the Intellectual in Modern France,” *Intellectuals in Politics: From the Dreyfus Affair to Salman Rushdie*, ed. Jeremy Jennings and Anthony Kemp-Welch (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 69. In France, many intellectuals are highly critical of American mass culture, and not a few of these intellectuals are Jewish.


24. This passage is taken from the essay “Über die Schwierigkeiten, ein Inländer zu sein,” *Deutschland, Deutschland unter anderem. Äußerungen zur Politik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1968), 12.


27. Herzinger and Stein provide a German translation of this passage. This is my retranslation back into English.

28. Among the targets are Rousseau, Herder, Fichte, Novalis, Nietzsche, Georges Sorel, Oswald Spengler, Moeller van den Bruck, Carl Schmitt, Martin Heidegger,
Ernst Jünger, Arnold Gehlen, Ernst Nolte, Rudolf Bahro, Christa Wolf, Heiner Müller, Günter Grass, Edgar Reitz (and his epic film *Heimat*), Botho Strauß, Alice Schwarzer, Luise Rinser, Simone de Beauvoir, Frantz Fanon, Jacques Derrida, Alain de Benoist, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Eugen Drewermann, Louis Farrakhan, Patrick Buchanan, and even German-American Germanist Jost Hermand.

Herzinger and Stein deny that they “throw cultural-elitist hotheads, cold-blooded intellectual historical revisionists and extremist murders into one pot.” They are, they assert, merely interested in the “common ferment around which a new discourse is being formed in Europe” (17). In the book, they are anything but disinterested analysts.

29. Israel is not described as a “paradise on earth” (42)—discrimination against Palestinian Israelis and the torture of prisoners is criticized—but its status as an “open society” is emphasized. The authors are pleased that the original Zionist dream of creating the “new man” and realizing socialism in the desert (43) did not succeed.

In another passage, the relationship between the U.S. and Israel is reversed: “The fundamental American idea, universalism, is a necessary consequence of Jewish monotheism” (39).

30. The authors relate a joke told by Allen: He never attends a performance of a Wagnerian opera, because afterwards, he always feels “an irresistible urge to march into Poland” (69). This retelling speaks volumes about the authors’ relationship to German culture.

31. Herzinger and Stein sound like Goldhagen (whose book appeared a year after their own) when they say the following: “National Socialism . . . was the most extreme, the most extremist culmination of a project anchored deep in German intellectual history” (167).

32. Roland Bubik (cf. *Die selbstbewußte Nation*) might have been the real-life model for this passage. In a 1996 interview, a former comrade described his life style: “Bubik as the big anti-Americanist eats at McDonald’s every day, and his brand of cigarettes is Western. That’s what I never have been able to understand about Bubik—how he can write these articles and live very differently.” “Auf eine Art wollte ich Ernst machen” (Interview with Gerlinde Gronow), *tageszeitung*, June 8, 1996.

33. A very different interpretation of this world is found in Ariel Dorfman, *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic* (New York: International General, 1975). The title of the Spanish original is *Para leer al Pato Donald*.

34. Their image of the U.S. needs updating, however. They seem to think that the civil rights movement has removed all obstacles to a race-blind society, and they have the impression that multiculturalism has been accepted by almost everyone (108–109).

35. There is of course a historical dimension to the Herzinger/Stein position as well. It has been said of earlier critics of modern Germany that “[a]bove all, these men loathed liberalism.” See Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1965). 2. Stern is referring to Lagarde, Langbehn, and Moeller van den Bruck. His own position is clear: “As moralists and as the guardians of what they thought was an ancient tradition, they attacked the progress
of modernity—the growing power of liberalism and secularism” (1; my emphasis).

Herzinger himself has published a longer work on the nature of liberalism. See Richard Herzinger, _Die Tyrannie des Gemeinsinns. Ein Bekenntnis zur egoistischen Gesellschaft_ (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1997). The title is characteristically tongue in cheek.


37. Sichelschmidt (b. 1913), a retired librarian, is the author of over sixty books. He is a member of the editorial staff of the right-wing journal _Nation. Das politische Magazin für Deutschland_. He has been characterized as a “neofascist journalist” (see _Antifaschistische Nachrichten_ 4(1998)). Among his books are _Verblöden die Deutschen? Analyse und Bilanz eines Niveauabstiegs_ (Herford: Nicolai, 1969) and _Deutschland verblödet. Wem nutzt der dumme Deutsche?_ (Kiel: Arndt-Verlag, 1995). Both books lament German culture’s descent into mediocrity. See also _Der ewige Deutschenhaß. Hinternänner und Nutznieder des Antigermanismus_ (Kiel: Arndt, 1992) and his study of patriotic literature: _Verschwiegen und vergessen. Nationale deutsche Autoren im 20. Jahrhundert_ (Berg: VGB-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1997). His publisher VGB is categorized as “right-wing extremist” by the German Office for the Protection of the Constitution. Sichelschmidt has also written for the _Deutsche National-Zeitung_, published by the DVU’s Gerhard Frey. See Jens Mecklenburg, ed., _Antifa Reader. Antifaschistisches Handbuch und Ratgeber_ (Berlin: Elefanten Press, 1996) 127.

38. Heimo Schwilk, _Was man uns verschwieg. Der Golfskrieg in der Zensur_ (Frankfurt am Main, Berlin: Ullstein, 1991). Page references in the body of the text. Ullstein was also the publisher of _Die selbstbewußte Nation_.

39. It is instructive to compare the rhetorical styles of a Schwilk and a Sichelschmidt, however. Whereas the former portrays General Schwarzkopf as a cynic (120), the latter says that he is “equipped with the belly of an oil sheik and the jaw of a professional brawler” (113). This does not necessarily mean that Schwilk is more familiar with the U.S. He refers to CBS as the “Central Broadcasting Service” (67) and calls the commanding general “Stormy [instead of Stormin’] Norman” (120).

40. This stance is changing ever so slowly, as evidenced by the debate in the Green Party about using the Bundeswehr, or at least air support and medical teams, in Bosnia. In 1999, the SPD-Green coalition government survived a heated debate about whether to send German ground troops to Kosovo. The debate did leave deep divisions within the Greens, however.

41. This word is part of the title of yet another recent book condemning the U.S.: Karlheinz Deschner, _Der Moloch. Eine kritische Geschichte der U.S.A._ [The moloch: a critical history of the USA] (München: Heyne, 1992). Deschner explains how he came to write such a book: “I never had thought of writing a history of the United States, even though I had occasionally concerned myself with the topic while pursuing other projects. It was only the Gulf War that drove me to it, whether I wanted to or not; [it was] perhaps less its barbarism, as bad as it was, than the outrageous hypocrisy with which it operated. At first, I wanted to write a diary of the Gulf War, but
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events came too thick and fast. Also, it soon seemed to me to be more illuminating to for once show the entire gruesome weave of violence and mendacity in the context of its history (“Why?” [9]).

When another critical book appeared in 1997, a reviewer began his comments with the following statement: “There is probably hardly another country that suffers so much from [emulating] its great model America as Germany does.” Jürgen Scheunemann, “Das Land der Vorbilder,” Der Tagesspiegel, April 6, 1998. The book is Peter Loesche’s Die Vereinigten Staaten. Innenansichten. Ein Versuch, das Land der unbegrenzten Widersprüche zu begreifen (Hannover: Fackelträger, 1997). In this title, the U.S. is transformed from the “land of endless opportunities” to the “land of endless contradictions.”

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2. See the dpa/eu dispatch “Hooligans wecken in Frankreich Erinnerungen an finstere Vergangenheit,” June 27, 1998. Distributed by Germany Live. The dispatch contains the following assessment of skinhead violence from the conservative French newspaper Le Figaro: “The German brutes who on Sunday terrorized Lens and seriously injured a policeman are the heirs of a minority, but tolerated neo-Nazi ideology.”

This was not the only such news on that day: At about the same time, but much closer to home, about a dozen right-wing youths, armed with chains and bottles, attacked the guests at a garden party in Oebisfelde (Sachsen-Anhalt), injuring five. See dpa/eu, “Rechtsextremistische Jugendliche überfallen Gartenparty,” June 27, 1998, Germany Live. In Saal (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern), a twenty-year-old asylum seeker from Algeria was beaten by six youths as he left a discotheque with friends. See dpa/eu, “20jähriger Algerier in Ostdeutschland niedergeschlagen,” June 27, 1998, Germany Live. The day afterward, young supporters of the right-wing NPD—who were outnumbered by protesters—staged a demonstration in Berlin. See dpa/eu, “NPD-Aufmarsch in Berlin unter großem Polizeiaufgebot,” June 27, 1998, Germany Live.

3. Not all Europeans would agree with Brigitte Seebacher-Brandt, for example: “The Germans do not have it in their power to make themselves smaller and poorer than they really are and to be spectators at the great global theater.” See Seebacher-Brandt, Die Linke und die Einheit (Berlin: Corso bei Siedler, 1991), 80. She sees powerful nations as a prerequisite for a powerful United Europe.


8. Jürgen Habermas, A Berlin Republic: Writings on Germany, trans. Steven Rendall (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 81. This is a translation of the 1995 book Die Normalität einer Berliner Republik (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp).


10. See also Johannes Klotz and Ulrich Schneider, eds., Die selbstbewusste Nation und ihr Geschichtsbild. Geschichtslegenden der Neuen Rechten (Köln: PapyRossa, 1997). In the preface to this volume, the authors—after quoting from Die selbstbewusste Nation—offer the following statement of purpose: “[C]onservative and new-right historians and journalists are rewriting history: historicization of National Socialism and relativization of its crimes, description of the Federal Republic from 1949 to 1989 as a special path, etc. The point of this is to systematically revise the insights that have been developed and painstakingly established by critical historiography. Their place is to be taken by a view of history according to which it would be a return to normalcy if Germany would finally emerge from the shadow of the past, take on its responsibility as a major power, and once again play the international role that it is entitled to—also in a military sense. In order to counter such regression, the debate with the apologists of the self-confident nation and their view of history must finally be carried out.” (“Vorwort,” 7.)


12. See Stefan Breuer, Ästhetischer Fundamentalismus. Stefan George und der deutsche Antimodernismus (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1995). I did not obtain a copy of this book until after finishing my own study. Breuer actually rejects the religion of art without denying that some of its insights (about environmental destruction, for example) are well worth considering. (There are parallels to Karl Heinz Bohrer’s Die Ästhetik des Schreckens here, although Breuer does not list the Bohrer book in his bibliography.) In his introduction, Breuer expresses his disgust with those critics of Botho Strauß’s “Impending Tragedy” who mindlessly make use of the “fascism club” rather than engaging in a historically based analysis.

Elfriede Jelinek, the 1998 winner of the prestigious Büchner Prize, would be a fitting heir to Grass, except for the fact that she is still, at age fifty-two, more interested in confrontation and polemics than dialogue. See the following interview done after the announcement of the prize: Peter von Becker, “Alles ist ein Spiel um den blutigen Ernst,” Der Tagespiegel, May 20, 1998.


16. According to historian Lothar Kettenacker, a meeting of minds has already occurred. He calls it “a curious alliance of right- and left-wing critics against the so-called ‘Coca-Cola’ or ‘McDonalds’ culture”: Germany Since 1945 (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 172. Kettenacker’s aim here, one close to Herzinger/Stein, is to discredit all criticism of the American model. The use of the word “curious” demonstrates that he has not given much thought to the various critiques of Westernization since Romanticism. Like Pells, he states: “The so-called Americanization of West Germany is a very superficial description, which does not stand up to scrutiny” (172).

17. He also adds that the contributions of the German Jews are in no way a “foreign infiltration” (“Überfremdung”) of the German mind (240).

18. One critic may have exaggerated, however, when he declared, in a review of the Schacht/Schwilk volume Für eine Berliner Republik, that the movement was already moribund. See Jan Ross, “Das schnelle Altern der Neuen Rechten,” Berliner Zeitung, February 14–15, 1998. This political obituary was written two months before the state elections in Sachsen-Anhalt (seen below).

19. Those who wish to get a taste of this activity should begin with the “Thule-Netz” (<http://www.thulenet.com>). Among the offerings are a chat room for “discussion among nationalists.” According to information provided on the website, over 171,000 visitors called up more than three million web pages between July 5, 1996, and April 4, 1998. A listing of right-wing sites on the web is provided in “Die Rechten im Internet” (<http://www.bnr.de/rechts.htm>). See also the contribution by Christian Flatz, “Rechtsextremismus im World Wide Web” (<http://www.gfp.org/unb.fr/art/0007.htm>).

20. The rising popularity of the populist Danish Folkeparti in a country so proud of its progressive policies and tolerance is especially troubling. The results of the March 1998 national elections in Denmark are summarized and analyzed in Politiken Weekly, March 18, 1998.

For a general introduction to the politics of the New Right in Europe, see Geoffrey Harris, The Dark Side of Europe: The Extreme Right Today (1990; Edinburgh: Edin-


22. For an example of Benoist’s writing in English translation, see “Confronting Globalization,” *Telos* 108 (1996): 117–137. See also *Telos* 98–99 (Winter 1993–Spring 1994), special double issue on “The French New Right.” It is puzzling that students of French culture can ignore the impact of Benoist. There is, for example, not a single reference to him in *French Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, ed. Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). In general, very little attention is paid to conservative intellectuals in this volume. Le Pen is also only mentioned once (6).

23. It is ironic that this institution is misspelled in the program: “Akadémie francaise.”


25. There is no objection to food shipments used to combat hunger in the “Third World,” however.


27. There is of course also a large number of unemployed young females in the former GDR, but they are less inclined to resort to violence as a way to vent their anger.


Merkel is now the CDU party chairperson (the first woman in this post), and Fischer is the foreign minister.


31. See Sibylle Tönnies, “Gemeinschaft von oben. Der amerikanische Kommuni-
tarismus, eine antiliberalen Bewegung?" Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, December 30, 1994. In this article, Tönnies asserts that an attack on liberalism would play into the hands of the New Right and its project of political restoration. Instead, she proposes the following: "We really need a reawakened sense of the value of the family, true friendship, [and] unqualified, spontaneous attention to one another. We need a new sense of the value of all that which is not connected to money, but rather to the heart." See also her recent article calling for the Germans to finally shed their fear of the state, one based on the (misinterpreted) experience of National Socialism: Sibylle Tönnies, “Save the Whale! Rettet den Leviathan!” tageszeitung, June 13, 1998. This article is part of a series on the left’s relationship to the state.

32. Antonia Grunenberg, Der Schlaf der Freiheit. Politik und Gemeinsinn im 21. Jahrhundert (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1997), 242–243. This book was selected as the non-fiction book of the month by the Süddeutsche Zeitung and the Norddeutscher Rundfunk in August 1997. In a brief positive review, Rita Süssmuth, the then president of the German parliament, characterized the book as being "against the grain of the spirit of our time" ("quer zum Zeitgeist"). "Der Schlaf der Freiheit," Der Tagesspiegel, October 15, 1997.

33. Benjamin Barber, Jihad vs. McWorld (New York: Random House, 1995), 6, 8. My emphasis. Barber's comments on reunified Germany, which are found in a chapter entitled "The Colonization of East Germany by McWorld," are hardly music to the ears of the (West) German political establishment: "[W]hat the German case suggests is exactly what the Russian case establishes: that McWorld's markets, tied here to the West German political and economic leviathan, have not and probably cannot produce a democratic civil society; indeed, in East Germany, they helped to destroy one in its infancy. McWorld is the problem, not the solution" (267). This chapter should be required reading for Germanists, even though Barber makes one small error, namely the inclusion of apparatchik writer Hermann Kant in a list of dissident authors (266).

34. Tönnies, Die Feier des Konkreten, 128. A similar, but not identical vision is found at the end of Christophe Charle's study Vordenker der Moderne. Die Intellektuellen im 19. Jahrhundert (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1997): "The new idea of the coming century is possibly that of the European intellectual: the emancipatory claim of the early nineteenth century, complemented by the cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment and the strict rationalism of the late nineteenth century, but freed from the dogmatism that put its stamp on the first half of the twentieth century" (217).

35. It will, however, be interesting to follow the career of Bodo Morshäuser (b. 1953), who has taken it upon himself to examine both xenophobic violence in reunified Germany and the left’s reaction to it: Hauptsache Deutsch (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1992) and Warten auf den Führer (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1993).


In *A Dubious Past*, Elliot Neaman is more critical of Syberberg than I am. Neaman views Syberberg’s 1990 book *Vom Unglück und Glück der Kunst in Deutschland nach dem letzten Kriege* (München: Matthes und Seitz) as “openly anti-Semitic” (220). Syberberg does say, however, that “Auschwitz and the exodus of the European Jews to Israel and America” must be one of the central themes of art in our time (*Vom Unglück*, 33). Neaman’s assessment of Syberberg appears to have been influenced at least in part by his reading of Eric Santner, to whose book *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory, and Film in Postwar Germany* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990) he refers. See Santner’s chapter “Allegories of Grieving: The Films of Hans Jürgen Syberberg” (103–149).


39. One forerunner who proposed an “International of the Religious Intelligentsia” was author, essayist, and Dadaist Hugo Ball (1886–1927). See Hugo Ball, *Zur Kritik der deutschen Intelligenz* (1918; Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1991), 10. In that same volume, Ball sees a “German mentality” that consists of a lack of “principles, feeling, logic and precision [and] instinctive morality” (12). He agrees with Bakunin that “if a tenth of their [the Germans’] rich intellectual consciousness had found its way into their lives, they would be glorious people” (32). Ball was a leftist who often sounded like a rightist, and he was not free of anti-Semitism. Anson Rabinbach examines the pitfalls inherent in Ball’s “inverted nationalism” in *In the Shadow of Catastrophe: German Intellectuals between Apocalypse and Enlightenment* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 66–96. His analysis was originally published as the introduction to the English translation of Ball’s work: *Critique of the German Intelligentsia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

See also Seth Taylor’s discussion of Ball’s *Critique in Left-Wing Nietzscheans*, 183–186.

In my opinion, the way in which the East German dramatist Heiner Müller (1929–1995) and the theater director Frank Castorf (both associated with the cultural left) toyed with the ideas of Ernst Jünger in recent years is hardly an intellectual or political path worthy of emulation. For background on this, see the following: István Eörsi, “‘Massaker als Sinnsuche.’ Über die seltsame Allianz von Heiner Müller und Botho Strauß,” *Der Spiegel*, no. 37, 1994, 215–220; Peter Zadek, “Den Killern ein Alibi: Über Frank Castorf, Heiner Müller und andere rechte Linke,” *Der Spiegel*, no. 4, 1995, 183; Stephan Lebert, “Der Fall Frank Castorf: Verwirrende Rollenspiele eines deutschen Intellektuellen,” *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, February 20, 1995; “‘Theater ist feudalistisch.’ Dramatiker Heiner Müller über das Berliner Ensemble, DDR—Nostalgie und Rechts-links-Verwirrungen,” *Der Spiegel*, no. 12, 1995, 224–226. In this interview, Müller denies that he and Castorf ever were involved in “anything like neo-Nationalism” (225).

Richard Herzinger has described the intention of Müller’s critique of civilization as “mobilization of resistance against a Westernization that is portrayed as a danger
that threatens the development, even the existence of the human race.” He shows that Müller “explicitly and implicitly links up with traditional modes of thought of the German critique of "Western civilization."” See Masken der Revolution. Vitalistische Zivilisations- und Humanismuskritik in Texten Heiner Müllers (München: Fink, 1992), 15–16.

40. For a reaction from the U.S., see David Binder, “Ernst Jünger, Contradictory German Author Who Wrote about War, Is Dead at 102,” New York Times, February 18, 1998. This obituary is free of glossing over, unlike many of the German ones.

41. One could also postulate that Kohl, in expressing his respect for Jünger, knew that he would be applauded by those extremely conservative voters that the Christian Democrats invariably court in election years.

42. The views of Wäigel and Lafontaine were reported by Germany Live (“Stimmen zum Tod von Ernst Jünger”) on February 18, 1998.


52. Rolf Schneider, “Er war niemals besser, als wenn er nur über sich selber schrieb,” \textit{Die Welt}, February 21, 1998. The only thoroughly negative eulogy that I discovered was printed in the Viennese daily \textit{Die Presse}. It was excerpted in \textit{Germany Live} on February 18, 1998.

53. How can one write—and correctly so—that democracy needs “intellectual deviation” to survive and then set up Ernst Jünger as a model of such deviation? See the comments from the February 21, 1998, edition of the \textit{Berliner Zeitung} on the occasion of Jünger’s funeral as excerpted by \textit{Germany Live} on the day of their publication. As stated previously, “leftist deviation” has never been truly acceptable in Germany.


57. Annemarie Pieper, \textit{Gut und Böse} (München: Beck, 1997), 121. This does not mean that the search for explanations is fruitless, she adds. Page references in the body of the text.

Notes to Epilogue

1. Anne Sa’adah, \textit{Germany’s Second Chance: Trust, Justice, and Democratization} (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 1998), ix. Sa’adah goes on to amplify this opening statement from her preface: “When I was a graduate student, Nazi Germany was not where I wanted to be late at night; even living in the shadow of the Third Reich seemed depressing. . . . Some of my closest friends now are German, but we sometimes come up hard against a wall of misunderstanding that can be explained only by radically different political experiences and cultures. And yet I now occasionally slip into the first-person plural when I speak about the problems and possibilities of contemporary Germany. The Federal Republic is indeed \textit{ein schwieriges Vaterland} [a difficult fatherland], but it is a country in which I feel implicated” (ix-x). My own feelings are quite similar, even though I did ponder Nazi Germany—and several other manifestations of Germanness—as a graduate student, both “late at night” and during the day.

2. Schröder was never a “street fighting man,” although photos from the 1970s show him in the requisite leather jacket with beer in hand. Unlike many more radical leftists, he comes from rather humble circumstances, and he grew up in a household devoid of the cultural artifacts of the \textit{Bildungsbürgertum}. He thus did not rebel by rejecting bourgeois culture out of hand. In this, he resembles Bill Clinton more than
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Tony Blair, with whom he has been compared. It was hardly a political statement when he gave an interview to the *Washington Post* while “puffing on a Cuban cigar.” See “Schroeder: ‘Decision to Stay Is . . . Right,’” *Washington Post*, April 18, 1999.


4. I am translating here from excerpts published by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and the *Frankfurter Rundschau* (both of November 11, 1998).

5. One observer has put it this way: “The passages in the Regierungserklärung about cultural policy were the colorful prospectus of a Social-Democratic enterprise whose products are to be quickly put on the market.” Christian Thomas, “Be Er De. Gerhard Schröders ‘Republik der Neuen Mitte,’” *Frankfurter Rundschau*, November 12, 1998.


8. As reported by Robin Alexander and Eberhard Seidel-Pielen, “Rechte mußten draußen bleiben,” *tageszeitung*, September 29, 1998. Few reports focused on this aspect of the election. Typical headlines were “The ghost of the right is done for” (Jens Schneider, “Aus für das rechte Gespenst,” *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, September 29, 1998) or “No extreme-right parties in the German parliament” (“Keine rechtsextremen Parteien im deutschen Parlament,” *dpa dispatch* distributed by *Germany Live*, September 27, 1998). Paul Geitner’s article in the *Washington Post* (September 27, 1998) was entitled “Extremists Run Strong in E. Germany,” but Geitner was referring to the PDS, the successor to the East German communists, who barely overcame the 5 percent hurdle in 1998.


In Brandenburg, the federal state that surrounds Berlin, the number of attacks against foreigners went up almost 30 percent in 1999, even though the total number of crimes perpetrated by right-wing extremists went down somewhat. During the same
year, the DVU increased its membership from 200 to 400, the NPD from 50 to 200. Only the Republicans lost members. See Jan Thomsen, "Fremdenfeindliche Gewalt nahm 1999 stark zu," Berliner Zeitung, May 13, 2000. The increase in xenophobic violence comes at a time when the number of people requesting asylum in Germany is at its lowest point since 1988. This means that there is a gap between the perception of the foreign presence and the actual social reality. See "Asylanträge. Tiefster Stand seit 1988 - Meiste Bewerber aus Jugoslawien," Der Tagespiegel, May 13, 2000.


Those critical of the provincialism and racism found in the East tend to downplay the fact that half of the violent attacks on foreigners do take place in the old West Germany. There are fewer per capita, to be sure, but one could argue that the ones that take place in a stable democracy are even more troubling.

11. A compilation of the most egregious acts from January 1996 to March 1999 can be found in an Associated Press dispatch of March 29, 1999, that was distributed by the online service Pipeline. More abbreviated summaries were printed in the Berliner Zeitung of February 16, 1999, and Die Welt of February 15, 1999.

12. Maku, “Dann geh doch gleich rüber!” Süddeutsche Zeitung, April 28, 1999. See also “Ghanaische Autorin auf Rügen angegriffen,” Frankfurter Rundschau, April 27, 1999. In May, Darko returned to Mecklenburg-Vorpommern to finish her reading tour, after she was asked to do so by the state parliament (Landtag). The original incident was clearly an embarrassment to the area. It was reported that skinheads had imitated monkeys and called her “nigger.” See adi, “Afrikanische Autorin Darko setzt Lesereise fort,” Süddeutsche Zeitung, May 22, 1999.


16. See Claus-Dieter Steyer, “Der Trauerzug fand unter Polizeischutz statt,” Der Tagespiegel, February 15, 1999. In November 1998, the efforts of the two towns were singled out for recognition by the EU Commission. Additional social workers were hired in the early 1990s after a series of attacks on Poles. In March 1999, the Department of Economic and Social History at the Europa-Universität Viadrina in Frankfurt/Oder advertised a half-time position for a historian to work on the section “Guben/Gubin (1945–1990)” in the project “History of the German-Polish Border Region in the European Framework.” Given recent events, an extension of the project’s scope to include the present day would not be difficult to justify.


20. Quoted in Ulrich Clewing, “Sir Foster hilft nicht beim Aufbau des Sozialismus,” tageszeitung, August 19, 1998. The tongue-in-cheek title refers to the decision by Sir Norman Foster, the architect of the renovated Reichstag, not to participate. He was bothered by the partisan (i.e., pro SPD) nature of the event.

21. Given the immediate goal of unseating Kohl, it is no surprise that the question of Helmut Schmidt’s coolness toward the, was not emphasized. Willy Brandt’s successor was no more prone to fireside chats with critical intellectuals than Ludwig Erhard, famous for his dismissal of activist writers.

One intellectual who praised Kohl’s influence on cultural affairs was Christoph Stölzl, the founding director of the German Historical Museum in Berlin: “Kohl tut wohl,” Die Zeit, no. 40, 1998. In 2000, Stölzl became the head of cultural affairs in Berlin.

22. “Eurovisionen” [Interview with Jack Lang], Die Zeit, no. 40, 1998. Lang also recalled how he had engaged in discussions with Hollywood executives: “One has to hammer into such people again and again that we [i.e., the Europeans] exist, and that they cannot do what they want in Europe without respecting certain rules.” Criticism of the U.S. was not absent from the “Eurovisions” meeting either. See Jakob Augstein, “Ist Montesquieu in der SPD? Wie die Sozialdemokraten nach ‘Eurovisionen’ suchten,” Süddeutsche Zeitung, August 21, 1998.

23. Cited in Moritz Rinke, “Vom Training des aufrechten Gangs,” Der Tagespiegel, August 21, 1998. Rinke, for one, found Schröder to be “pleasantly unpretentious,” since he did not “constantly quote Ernst Jünger [!] or claim to be a bookworm.”
24. Walser has been a visiting professor at Middlebury, Texas, West Virginia, Dartmouth, and Berkeley.

25. It was reported in a dpa dispatch that Walser had chosen Schirrmacher himself. This does not necessarily mean that Walser agreed in toto with the cultural-political agenda of his younger admirer. See “Friedenspreis an Walser — Gnade für Top-Spion ’Topas’ gefordert,” distributed by the online service Germany Live, October 12, 1998.

26. My translations refer to the online version of Schirrmacher’s talk (entitled “Sein Anteil” [“His Share”], which was distributed by the Börsenverein des deutschen Buchhandels on its website: <http://www.boersenverein.de/fpreis/fs_laud.htm>. Walser’s own talk — “Erfahrungen beim Verfassen einer Sonntagsrede” [“Experiences While Writing a Sunday Speech”] — will also be cited according to the version on the same website: <http://www.boersenverein.de/fpreis/mw_rede.htm>. For book versions, see Friedenspreis des deutschen Buchhandels 1998. Martin Walser (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Buchhändler-Vereinigung, 1998) and Erfahrungen beim Verfassen einer Sonntagsrede. Friedenspreis des deutschen Buchhandels 1998 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998). Lengthy excerpts from Walser’s speech were also published in the Frankfurter Rundschau, the Süddeutsche Zeitung, the tageszeitung, and many other dailies on October 12, 1998. Two brief passages that Walser did not read in Frankfurt are included in the version found in the journal Universitas, December 1998, 1122–1132. The extra passages are briefly discussed by the editors on p. 1132.

After this epilogue was completed, the following collection appeared: Frank Schirrmacher, ed., Die Walser-Bubis-Debatte. Eine Dokumentation (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1999). The volume contains the speeches by Walser and Bubis, numerous responses to both (including personal letters), and the transcript of the December 13, 1998, meeting of Walser and Bubis at the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. The collection is organized chronologically, with one exception: The first document is not Schirrmacher’s speech introducing Walser, but rather the honoree’s Peace Prize Speech. This will probably be viewed by most German observers as an example of false modesty.

27. Martin Walser, Ein springender Brunnen (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998).

28. Here are just two examples: In “Praktiker, Weltfremde und Vietnam” [“Practical Types, Otherwordly Ones and Vietnam” — Munich, 1966], he said: “[I]f we can’t do anything about the decline of the U.S.A. and against our own enslavement to this system that has been rapidly decaying for ten years, then it can’t be meaningless to at least speak of this decline [Verfall] and our enslavement [Verfallenheit]. . . . It can’t be meaningless to call a crime a crime. . . . I call upon the parties represented in parliament to place Vietnam on the agenda of the German Bundestag.” In “Amerikanischer als die Amerikaner” [More American than the Americans — Munich, 1967], he declared: “We have obviously chosen to put up with watching this brutalization of America like drugged sycophants. A Europeanization of our politics is no longer conceivable, although that would perhaps help the better America in its battle against the lousy and

29. In a 1995 interview, Walser criticized the "glorification of violence" on television and said that he could no longer watch "certain American films" because of their depiction of brutality. These comments put his reference to television in the Frankfurt speech in a different light. See "‘Man bleibt wunschbereit’" [interview with Martin Walser], *Der Spiegel*, no. 36, 1995, 209. Ignatz Bubis claimed that Walser had never become agitated about violence in "advertising or crime shows," so his opposition to violent documentaries about the Holocaust had nothing to do with violence and everything to do with his desire to make the Holocaust disappear. See "‘Walser will, daß der Holocaust verschwindet.’ Gespräch mit Ignatz Bubis und Peter Schneider," *Die Welt*, October 14, 1998.

30. See for example "Unser Auschwitz" (1965) and "Auschwitz und kein Ende" (1979). Both have been reprinted in *Ansichten, Einsichten*, 158–172 and 631–636.

31. Compare the feelings of Anne Sa’adah as quoted at the beginning of this epilogue.

32. There is a linguistic "slip" in this passage of which the author might not have been aware: "Everyone knows our historical burden, the interminable shame. [N]ot a day [passes] on which it is not held up before us. Could it be that the intellectuals who hold it up before us . . . for a second succumb to the illusion that they . . . are for a moment closer to the victims than to the perpetrators?" In this construction, the “intellectuals” are not part of the German people, but rather outside agents. This is too close to the fascist viewpoint for comfort.

33. See Martin Walser, "Über freie und unfreie Rede," *Der Spiegel*, no. 45, 1994. On that occasion, Walser spoke at the University of Heidelberg to express his gratitude for the Dolf-Sternberger-Preis. Prefigurations of the Frankfurt comments on the nature of conscience can be found in that speech: "For my part, I would rather be ashamed without being asked rather than after being asked. I do not blush on command. . . . Cultivating taboos in the service of enlightenment. Exercise of power that regards itself as enlightenment" (138). The full text of the speech was published in *Ansichten, Einsichten*, 1046–1061.

34. Schröder was one of the few dignitaries not to attend Walser’s speech. In a later interview, he said that it was not his place to provide a public commentary on the speech. He did, however, deny that Walser wanted to provide ammunition for those who would rather forget the past ("den Verdrängern"). Although he thought that some of Walser’s formulations were “exaggerated” (“überspitzt”), he defended their use: “A poet can do things like that. I would not be permitted to [do so].” See "Eine offene Republik" [interview with Gerhard Schröder], *Die Zeit*, no. 6, 1999. In Frankfurt, Walser expressed his hope that he would not be giving succor to "contemporary obscurantists with an aversion to guilt feelings." Such a statement shows that he was hardly as naïve as the Strauß of “Impending Tragedy” or the Handke of *Justice for Serbia*.

35. He uses the term “Denkmal” rather than “Mahnmal,” ignoring usage in the
debate about the edifice. The former is a neutral word, whereas the latter has only negative connotations with regard to admonishing present and future generations. Already in September 1998, Walser had referred to the project as a “monument of shame” and “a monument as big as a soccer field.” See “Martin Walser gegen Holocaust-Denkmal,” Der Tagespiegel, September 8, 1998.

For an anthology of contributions to the debate about the memorial, see Michael S. Cullen, Das Holocaust-Mahnmal. Dokumentation einer Debatte (Zürich: Pendo-Verlag, 1999). In an article about this debate, Cullen stated that it had at times “been enriched and simultaneously blanketed by the Walser-Bubis dispute.” See Michael S. Cullen, “Alles Anfang ist lang,” Der Tagespiegel, January 6, 1999.

36. Before the publication of Goldhagen’s book, Walser had used a similar formulation about the relationship between German and Jews. See Martin Walser, “Wir werden Goethe retten,” Der Spiegel, no. 52, 1995, 143. This article discusses Victor Klemperer’s diaries, which were discovered by Walser in the Saxony State Library (Dresden) in the fall of 1989. He not only praises the diaries as the best vehicle for “making the reality of the NS dictatorship more comprehensible to us” but also agrees with Klemperer’s view of the conscience: “One can learn from Klemperer how to deal with one’s own conscience instead of paying attention to that of other people” (146). A German journalist has postulated that Klemperer’s diaries will affect the American view of Nazi terror more than Goldhagen’s book. See Robert von Rimscha, “Der Holocaust auf Augenhöhe,” Der Tagespiegel, January 13, 1999. For Klemperer in English, see I Will Bear Witness: A Diary of the Nazi Years, 1933–1941 (New York: Random House, 1998). The New York Times published not one, but two reviews of this book: Richard Bernstein, “How the Little Things Add Up to Horror,” November 11, 1998, and Peter Gay’s assessment in the New York Times Book Review of November 22, 1998 (featured on the cover).


Fassbinder’s play has never been performed in Germany (a planned production at the Maxim Gorki Theater in Berlin was cancelled in the autumn of 1998); it had its premiere in New York and has been performed in Denmark and Sweden. A performance in Milan in November 1998 was not controversial. See Henning Klüver, “Alles nur Verlierer,” Süddeutsche Zeitung, November 20, 1998. When a small theater in Tel Aviv put it on in April 1999, the assistant director was quoted as saying: “After all, it is not the play itself that propagates anti-Semitism, but the situation in which it is set.” Fassbinder himself had said that the characters in the play “do not express the views of the author.” Both citations are taken from Thorsten Schmitz, “Der Müll, die Stadt und ein anderer Ort,” Süddeutsche Zeitung, April 6, 1999. The successful 1985 protest has been described as “the only big theater scandal that has happened in the Federal Republic . . . the only case in which the principle of artistic freedom was not upheld.” See
Stephan Speicher, “Ein reicher Jude. Ist Fassbinders Der Müll, die Stadt und der Tod antisemitisch?” Berliner Zeitung, September 2, 1998. To my knowledge, there has never been a successful protest against an anti-German play or film since 1945, even though there has been no lack of symbolic German self-mutilation on the stage and screen. This demonstrates that, at least in the cultural sphere, one cannot speak of a “normal” situation. (The only other country in which performance of the play has been prevented is normally liberal Holland.) The figure of the “rich Jew” in the play—which is more grotesque than realistic—is a manifestation of every imaginable anti-Semitic stereotype, and the character who wishes that he had been gassed (Hans von Gluck) is also hardly an appealing individual. As a whole, Fassbinder’s play may well disgust many people, but it is hardly an example of anti-Semitic propaganda. See R. W. Fassbinder, Der Müll, die Stadt und der Tod (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag der Autoren, 1981).

38. “Bubis beschuldigt Walser ‘geistiger Brandstiftung’,” Frankfurter Rundschau, October 13, 1998. Educated Germans would associate Bubis’s choice of words with Max Frisch’s 1958 play Biedermann and the Arsonists (Biedermann und die Brandstifter). That work is a warning against tyranny in general and fascism in particular. The allusion was surely not lost on Walser.


40. French intellectual Bernard-Henri Lévy has described Bubis as a “prototype . . . of those German Jews [who are] more German than the Germans.” [“Prototype . . . de ces juifs allemands, plus allemands que les Allemands.”] This dictum is found in Lévy’s two-part series on Germany in the Schröder era. Although the tone is generally not polemical, the announcement of the series on the front page of Le Monde (“The New Germany of Gerhard Schröder or the Temptation to Forget”) and the inclusion of gruesome photographs from the Wehrmacht Exhibition give it a strange flavor. See Bernard-Henri Lévy, “Allemagne, Année Zero?” Le Monde, February 6, and 7–8, 1999. At one point, Lévy says that “Schröder wants to change remembrance . . . [and Walser] claims the right to change the channel” when he has seen enough images of the Shoah.

41. For a recent study of Jewish assimilation in the educated middle class, see Klaus Kemper, Die Jellineks 1820–1955. Eine familienbiographische Studie zum deutsch-jüdischen Bildungsbürgertum (Düsseldorf: Droste 1998).

42. In 1994, Bubis drew attention to what he called the “phenomenon of intellectual right-wing radicalism.” At first, he put Strauß and Enzensberger in that camp. When asked about the justification for this, he issued a retraction. He then maintained that he differentiated between the “mental arsonists” Frey, Schönhuber, and Deckert on the one hand and the “spiritual trailblazers of intellectual right-wing radicalism” like Ernst Nolte. In November 1999, he did not hesitate to use the arsonist label for Walser, only to retract it later (see below). See “‘Wegbereiter wie Nolte.’ Ignatz Bubis erläutert seine Intellektuellen-Schelte,” Der Spiegel, no. 16, 1994, 170. In late 1998, he returned to Strauß and Enzensberger, claiming that they had a certain
“national[istic] touch,” even though they were not “right-wing extremists.” See “Bubis nennt Walser und Dohnanyi ‘latente Antisemiten,’” Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, November 30, 1998. This headline was printed at the top of the first page of that edition. (Writers are not usually given that kind of attention, even in the FAZ.) The ability of a public figure like Bubis to command attention in the media despite his history of vacillation and *ad hominem* attacks is significant, because it demonstrates how “abnormal” German society still is. No well-known non-Jewish German would be taken seriously if he were to act as Bubis did. His special status was a direct result of the official philosemitism, which restricts Jews to the status of “other” in postwar Germany. Seen in this light, the criticism of Bubis by non-Jewish Germans in the wake of the “Walser-Bubis debate” may well be a sign that a more “normal” dialogue and dispute will be possible in the future.

43. Those who would like a brief summary with selected quotations should peruse the materials assembled by Lutz Hagestedt in the online journal literaturkritik, no. 1, 1999 (<http://www.literaturkritik.de>). Der Spiegel published a long interview with Ignatz Bubis and a provocative editorial by publisher Rudolf Augstein in no. 49, 1998, an interview with German-Jewish students in no. 50, and a fascinating collection of letters to the editor in no. 51. The journal Universitas dedicated most of the December 1998 issue to the topic “Normales Deutschland?” including Walser’s speech and several accompanying pieces (one of which was an interview with political scientist Antonia Grunenberg—see Conclusions and Prospects above.)


45. "’Walser will, daß der Holocaust verschwindet.’ WELT-Gespräch mit Ignatz Bubis und Peter Schneider,” Die Welt, October 14, 1998.

46. Probably the most frivolous and at the same time damaging answer came from scholar Saul Friedländer, an expert on the Nazi period: “That I would have become a member of a national resistance movement, seems to me not only conceivable, but probable.” Saul Friedländer, “Über Martin Walser’s Friedenspreis-Rede und die Aufgab der Erinnerung,” Die Zeit, no. 49, 1998. Many members of the German generation of 1968 spoke in this way with their parents, whom they considered to have been cowards, collaborationists, or worse. The actual reality was, at least in many cases, much more complicated.


48. See Elie Wiesel, “Ohne Schande. Offener Brief von Elie Wiesel an Martin Walser,” Die Zeit, no. 51, 1998: “Do you not understand that you have opened a door through which others can storm in who pursue completely different political ends and are dangerous in a very different way?” This was also Bubis’s main criticism of Walser. Outside observers would have the impression that the “hordes” are simply waiting for the right signal before unleashing their wrath.

50. Richard von Weizsäcker, “Der Streit wird gefährlich. Mußte Walser provozieren?” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, November 20, 1998. A short article on the front page of that edition had the title: “Weizsäcker: Streit um Walser gerät außer Kontrolle.” The phrase “out of control” could be interpreted as signifying a situation in which certain codes and taboos were no longer being maintained, and that is exactly what happened. From whose perspective was this “dangerous”? Aiming to avoid more controversy, the German Book Trade Association announced that the winner of the 1999 Peace Prize would be German-Jewish-American historian Fritz Stern. He has the advantage of being not only Jewish, but also having advocated the reunification of Germany, an “intellectual Bubis” as it were. See Ulrich Raulff, “Eine Chance. Friedenspreis für Fritz Stern,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, April 30, 1999.


53. One of the quirkiest aspects of the peace-prize speech was Walser’s appeal to President Herzog to pardon the “idealistic” East German spy Rainer Rupp, who supposedly had only engaged in espionage in order to help maintain the peace in Europe.

54. The only other case of abrasiveness came when Bubis declared that he was satisfied with Walser’s clarifications and would now retract the accusation of “mental arson.” Walser, who had earlier said that he would not speak with Bubis unless he made such a retraction, now said that Bubis did not need to do so. Walser’s arrogance in this instance might well have been no more than a mask hiding his insecurity. One sign of this is the fact that he made a point of citing four Jews (Salomon Korn, writer Rafael Seligmann, religious scholar Jakob Taubes, and journalist Henryk M. Broder) who, he asserted, shared his views about the dangers of over-ritualized remembrance.

Bubis’s successor as president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, Paul Spiegel, has said that the consequences of Walser’s speech are enormous (“unübersehbar”), and that Bubis did not have to retract his accusation of “mental arson.” Spiegel has even gone one step further, claiming that Walser has ignited a “wildfire” [Flächenbrand] in Germany. This type of rhetoric could hardly be characterized as a contribution to the promotion of German-Jewish dialogue. Seeing, “Paul Spiegel rügt den Chef der Unionsfraktion,” *Frankfurter Rundschau*, May 13, 2000.

55. Despite other disagreements, Walser and Goldhagen share the belief that contemporary Germany has nothing to do with this past.

56. It must be said, however, that the pacifistic left often ignored conflicts outside of Europe (e.g., in Afghanistan) or idealized “wars of liberation” in the Third World (as it was called then).
57. Fischer was splattered with red paint before he took the podium, but he went on speaking anyway.


59. “Ein Territorium des Hasses” [collected statements by German writers about the NATO bombing], Der Spiegel, no. 15, 1999, 264. On the same page, one finds a rather strange statement by Walser: “A policy that leads to a war must have been a completely wrong policy. One cannot win a war, especially not this one—just as one could not win the Vietnam War.” Contrast this with Enzensberger’s praise for the allies in World War II.


63. See for example the article by novelist Gerhard Köpf, “In den Schuhen des Fischers. Der Prediger, der uns die Leviten liest—Eine Einführung in die geistliche Rhetorik des Schriftstellers Martin Walser,” Süddeutsche Zeitung, October 10, 1998. Note that this piece was written before Walser’s peace-prize speech.

Richard Herzinger seems puzzled that the Germans still enjoy the “anarchistic ritual” of sermonizing writers, dubbing it “an ancient burden that one has become fond of, [one] that weighs down the otherwise unbearable lightness of postmodern existence.” See Richard Herzinger, “Sinn um Untergang? Identitätsstiftung in der Literatur,” Universitas, March 1999, 220. In this article, he rejects Walser’s supposed Heideggerian conservative cultural criticism, but does so with much irony. His coauthor Hannes Stein (see the Excursus above), who also criticizes Walser, uses not a rapier, but a club, and his methods are questionable, to say the least. Stein has discovered that Walser is a character (“Christoph”) in Ruth Klüger’s fictionalized autobiography Weiter leben, and he presents us with harsh judgments about this character. Aside from the fact that this is “Christoph,” and not Walser, Stein ignores more positive aspects about the character. Klüger writes for instance: “What I am writing here, simplifies [matters]. We [i.e., the narrator and “Christoph”] were not at all that different.” See Ruth Klüger, Weiter leben (Göttingen: Wallstein, 1992), 213. Stein also sees similarities between Walser as a “raving old man” (“polternder Greis”) and as an “insolent young man” (“Schnösel”) in the postwar years. The use of such language is no credit to the commentator. See Hannes Stein, “Geübt im Wegdenken. Wie sich Martin Walser treu blieb. Der Auftritt des Schriftstellers in einer Nachkriegserinnerung,” Berliner Zeitung, November 16, 1998.

64. “Handke’s defenders like to emphasize that ‘poets know better,’ as Bob Dylan once put it: that their fresh view enables us to see through journalistic manipulation. But if there is any lesson from the Balkan war, then it is that poets don’t know better.” Slavoj Zizek, “Der Balkan im Auge. Was Peter Handke nach Ruritanien treibt,” Süddeutsche Zeitung, March 17, 1999.

65. According to Stern Online (May 16, 1999), the Süddeutsche was to publish
Handke's essay about his trip to Serbia on May 29, 1999. It actually appeared a week later. See Peter Handke, "Der Krieg ist das Gebiet des Zufalls," Süddeutsche Zeitung, June 5–6, 1999. The essay, consisting of excerpts from a larger piece, appeared after the completion of this epilogue. It has now appeared in book form: Peter Handke, Unter Tränen fragend. Nachträgliche Aufzeichnungen von zwei Jugoslawien-Durchquerungen im Krieg, März und April 1999 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2000). Handke has also written a play about the Balkans, which had its premiere performance at the Viennese Burgtheater in June 1999. For a book version, see Peter Handke, Die Fahrt im Einbaum oder Das Stück zum Film vom Krieg (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1999). The play cannot be discussed here. Suffice it to say that, as in the case of Botho Strauß's Ithaka, the text caused a scandal long before its first performance. Despite all legitimate criticism of Handke's political utterances, his literary works should not be read as mere editorials.


70. See for example his dispute with Jürgen Habermas about using bombs to guarantee human rights. In the interview cited in note 72 below, Handke accuses Habermas of being an apologist of "raging violence." The philosopher had expressed the hope that the war in Kosovo could accelerate the transition from the "classic international law of the states to the cosmopolitan law of a global civil society." See Habermas, “Bestialität und Humanität. Ein Krieg an der Grenze zwischen Recht und Moral,” Die Zeit, no. 18, 1999. He answered Handke’s sharp criticism in “Zweifellos. Eine Antwort auf Peter Handke,” Süddeutsche Zeitung, May 18, 1999.


72. Willi Winkler, “Moral ist ein anderes Wort für Willkür” [Interview with Peter Handke], Süddeutsche Zeitung, May 15, 1999. In this interview, Handke refers to the ’68ers again: “Does not all the suffering of [this] war stem from the fact that the ’68ers are in power in the entire Western world?”

73. See “Wer sind die willigen Vollstrecker? Ein Interview mit Daniel Goldhagen zum Krieg im Kosovo,” Frankfurter Rundschau, April 20, 1999. For a description of a heated debate between Goldhagen and German intellectuals (moderated by American Andrei Markovits), see “Wie im ’Dritten Reich?’ Goldhagens Holocaust-Vergleich,” tageszeitung, May 10, 1999. When Goldhagen published his essay on Serbia in the Süddeutsche, the paper took the unusual step of adding an editorial critical of his the-

74. The full passage reads: “Reeducate Serbia? No, reeducate America together with its chairman and the Pimpf Goldhagen.” Another advocate of Serbian reeducation is the Albanian author Ismail Kadaré. See “Ein unheilbarer Haß mit tiefen Wurzeln” [Interview with Ismail Kandaré], *tageszeitung*, May 26, 1999.


