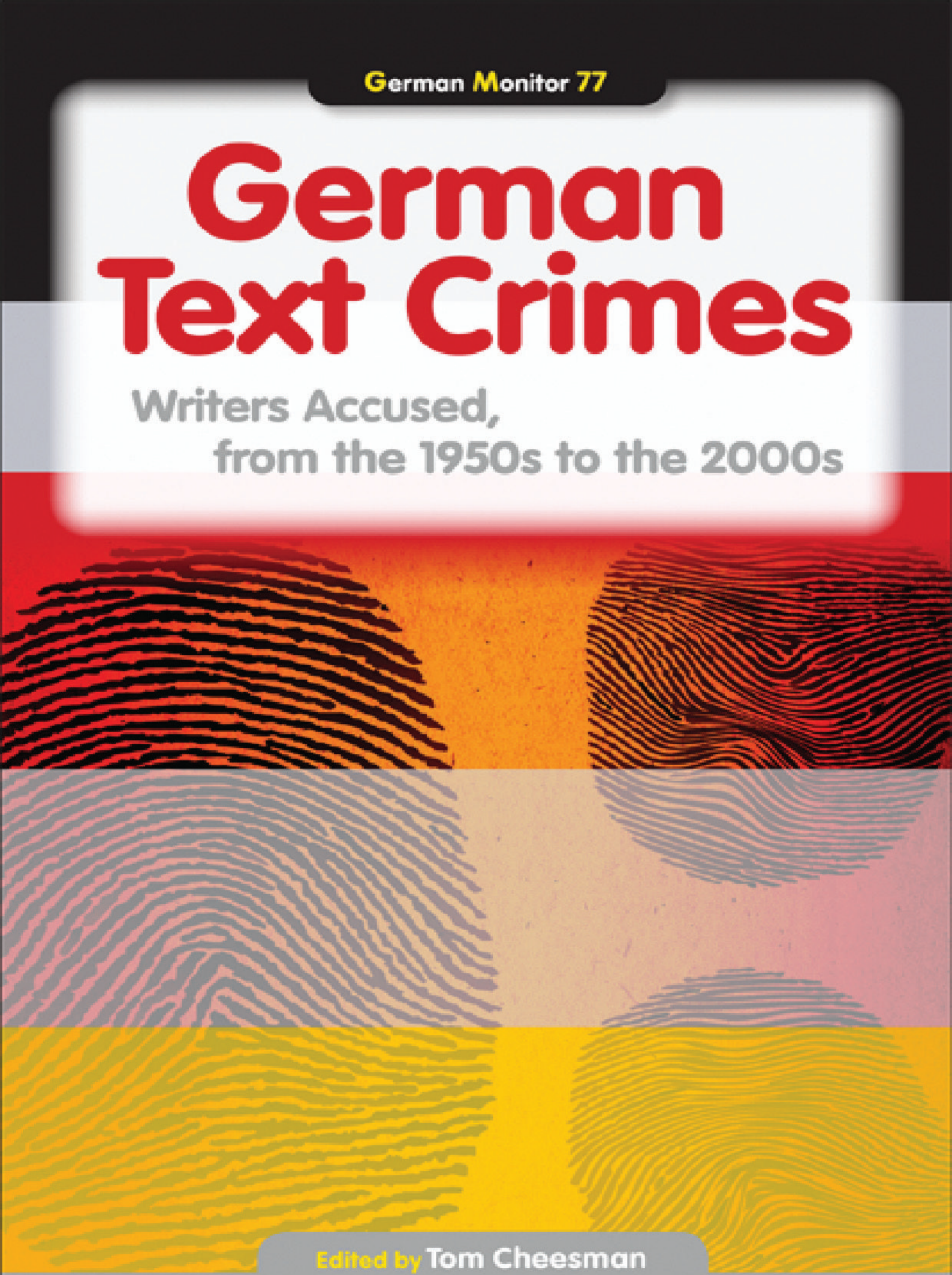
German Monitor 77

German Text Crimes

Writers Accused, from the 1950s to the 2000s



Edited by Tom Cheesman

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Introduction: Incriminating Texts – With Reflections on the Justiciability of *Esra* and *Leyla*

Desecration, defamation ('Rufmord'), depravity, invasion of privacy, theft of intellectual property, ideological sabotage, corruption of public morality, incitement to violence, impropriety, inauthenticity – this is not an exhaustive list of the crimes for which literary texts and their authors may be tried in courts of law and/or the court of public opinion. Text crimes of omission – such as silence on a subject – can count as heavily as crimes of commission. One frequent charge is an alleged failure to write 'real' or 'worthwhile' literature: for some, the harshest accusation. Texts are both subjects and objects of expression, and 'text crimes' are matters of interpretation, so interpretations, too, can be judged to commit text crimes: censorship is the obvious example, but a reading or a (theatrical, filmic) interpretation can also be judged an offence.

(Allegations of) text crimes beget (allegations of) text crimes. Much of the modern history of literature and its reception, not only in the German-speaking world, can be told as a history of such allegations, some leading to legal proceedings, some not. Texts are more often incriminated for violating cultural norms than for breaking actual laws. Alleged crimes may be defined in juridical terms, or moral terms, or both. Accusations, if communicated with sufficient power, elicit counter-accusations, revealing the contours of cultural understandings of ethics and politics.

This volume deals with a selection of such events, from the later twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It differs in its priorities from the recent spate of publications in German on literary scandal as a social and media phenomenon, which have followed in the wake of Robert Weninger's wide-ranging and pugnacious *Streitbare Literaten* (2004).[1] His studies, as well as the bulk of the contributions to the edited volumes of Stefan Neuhaus and Johann Holzner (2007) and Hans-Edwin Friedrich (2009) on literary scandals,[2] and Thomas Ernst *et al.* on 'subversion' in a wider range of cultural forms (2008),[3] exhibit two connected tendencies. Firstly, they use the cases in question as scaffolding for a narrative of intellectual and cultural history, and therefore focus less on the literary works in question than on the positions taken by protagonists in the

associated public scandals – and in these, a text's author may not even be a major player. Often, indeed, these studies replicate the logic of public literary scandal or of (perceived) 'subversion' which they analyse, in that they proceed with only an initial, glancing reference to the putative scandalon or subversive agent. Literary facts tend to be occluded by extra-literary facts. Secondly, and relatedly, these scholars are chiefly concerned to elaborate theories of the relation between aesthetics and cultural politics, in which the former is usually subordinated to the latter.

The emphasis of most contributors here is a little different. They focus more on the literary texts as texts and on the self-understandings of the authors in question. Without necessarily adopting the stance of defenders of sullied reputations, they seek to recover the literary work and the authorial project from behind the fog of accusation and counter-accusation, appropriation and exploitation. Without neglecting the contingent interactions of the logics of individual (self)marketing, collective cultural politicking, legal constraints, media opportunities, and occasional moral panics, these essays try not to let the grey glare of these extrinsic factors hide the possibly greener logic of the texts.[4]

This volume joins the growing body of work concerned with the relations between literary (and other cultural) works and legal questions and discourses: the burgeoning field of Law and Literature. In the USA this field is associated with efforts to import into the study of law some of the critical methods of postmodern literary theory.[5] In the German context it seems to have been domesticated in studies of legal aspects of literary culture or literary representations of questions of law and the philosophy of law. But the recent collection edited by Claude D. Conter (2010) on *Justitiabilität und Rechtmäßigkeit* (justiciability and juridification),[6] that is, the constitution of literary and other cultural texts as objects of law, demonstrates that German work in this field combines legal and literary studies in increasingly stimulating ways. Conter's contributors' themes – censorship, conflicting rights to freedom of expression and privacy, intellectual and moral property, and taboo[7] – are also ours. Still, when Conter describes the volume's purpose as being to demonstrate that literature can always be subject to legal action (can be 'justiciable'), hence that law is a category of the sociology of literature, and that 'literature as a social system' develops along or through 'processes of juridification',[8] this suggests a more systematic ambition than ours: a greater faith in the likelihood of reaching general conclusions about the interrelations, not just of law and literature, but also of all the other entailed forces of cultural and social change: in economics, ethics,

politics, religion, media, and so forth. Questions of cultural property and propriety, sacrality and violation, in short: right and wrong, are involved in all interpretation, as in all creative writing. Law cannot be cleanly demarcated from non-law, above all from ethics (in 'opinions', 'readings', etc). So 'text crimes' can be investigated – if probably not solved – within many conceptual frameworks.

On Zaimoglu's *Leyla* and Biller's *Esra*

The theme of this volume was suggested in 2009 by Duncan Large as we began planning a programme for the Swansea German Studies Seminar. Our original plan also included chapters on – amongst others – the self-reinvention of Gruppe 47 authors, whose fictionalised autobiographies were foundational for West German literature;[9] on Günter Grass, his fictions of self,[10] and his variously incriminated texts (the poem-essay 'Was gesagt werden muß' [What needs to be said] is proving highly disruptive at the time of writing);[11] on Christa Wolf and the censors: political censors in the GDR and, after 1989, self-appointed critics of politically engaged literature in the FRG;[12] and on the 'Wilkomirski' debâcle.[13] These absences are regrettable, and the list could be greatly extended. Our interest in the topic was sparked by two then 'live' literary 'crime cases', one quasi-legal and one legal, which are discussed here in brief, to amplify what is meant by 'text crime'.

The quasi-legal case involved allegations of plagiarism directed against Feridun Zaimoglu and his novel *Leyla* (2006), reported (if rarely supported) by many journalist-critics in German-language newspapers in summer 2006.[14] The case has never come before a court. That might be considered *prima facie* evidence for the writer's innocence. Were he demonstrably a plagiarist, then Emine Sevgi Özdamar, whose novel *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei […]* (1992) some said (and say) he plagiarised in *Leyla*, should have set the wheels of law in motion, as a matter of principle. Or should she? In a brief discussion of this 'affair', Claude D. Conter notes that what is a stake for writers and publishers in cases of (alleged) plagiarism is less their legal copyright or intellectual property than their cultural reputation, or the 'brand value' of their public names. This being widely perceived, a victim of plagiarism is often well advised not to institute proceedings, in order to avoid the appearance of resorting to law merely in order to protect a position in the literary marketplace, which looks ridiculous.[15] The peculiarly narrow cultural niche occupied by the two writers concerned here – the elder and

younger chief representatives of the German literature by writers of Turkish background – must have intensified the pressure not to sue. In fact, contrary to what Conter seems to think, Özdamar never even informally accused Zaimoglu of plagiarism: only of 'stealing her life story'.[16] This is not a crime recognized in law: decidedly not 'justiciable'.

Plagiarism can be a shattering accusation for writers – Paul Celan is perhaps the best and worst example[17] – but it is an uninteresting text crime for critics versed in intertextuality. It may be practised ignobly, as by ex-minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg in his *Verfassung und Verfassungsvertrag* (2007) (he paid the price of political office in 2011);[18] or openly, creatively, and unapologetically, as by Helene Hegemann, who made no bones about copying and editing much of her bestselling club-scene novel *Axolotl Roadkill* (2010) from techno-fan Airen's blog and his ensuing autobiographical novel *Strobo* (2009) (she paid no price at all, as Airen, like Özdamar, did not sue).[19] The Özdamar-Zaimoglu case is more complex. The point is not that he might have plundered her *Karawanserei* for certain textual motifs or even narrative incidents: his more important putative crime lay in appropriating in *Leyla* the whole substance of Özdamar's story, the totality not of her text but of the experience out of which she created the text. This is a very vexed issue. The story of Özdamar's *Karawanserei* is (as we know from extra-textual sources) the author's personal early life-story, fictionalized and poeticized. The in many ways similar story told in Zaimoglu's *Leyla* is (as we also know from extra-textual sources) the author's mother's early life-story, fictionalized and poeticized. The two women's early life-stories appear to have been in many ways similar, in terms of local and temporal geographical, historical, sociological and cultural facts. Does a prior autobiographical author's rights in her story preclude another author morally, if not legally, from telling a similar story about another, in some ways similar person?

Surely not. Yet one can appreciate Özdamar's sense of injury. Her own telling of her own story, as formally experimental autofiction, occupied a unique, prominent position in German (not just German Turkish) literature for over a decade. Her work first established 'intercultural' Turkish German literature as a phenomenon of critical interest. She followed up *Karawanserei* with increasingly ambitious (in aesthetic terms) autonarrative sequels, developing a unique oeuvre which gained international critical esteem.[20] Then, in the mid-2000s, not one but two younger, male authors presented stories based on their mothers' and aunts' early lives in Anatolia: Selim Özdogan's *Die Tochter des Schmieds*

(2005)[21] as well as Zaimoglu's *Leyla*. Both may yet come to be viewed as paying tribute to Özdamar's pioneering first novel, but when they appeared – to great critical acclaim in Zaimoglu's case – their more populist storytelling threatened her status in the German Turkish high cultural niche. The case might best be considered as a drama of succession. An accusation of 'matricide', no less, was levelled against Zaimoglu by Sieglinde Geisel,[22] on implausible literary textual grounds.[23] Still, Geisel has a point. Zaimoglu (and Özdogan) turned a story which Özdamar had created in German as her own, in highly original texts whose 'I' was hers, into the multi-vocal story of her generation, in much less original literary texts where the 'I' was a transgender impersonation. In principle this did not symbolically 'kill' Özdamar; rather, it re-created her as the fertile symbolic mother of new texts on themes indelibly tied to her name in German culture. However, in fact the affair has seriously damaged her literary productivity: she has not (so far) published any substantial work in German since the story broke in the media.[24]

In this case, non-justiciable 'text crimes' (alleged theft of a biography, appropriation of or displacement from a cultural position, damage to a self-image) encapsulate a potentially justiciable one (alleged plagiarism), and all these 'crimes' are very much a matter of perspective – as much as any which come before the law.[25]

The second contemporary case which provided an impetus for this volume also involved conflations of art-narration and life-stories, and also involved migrant subjects, both as authors and as protagonists. This, though, was an eminently justiciable text crime. The text concerned, Maxim Biller's novel *Esra* (2003), was successfully suppressed by two readers who persuaded the courts that it represented them, personally, in ways which injured their right to privacy. Accordingly they remain unnamed here, too. Their suit against *Esra* became a test case of conflict between two constitutionally anchored rights: to privacy and to freedom of artistic expression.[26] This made legal history, and is now cited alongside that of Klaus Mann's *Mephisto* (1936). Mann's novel was banned for political reasons by the National Socialists, and banned again in West Germany in 1966 at the behest of Peter Gorski, an adopted son of Gustav Gründgens, who was transparently portrayed by Mann as 'Hendrik Höfgen'. The *Mephisto* ruling was confirmed by the Federal Constitutional Court in 1971, yet the injunction forbidding publication applied – like the *Esra* ruling – only to the named publisher, so it cannot exactly be described as 'censorship'. During the 1970s *Mephisto* continued to be easily available in editions from the GDR and pirate editions; from

1981, it was issued by a different West German publisher, and Gorski did not sue again.[27] *Esra*, on the other hand, is not easy to come by – especially the (self)'censored' second edition.[28]

Esra was published, injuncted, withdrawn, republished with numerous cuts (blanks), and re-injuncted, all in a matter of months in 2003. The novel fictionalises Biller's ill-starred relationship with a woman of Turkish background. The cuts ostensibly aimed to satisfy the ex-girlfriend and her mother, after they had brought proceedings on grounds that the novel depicted them very intimately (including details of the girlfriend's sexuality), unflatteringly, and recognisably: both women had and have public careers to which the novel directly, indeed unmistakably refers. The blanks in the second edition are sported like heroic wounds in the battle for artistic freedom. They did little to protect the plaintiffs' identities. Some 4,000 copies of the first edition had been sold, and the women's real names were common knowledge among Biller's readers. But in any case they remained easy to deduce. The visible gaps represented a denunciation of the plaintiffs' attack on the freedom of art, proclaiming that censorship was being exercised in Germany, once again.[29] But the way the cuts were carried out – by the author and/or the publisher – was calculated to add insult to injury.

A key point identifying one of the plaintiffs is that she received an 'Alternative Nobel Prize', mentioned in the first sentence of the novel, and not blanked out. The blanks as inserted could only increase the text's outrage to them, and its amusement value for other readers:

> Als Esras Mutter den Nobelpreis bekam, schien es so, also würden Esra und ich es vielleicht doch noch schaffen. der Nobelpreis hatte diese herrische, ehrgeizige Frau für eine Weile friedlich gemacht. (9)
>
> (When Esra's mother got the Nobel Prize, it seemed as if Esra and I might make it after all. the Nobel Prize had made this domineering, ambitious woman peaceful for a while.)

The reason for the presence of the blanks is unhidden:

> Esra hatte von Anfang an zu mir gesagt, ich dürfe nie etwas über sie schreiben. Ich hatte schon mal etwas über sie geschrieben, über ihre und Fridos Hochzeit, und ihre Mutter kam in der Geschichte natürlich auch vor,

> weshalb sie jahrelang durch gelaufen war, in der Hoffnung, mich zufällig zu treffen und mir zur Strafe eine runterzuhauen. (14)
>
> (Esra had told me from the outset that I should never write anything about her. I had already written about her before, about her and Frido's weddng, and naturally her mother appeared in that story too, which was why for years she had walked around hoping to bump into me and punish me with a clip around the ear.)

Biller is famous as a Munich writer, as well as for being pugnacious, Jewish, an immigrant (raised in Prague), and a humorist. Cuts to references to Munich are flagrantly ridiculous: 'Seit wir uns trafen, war ich nicht mehr gern in , schon gar nicht in der Gegend zwischen platz und park' (Since we had met I had felt uncomfortable in , especially in the area between Place and Park) (97). So are cuts to references to Turkey: 'Wenn man nach will, muß man zuerst nach fliegen […]' (If one wants to get to , one first has to fly to) (194); 'Im Hotel gab es ein paar nette Kinder. […] Außer den Familien waren ein paar Italiener und Israelis da […]' (There were some nice children. […] Apart from the families there were some Italians and Israelis) (195). Most cuts are of this kind. At one point, references to Greek place-names are cut, with no possible motive to protect the plaintiffs' identities. This is where *Esra* reaches the (wholly fictive) revelation of common ethnic identity between Adam, the in every way Biller-like narrator, and Esra's family. Her grandparents reveal that they descend from followers of Sabbatai Zvi, i.e. they are Jews too, albeit crypto-Jews whose ancestors converted to Islam.[30] 'Schabbatai' and 'Dönme' (the Turkish group term) remain legible. The effect of cuts here is to intensify the drama of ethnic recognition, adding a layer of implied anti-German tendentiousness – Germans were genocidal, as the grandmother reports; but nowadays they 'only' censor art:

> "Immerhin verdanken wir Schabbatai unser Leben. […] Wir mußten als vor dem Krieg verlassen und nach gehen. Darum konnten uns die Deutschen nichts anhaben, als sie in alle Juden umbrachten." (203)
>
> ("We have Sabbatai to thank for our lives after all. […] As we had to leave before the war and go to . That's

> the reason why the Germans couldn't touch us when they killed all the Jews in .")

The plaintiffs demanded 100,000 euros in damages. The regional court in Munich ordered payment of half that sum, but (following a public declaration of solidarity with Biller signed by over 100 writers, publishers and artists)[31] the fine was eventually quashed by a higher court.[32]

Both these much-debated cases concern the contested representation of really existing women of Turkish backgrounds in fiction by German writers of migrant backgrounds. It is tempting to speculate why the limits of the freedom of artistic expression were being tested by such writers, and their efforts contested by such women, in the mid to late 2000s. German society is still beginning to settle into its self-recognition as a 'post-migrant' multicultural space. In this space, Turkish and Muslim women are symbolic test-cases for the tolerability of cultural difference, surrounded by taboos – but shifting taboos – on their self-representation and representation of them by others. The mobility of gendered taboos presents a challenge and an opportunity for Turkish and Jewish male cultural producers with ambivalent status as insider-outsiders, and ambivalent feelings about assimilating to 'German-ness' and retaining critical difference (critical for their creative careers, as well as for their sense of self). The particular real Turkish women concerned here are far from what passes for 'typical' in Germany: not working-class, not religious, and not in any need of representation by others. Since Emine Sevgi Özdamar had made her private life-story public, she could not bring a breach of privacy case against Zaimoglu; nor, given the nature of the intertextual relations, could she have succeeded with a plagiarism case. Biller's ex-girlfriend, as an actress, and her mother, as a political activist, are public figures, but because they had not publicised their private lives, his work was rightly found to violate their rights. That both writers consciously took the risk of such violation – in very different ways – may be linked with the textual gender politics of their then recent entry into the German literary scene.

In November 1999, Zaimoglu attacked all producers of contemporary literary fiction in an article in *Die Zeit* titled 'Knabenwindelprosa' (boy-nappy-prose).[33] This announced his arrival as a literary author, in competition with others with that status, rather than 'merely' a documentary writer. He had just delivered his first full-length prose work not derived from interview material, *Liebesmale scharlachrot* (2000). Biller's first full-length novel (*Die Tochter*) appeared in March

2000. That April, he gathered most of the prominent writers of his generation (born *circa* 1960) to Tutzing,[34] to hear him deliver a speech calling them all 'Schlappschwänze' (flaccid dicks). Biller allowed one exception: Zaimoglu's work was 'alles andere als Schlappschwanz-Literatur'.[35] Women writers appear to have been invisible to both of them, as they staked their controversy-seeking, status-seeking, matey macho claims. For both men, Turkish women – and, notably, maternal women: Esra's identity as a mother is crucial in Biller's novel – seem to have represented 'material' for textual experiments designed to penetrate German high-status cultural space, at the risk of injuring real bodily subjects in making textual subjects of them.

Such speculative analyses are always tempting, even plausible, and could be extended: in particular, into non-German contexts. Hanif Kureishi has also been accused of writing 'authentic' fiction at the expense of real family members, above all by his sister.[36] Questions of 'authenticity' are critically complex here. They are peculiarly important for migrant and intercultural writers, as well as for their readers, when the writers present themselves in the role of guides to the worlds of ethno-cultural 'Others'. Literary critics in dominant cultures are trained to mock naive notions of authenticity, but minority cultures and emergent intercultures are highly vulnerable to charges of inauthenticity. Biller's *Esra* was widely read as the author's authentic *cri-de-coeur* following a failed relationship; Stuart Taberner shows that it is better understood as an account of a Jewish-German-Turkish identity crisis, culminating in a tentative intercultural utopia, where entwined genealogies recall Lessing's *Nathan der Weise* – or perhaps parody it, mocking such naïve fantasies.[37] Still, the novel also constitutes a text crime against specific persons, and this crime was clearly compounded by its second edition. Legal judgments both assume and confer this other kind of authenticity in the relation between text and non-text. Zaimoglu's *Leyla* may have been 'commissioned' by his mother;[38] it may have been meant to clinch the writer's arrival as a feted 'German author'; it may seem to him and to many critics to represent an impressive feat of transgender imagining; but it may also have been written to displace Özdamar within the literary field. If she feels strongly that the text constitutes such a crime against her, and if it (or the talk about it) has in fact had the effect of displacing and silencing her, then that is also an authenticity to be reckoned with. The incommensurable facticities of texts and of social events cannot be disentangled.

German Text Crimes

The essays in this volume explore a great variety of cases, but there are many common elements. Predictably, one source of accusations dominates the book, as it has dominated cultural reflection in the post-war German-speaking states: the trauma and the contested remembrance of the National Socialist regime, the Second World War, and the Holocaust. This is central in differing ways in the cases discussed here by Duncan Large (on Heidegger), Katharina Hall (on Bernhard Schlink), Stuart Parkes (on Martin Walser), Karoline von Oppen (on Peter Handke), and Áine McMurtry (on Ingeborg Bachmann). It is also implicated in the cases discussed by Julian Preece (on Rolf Hochhuth, Thomas Weiss and Franz-Maria Sonner).

The ethical question of how National Socialism and the Holocaust may and should be textually memorialised is also a question for formal law (a court sentence is a text genre too), and indeed is dramatised as such in Schlink's bestseller *Der Vorleser* (1995) (trans. *The Reader*, 1997). Versions of Adorno's dictum that poetry is impossible after Auschwitz keep returning in these debates, in the trope of silence. In a high-profile speech in 1998, accepting the Frankfurt Book Fair's Peace Prize, Martin Walser attacked a German media culture of unremitting incrimination ('Beschuldigung') by critics always alert to suspected offenses against the memory of victims of National Socialism.[39] Walser called for the 'normalisation' of Germany, as a country now no more inclined to barbarism than others.[40] Implying that 'normalisation' would mean a cessation of cultural hostilities grounded in the sensitivity of conflicted collective memories, Walser seemed to be calling for a measure of silence. Heidegger's post-war silence on National Socialism and its crimes has been construed by his defenders as the only possible dignified stance amid the din of recrimination; but by others as an implicit re-inscription of his offense as a fellow-traveller. Schlink's novel proposes a perpetrator who opts for self-incriminating silence in court, rather than reveal that she cannot read. To hostile readers, this device allegorically exculpates not just one fictional war criminal but all real ones, and the novel fails to give adequate voice to Holocaust victims. Bachmann's crisis of the early 1960s, her fall into public poetic silence until the prose work *Malina* (1971), is associated with her struggle to find an adequate aesthetic form to connect public memories and private experiences of traumatic violence. Handke's highly unpopular position on Serbia and the wars of the 1990s in ex-Yugoslavia is rooted in what he sees as the

self-serving amnesia and selective silence of German-language culture with regard to the Balkans during the Second World War.

In light of Walser's remarks on 'Beschuldigung' and normalisation, the loud scandal provoked a few years later by his lightly fictionalised portrayal of the powerful celebrity critic Marcel Reich-Ranicki – a Jewish Holocaust survivor – in the satirical novel *Tod eines Kritikers* (2002) was predictable. Stuart Parkes's essay shows that the novel uses Jewish stereotypes much less egregiously than some other German writers' aggrieved depictions of Reich-Ranicki. Indeed, Walser's aim in the novel, Parkes argues, was 'to show how German society is not at ease with itself in any question relating to Jews' – and he concludes that at most Walser's 'crime' here was to write a bad novel. That of his critics, on the other hand, was to exploit the topics of Holocaust memory and anti-Semitism for their own interests. The literary editor of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Frank Schirrmacher, precipitated the scandal with an open letter to Walser justifying his refusal to serialise the novel. Parkes suggests that he did so not for reasons of unalloyed ethical principle, let alone on grounds of literary critical judgment, but because he knew it would help sell copies of his newspaper.

Katharina Hall surveys the highly polarised reception of Bernhard Schlink's *Der Vorleser*, drawing out the ways in which critics' positions – national location, ethnicity, gender, academic or journalistic publication venues, and the timing of their interventions – tend to predict their views of the novel: either as a successfully ambivalent examination of transgenerational traumatic memories, or as a populist exploitation of the marketability of Holocaust narratives. More than other essays in this volume, Hall's adopts a meta-critical approach (she has criticised the novel elsewhere).[41] Systematically analysing the still ongoing debate in German-language and Anglophone (British, American, and other) criticism, Hall demonstrates the continuing salience of national-linguistic cultural boundaries, but also their insufficiency as frames for understanding how texts are read. She shows that aesthetic criteria are crucial here, and that there is a close correlation between views on two questions of Schlink's putative guilt. Those who deem him guilty of an ethical 'crime against the history and memory of the Holocaust' also deem him equally guilty of an aesthetic 'crime against literature'. There is surprisingly little middle ground between judgments of the novel as a 'masterpiece' or as (in Cynthia Ozick's words) 'Nazi porn'. Nor is there any sign of positions once adopted being shifted. This raises questions about the priority and entanglement of ethical and aesthetic judgments.

It is probably widely accepted that a 'good book' can promote unwelcome, even by some accounts 'criminal' ideas, while 'bad books' can be innocuous, yet critics – more than 'ordinary readers' – hanker for a reconciliation between aesthetics and ethics, form and thought.

Duncan Large's chapter moves from a survey of responses to Heidegger's work and public image in English, French, and German literature to focus on the Northern Ireland poet Tom Paulin's engagement with the philosopher following the 'Heidegger Affair' of the late 1980s, sparked by the critical attention drawn by Victor Farías and others to the 'Rektoratsrede' of 1933. In a complex long poem in 1987 Paulin condemned Heidegger's entire work as not only fraudulent and equivocal, but implicitly fascistic and latterly riddled with silence on the Holocaust. Arraigning Heidegger for what Large calls his 'texts' crime': 'their failure to disclose the crimes which can only be read between their lines', Paulin went on to elaborate an explicitly anti-Heideggerian critical aesthetic of 'dwelling without roots'. But nuance lies in Paulin's poems' self-reflexive suggestions of self-incrimination in the face of war crimes or crimes of toleration of them. Also from Paulin comes the dictum that 'all great worldshaking events / have been brought about / not by the written but the spoken word'.[42] This suggests that speeches like the 'Rektoratsrede' – or Walser's – have far more power to change the world than poetic or philosophical texts *per se*. The 'work' as text lacks impact until mediated by voices. This adds to the sinister overtones of Paulin's image of 'Heidegger's fans / gathered in Freiburg / to hear a voice drone and spit / behind a net curtain […].'[43] 'Text crime', then, may be a misnomer for an event which begins not with what a text as such 'says', or fails to 'say', but rather in acts of speech which recite or paraphrase texts' contents, for particular audiences, moments, and purposes. For a text to incriminate or be incriminated, vocal performances are required. It is a moot point whether this holds for Paulin's own 'text peccadillos'. Mis-transcriptions from German mar the 1980s poetry, and in more recent poetry and criticism Paulin assesses Heidegger's thought with more nuance and more positively, but sometimes misconstrues the commentaries on which he relies.

Karoline von Oppen's title 'Justice for Peter Handke?' echoes that of Robert Weninger's chapter on the case in *Streitbare Literaten*.[44] Weninger joined the vast majority of German and international commentators in condemning Handke for his 'nur schwer nachvollziehbare, unreflektiert pauschale und undifferenzierte Parteinahme'[45] for Serbia, in the essay-travelogue *Eine winterliche Reise […]* (1996) and subsequent, ever more

controversial texts and spoken interventions on politics and war in ex-Yugoslavia. Von Oppen takes Handke's side in her close reading of the 1996 text. She seeks to establish that its aims are not to assert a 'correct' authorial view of the war in the Balkans against others, but to introduce humility and uncertainty into political debate by aesthetic means. Handke published the essay at a time when debate in Germany and other NATO countries was focused on the self-serving question von Oppen formulates as: 'whether Serbia had been adequately punished'. She stresses the significance of Handke's 'anti-fascist' itinerary in the text, connecting sites of German atrocities in the Second World War, a feature which non-Serbian readers have missed – forgivably, as Handke left his topography of memory, or rather of German amnesia, implicit. She highlights the way Handke stages the unreliability of the writing 'I', and her analysis of the text's multi-generic form enables her to identify irony in passages of description which have generally been seen as reproducing representational stereotypes – always a heinous text crime. This is likely to be a controversial essay for its partisanship – even though that is tempered by von Oppen's doubts as to whether the formal complexity of Handke's intervention aided his ideological cause.

In Áine McMurtry's essay on Ingeborg Bachmann, memories of National Socialism play a pivotal role. The problem of how to represent traumatic violence, connecting the atrocities of the past with the crimes and silences of the political and personal present, lay at the root of Bachmann's personal and poetic crisis in the early 1960s. At this time she wrote numerous poetic drafts which she did not seek to publish. When her siblings and executors published them in 2000, they were accused of editorial text crimes: they had desecrated the memory of a poet who enjoys quasi-sacral status, by affording readers insight into her suffering as a woman, rather than as a poet crafting public utterances, and they had compounded this crime by providing inadequate editorial apparatus. But the problem of poet/persona/person distinctions was precisely what led to Bachmann's crisis: she had come to think that the artifice of the poetic subject whose aesthetic devices (in McMurty's words) 'sublimate the articulation of crisis' was 'politically suspect, if not indeed criminal'. For McMurtry the drafts are radical experiments with form, coupling confessional immediacy of expressions of private, mental and bodily distress with 'hyper-identification' with other bodies victimised by fascistic and patriarchal violence. These experiments eventually enabled Bachmann to develop the prose poetics of the *Todesarten* cycle. With *Malina* she found 'an aesthetic solution to the representation of

continuing fascist structures and their relation to subjective crisis in the post-Holocaust situation'. Bachmann's crisis of self-incrimination and self-victimisation, and incrimination of the violent foundations of her society and culture, entailed almost a decade of public silence.

Julian Preece discusses disturbing symptoms of the enduring culture of violence and silence in recent works by Rolf Hochhuth, Thomas Weiss and Franz-Maria Sonner, in which assassination is advocated as a legitimate strategy for resisting the structural violence of global capitalism in Germany. Preece is especially concerned by what he calls the 'disturbingly restrained' reception of these works. The long German tradition of politically motivated assassination includes numerous 'actions' of the Red Army Faction, including, after their 1970s heyday, the killings of the head of research at Siemens, Karl-Heinz Beckurts, and his driver Eckhard Groppler, in 1986; of the diplomat Gerold von Braunmühl, in the same year; of Deutsche Bank chairman Alfred Herrhausen in 1989; and of Treuhand chairman Karsten Detlev Rohwedder in 1991. A decade and more later, Hochhuth's play *McKinsey kommt* (2003) and Weiss's novel *Tod eines Trüffelschweins* (2007), both loosely based on real-life events, present assassinations as, if not laudable, then comprehensible and commensurate with the (in Conter's terms, mostly 'non-justiciable') economic and social crimes committed by transnational corporations in the course of acquiring, merging, 'rationalising' and dissolving German businesses. Such acts of economic and social violence are a feature of global capitalism; German businesses are not particularly vulnerable to them. But whereas the RAF targeted German leaders in business and other sectors (and US military bases), the works Preece discusses specify the targets of 'legitimate' counter-violence as individuals working for American corporate interests. Weiss's novel further implies that the 'legitimate target' is a Jew, which makes his novel's title egregiously offensive. Preece finds the lack of expressions of disquiet about such texts disquieting: the silence among German readers and critics suggests a widespread 'klammheimliche Freude'[46] in indulging in fantasies of national revenge upon foreign 'economic imperialists'.

Some of the same murderous fantasies figure in David Barnett's essay on recent legal and quasi-legal conflicts between playwrights and the directors who 'criminally' abuse their scripts. Hochhuth notoriously presented Rohwedder's assassination as legitimate in the play *Wessis in Weimar* (1992); Volker Lösch's production of Gerhart Hauptmann's *Die Weber* (1893) in Dresden in 2004 introduced verbatim texts elicited from local unemployed people, including some wishing death to Chancellor

Gerhard Schröder and others. Hauptmann's granddaughter successfully took out an injunction suppressing that production. Hochhuth has similarly banned productions of his own work and even mounted his own 'vanity productions' in their place, as Barnett recounts. He did not prevent the Berliner Ensemble production of *Wessis in Weimar*, even though it offended him greatly. Director Einar Schleef radically reworked the incendiary text material to create a more multivocal, reflective drama: this story offers some comfort to Preece. Sometimes playwrights succeed in intimidating directors, leading to dutifully 'werktreu' productions, dull and unsuccessful theatre, as Barnett shows in the case of Theresia Walser's work. Heiner Müller and René Pollesch are among further examples of dramatists committed to open theatrical experimentation who have nevertheless resorted to the law to suppress productions, or to insist on changes or programme notes distancing them from the work as presented on stage. 'Violation' of the supposed 'integrity' of the script is integral to 'Regietheater', a term which was originally and still sometimes is accusatory or pejorative. But Barnett shows that its contrary, 'Werktreue', can neither be defined nor put into practice. What German copyright law calls 'distortion' of the text as property of the writer is unavoidable in theatrical production. What really counts in disputes between writers and theatres – even more than the details of their legal contracts – the relative cultural status of the parties in conflict, their contingent interests in pursuing conflict or in compromising, and last not least the spectators as arbiters of value: bums on seats, and reviews which translate into them.

David Robb's essay on the permanent conflict between the political authorities in the GDR and critical song-writers demonstrates a similar multi-polar logic at work, arguably simplified by the primacy of political rather than economic constraints, and hence greater relative transparency of positions and motives. Robb shows that audience responses were crucial factors in state agents' estimates of the practical utility of banning or censoring performing artists' work, and even in assessing whether or not a crime was being committed in the presentation of texts wreathed in layers of irony. Moreover, state agents were far from united in their understandings and interpretations, and performers became expert at exploiting their differences. Robb combines archival research with text criticism, showing how, in much of their work, Wolf Biermann and the cabaret artists Hans-Eckhard Wenzel and Steffen Mensching drew on the heroic cultural tradition of Marxist revolutionary writings and deeds in order to attack the shortcomings of 'really existing socialism'. By

mobilising the state's own ideological mythology against it, their intertextual strategies created a space for dissent which plausibly claimed socialist legitimacy. Biermann chose a confrontational approach and was exiled, but Wenzel and Mensching remained in business as the cabaret act 'Karls Enkel' (a reference to both Marx and Valentin), enjoying the unique and officially non-existent status of an independent theatre troupe, satirising the GDR regime's pretensions to legitimacy with increasingly bleak humour and open critique.

Images of the Bakhtinian-Rabelaisian, carnivalesque, 'grotesque body' often feature in songs against the Socialist Unity Party, as Robb shows with scatological and obscene examples. Bakhtin's work itself is often read as a coded critique of Stalinist oppression.[47] Representations of bodily 'filth', degradation and excess have traditionally been assumed to subvert orthodoxy and authority. On the other hand, gender-aware readings of grotesque representations often find that they endorse male adult violence against women and children, and so feminist culture is strongly associated with anti-pornography politics. Heike Bartel's essay on Charlotte Roche's bestseller *Feuchtgebiete* (2008) reveals that these correspondences are not so simple. Bartel sets the novel in the context of feminist debates since the 1970s on pornography, particularly on the possibility of undoing the equation between feminism and joyless prudery by developing, in theory and practice, a non-patriarchal, non-exploitative, pro-women pornography. *Feuchtigkeit* combines features of pornography with grotesque corporeal comedy, claiming to advance women's emancipation in ways which recall these debates. Bartel goes on to compare Roche's work with Elfriede Jelinek's critique of mainstream pornography in *Lust* (1989). In close readings of both texts, Bartel shows how *Lust* deconstructs pornographic textuality by staging and disrupting its routines, foregrounding the sign-systems of economics and power in everyday language and the way they are underwritten by promises of male violence. *Feuchtgebiete* has no coherent political, ethical and aesthetic programme: the un-self-reflexive text reproduces dominant relations of gender power at macro and micro levels alike. Roche and her narrator claim to disrupt sexual fantasies of purity – the squeaky clean 'rubber doll' image to which sub-pornographic advertising urges women to aspire. But since every possible fetish is now equally marketised, *Feuchtgebiete*'s 'grotesque' fascination with bodily excretions, suppurations and odours seems slightly specialised, rather than very radical. This helps explain why there has been no scandal about it.[48] Encouraging frankness in talk about sex is hardly a crime. But voicing female desire in a

patriarchal culture is a project which Jelinek and many others have shown to be more than problematic. Roche's manifest ignorance of such work, her lack of literary status, and her apparent lack of ambition to achieve it, protect her novel from serious criticism. The crimes involved here have too many perpetrators to mention.

Notes

1 Robert Weninger, *Streitbare Literaten. Kontroverse und Eklats in der deutschen Literatur von Adorno bis Walser*, Munich: Beck, 2004.

2 Stefan Neuhaus and Johann Holzner, eds, *Literatur als Skandal: Fälle Funktionen Folgen*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007; Hans-Edwin Friedrich, ed., *Literaturskandale*, Frankfurt/Main etc.: Peter Lang, 2009. Two relevant monographs have been announced: Thomas Ernst, *Literatur und Subversion. Politisches Schreiben in der Gegenwart*, Bielefeld: transcript, 2012; and Andreas Freinschlag, *Theorie literarischer Provokation*, Vienna etc.: Böhlau, announced annually since 2009.

3 Thomas Ernst, Patricia Gozalbez Cantó, Sebastian Richter, Nadja Sennewald and Julia Tieke, eds, *SUBversionen: Zum Verhältnis von Politik und Ästhetik in der Gegenwart*, Bielefeld: transcript, 2008.

4 See: Arthur K. Williams, Stuart Parkes and Julian Preece, eds, *Literature, Markets and Media in Germany and Austria Today*, Oxford and New York: Peter Lang, 2000.

5 A useful comparative overview on US, British and German studies in 'Law and Literature' is provided by Greta Olson, 'De-Americanizing Law and Literature Narratives: Opening Up the Story', *Law and Literature*, 22:2 (2010), 338-66.

6 Claude D. Conter, ed., *Justitiabilität und Rechtmäßigkeit. Verrechtlichungsprozesse von Literatur und Film in der Moderne*, Amsterdam and New York, NY: Rodopi, 2010.

7 See here also David Jackson, ed., *Taboos in German Literature*, Oxford: Berghahn, 1996.

8 Conter, 'Justitiabilität und Rechtmäßigkeit: Verrechtlichungsprozesse von Literatur und Film', in Conter, ed., *Justitiabilität*, pp. 7-26 (here: p. 7f.).

9 See Rhys W. Williams, 'Survival Without Compromise? Reconfiguring the Past in the Works of Hans Werner Richter and Alfred Andersch', in: Neil H. Donahue and Doris Kirchner, eds, *Flight of Fantasy: New Perspectives on Inner Emigration in German Literature, 1933-1945*, New York: Berghahn, 2003, pp. 211-22.

10 See Rebecca Braun, '"Mich in Variationen erzählen": Günter Grass and the Ethics of Autobiogaphy', *Modern Language Review*, 103:4 (2008), 1051-66.

11 *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 4 April 2012. On 16 April 2012, the newspaper's web edition showed 229 readers' comments, while a search on Youtube for 'Günter Grass' with 'Was gesagt werden muß' returned over 200 results (with 'What Must be Said', just 22), and at least three English translations were circulating online – see: http://kugelmass.wordpress.com/2012/04/10/notes-on-the-translation-of-what-must-be-said (accessed 16 April 2012). For a discussion of the poem's implications for international law, see Stefan A. G. Talmon, 'Günter Grass und das Völkerrecht (Günter Grass and Public International Law)', Bonn Research Papers on Public International Law No 3/2012 (24 April, 2012), available at http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2045683.

12 See Georgina Paul, '"Ich, Seherin, gehörte zum Palast": Christa Wolf's Literary Treatment of the Staatssicherheit in the Context of Her Poetics of Self-analysis', in: Paul Cooke and Andrew Plowman, eds, *German Writers and the Politics of Culture: Dealing with the Stasi*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, 87-106.

13 Bruno Dössekker's fictional 'memoir' of a Holocaust survivor, Binjamin Wilkomirski's *Bruchstücke*, was published in 1995 by Jüdischer Verlag (part of Suhrkamp) and translated into nine languages before it was exposed in 1998 by Daniel Ganzfried. The case is discussed in tandem with Schlink's *Der Vorleser* (*The Reader*) (see Hall in this volume) by Omer Bartov, 'Germany as Victim', *New German Critique*, 80 (2000), 29-40. See also Hans-Edwin Friedrich, 'Gefälschte Erinnerung. Binjamin Wilkomirski: *Bruchstücke. Aus einer Kindheit 1939-1945* (1995)', in: Hans-Edwin Friedrich, ed., *Literaturskandale*, Frankfurt/Main etc.: Peter Lang, 2009, pp. 203-16.

14 The origin of the accusation of plagiarism retailed by numerous journalists was Maria Brunner, who in late May 2006 provided to Volker Weidermann of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* a paper detailing parallels between the two novels. Interested Germanists have ever since awaited her article on the subject, announced as: 'Parallele kulturelle Identifikationsräume in F. Zaimoglus *Leyla* und E. S. Özdamars Roman *Das Leben ist eine Karawanserei* oder Absorption von Textteilen?' This title appears in the downloadable table of contents of the as yet

unpublished volume *Der deutschsprachige Roman aus interkultureller Sicht*, edited by Gabriella Rácz and László V. Szabó (Studia Germanica Universitatis Vesprimiensis, supplementary volume 10), Veszprém: Universitätsverlag; Vienna: Praesens. The book is dated online '2009'. See http://german.uni-pannon.hu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=41&Itemid=1 (accessed 1 April 2012).

15 Conter, 'Justitiabilität und Rechtmäßigkeit: Verrechtlichungsprozesse von Literatur und Film', in Conter, ed., *Justitiabilität*, pp. 7-26 (here: p. 17f.).

16 Volker Weidermann, 'Abgeschrieben? Streit um den Roman *Leyla*: Özdamar gegen Zaimoglu', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1 June 2006.

17 Claire Goll's accusation that Celan had plagiarised her late husband's work poisoned the last years of Celan's life. See: Barbara Wiedemann, *Paul Celan. Die Goll-Affäre. Dokumente zu einer Infamie*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2000.

18 Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg, *Verfassung und Verfassungsvertrag. Konstitutionelle Entwicklungsstufen in den USA und der EU*, diss., Bayreuth, 2007; Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2009. See: Peter Sloterdijk, 'Doktor Wenn und Doktor Aber: Die Figur des Hochstaplers gehört ins Zentrum der modernen Kultur', *Der Spiegel* 49, 4 December 2011.

19 For contrasting views see: Harald Martenstein, 'Hegemann und Airen im Textvergleich', *Die Zeit*, 2 March 2010; Philipp Theisohn, 'Call the Spade a Spade', *Signandsight.com*, 4 March 2010, at: http://www.signandsight.com/features/1999.html (accessed 4 April 2012).

20 See e.g. Margaret Littler, 'Intimacy and Affect in Turkish-German Writing: Emine Sevgi Özdamar's "The Courtyard in the Mirror"', *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 29:3 (2008), 331-45; Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf, 'Autofiktion oder: Autobiographie nach der Autobiographie. Goethe – Barthes – Özdamar', in: Ulrich Breuer and Beatrice Sandberg, eds, *Autobiographisches Schreiben in der deutschsprachigen Gegenwartsliteratur*, vol 1: *Grenzen der Identität und der Fiktionalität*, Munich: Iudicium, 2006, pp. 353-68.

21 Selim Özdogan, *Die Tochter des Schmieds*, Berlin: Aufbau, 2005.

22 Sieglinde Geisel, 'Leyla – eine Travestie?', *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 24 June 2006.

23 Tom Cheesman, 'For Feridun Zaimoglu's *Leyla*. Crime Facts and Fictions', *German as a Foreign Language*, 3 (2008), 4-25 (here: p. 19); and *Novels of Turkish*

German Settlement: Cosmopolite Fictions, Rochester N.Y.: Camden House, 2007, pp. 183-96.

24 Özdamar reportedly said in 2009 that the affair left her unable to continue writing in German: personal communication from Kevin Robins (a friend of the writer). She has not published a book since *Seltsame Sterne starren zur Erde. Wedding – Pankow 1976/77,* Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2003.

25 Accounts of the case include: Yasemin Dayıoğlu-Yücel, 'Authorship and Authenticity in Migrant Writing: the Plagiarism Debate on *Leyla*', in: Tom Cheesman and Karin E. Yeşialda, eds, *Feridun Zaimoglu*, Oxford etc: Peter Lang (forthcoming, 2013); and Andreas Pflitsch, 'Fiktive Migration und migrierende Fiktion', in: Ezli Özkan et al., eds, *Wider den Kulturenzwang. Migration, Kulturalisierung und Weltliteratur*, Bielefeld: transcript, 2009, pp. 231-49.

26 Thank you to Brigid Haines for drawing my attention to the case and collecting resources.

27 Anja Schiemann, 'Persönlichkeitsrechtsverletzung contra Kunstfreiheit – Die *Mephisto*-Entscheidung und ihre Auswirkung auf die neuere Rechtsprechung', in: Conter, ed., *Justitiabilität*, pp. 27-45.

28 My thanks to Petra Fachinger and Rachel Ramsay for facilitating access to copies of the 2003 editions.

29 Bodo Plachta, 'Lücken – Striche – Einschwärzungen', in: Conter, ed., *Justitiabilität*, pp. 129-47 (on *Esra* pp. 144-6).

30 See: Stuart Taberner, 'Germans, Jews and Turks in Maxim Biller's Novel *Esra*', *German Quarterly*, 79:2 (2006), 234-48.

31 'Fall *Esra*: Solidarität mit Maxim Biller', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 22 July 2006. It is worth mentioning the number of 'Lesermeinungen' posted in response to this ringing multi-author declaration: none.

32 For exhaustive discussion and further references see Eva Inés Obergfell, 'Der Fall *Esra* – Eine Neujustierung des Verhältnisses von Persönlichkeitsrecht und literarischer Kunstfreiheit', in: Conter, ed., *Justitiabilität*, pp. 65-84; and cf. Gertrud Maria Rösch, 'Wem gehört eine Geschichte? Über die Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Fiktionalisierung von Realität', in Conter, ed., *Justitiabilität*, pp. 217-28.

33 Feridun Zaimoglu, 'Knabenwindelprosa', *Die Zeit*, 18 November 1999.

34 Christof Siemes, 'Schwäne in goldenem Nebel', *Die Zeit*, 6 April 2000.

35 Maxim Biller, 'Feige das Land, schlapp die Literatur. Über die Schwierigkeiten beim Sagen der Wahrheit', *Die Zeit*, 13 April 2000.

36 Yasmin Kureishi's protests include '"Keep Me Out of Your Novels": Hanif Kureishi's Sister Has Had Enough', *The Independent*, 4 May 2008. She has not resorted to the law, perhaps not only because British libel law is unaffordable. Also worth considering in this context is Abdullahi El-Tom, 'McCourt's *Angela's Ashes* and the Portrait of the Other', *Irish Journal of Anthropology*, 3 (1998), 78-89. Women may be perpetrators too. Rigoberta Menchú Tum is cast variously as a text criminal or as the victim of David Stoll's text crimes: see Leigh Gilmore, 'Jurisdictions: *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, The Kiss, and Scandalous Self-Representation in the Age of Memoir and Trauma', *Signs*, 28:2 (2003), 695-718. Many Bangladeshis in Brick Lane deem Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2008) an affront. And so on.

37 Stuart Taberner, 'Germans, Jews and Turks in Maxim Biller's Novel *Esra*', *German Quarterly*, 79:2 (2006), 234-48 (here 248). Cf. Tom Cheesman, 'Nathan Without the Rings: Postmodern Religion in Feridun Zaimoglu and Günter Senkel's "Nathan Messiah"', in: Tom Cheesman and Karin E. Yeşialda, eds, *Feridun Zaimoglu*, Oxford etc: Peter Lang, 2012, pp. 117-44.

38 See Dorothee Kimmich, 'Metamorphosen einer Biographie: Bemerkungen zu Feridun Zaimoglus *Leyla*', in: Rüdiger Schütt, ed., *Feridun Zaimoglu in Schrift und Bild*, Kiel: Edition Fliehkraft, 2011, pp. 57-69.

39 Martin Walser, 'Dankesrede von Martin Walser zur Verleihung des Friedenspreises des Deutschen Buchhandels in der Frankfurter Paulskirche am 11. Oktober 1998. Erfahrungen beim Verfassen einer Sonntagsrede', at: Stiftung Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, http://www.hdg.de/lemo/html/dokumente/WegeInDieGegenwart_redeWalserZumFriedenspreis/ (accessed 6 April 2012).

40 See: Stuart Taberner, *German Literature of the 1990s and Beyond: Normalization and the Berlin Republic*, Rochester, N.Y.: Camden House, 2005.

41 Katharina Hall, 'The Author, the Novel, the Reader and the Perils of "Neue Lesbarkeit": A Comparative Analysis of Bernhard Schlink's *Selbs Justiz* and *Der Vorleser*', *German Life and Letters*, 59:3 (2006), 446-67.

42 Tom Paulin, *The Invasion Handbook*, London: Faber & Faber, 2002, p. 89.

43 Tom Paulin, *Walking a Line*, London: Faber & Faber, 1994, p. 43.

44 Robert Weninger, '"Der Ritt über den Balken": Gerechtigkeit für Peter Handke?', in *Streitbare Literaten*, 165-85.

45 Weninger, p. 170.

46 The formulation comes from a statement signed 'Mescalero' issued by the students union (ASTA) in Göttingen following the assassination of Siegfried Buback in April 1977. See Ulrich Greiner, 'Klammheimliche Freude', *Die Zeit*, 39 March 2007.

47 See Caryl Emerson, *The First One Hundred Years of Mikhail Bakhtin*, Princeton, Princeton UP, 1997.

48 For a contrary view see Albert Meier, 'Immer sehr unmädchenhaft. Charlotte Roche und ihre *Feuchtgebiete*', in: Hans-Edwin Friedrich, ed., *Literaturskandale*, Frankfurt/Main etc.: Peter Lang, 2009, pp. 231-41.

Duncan Large

'Part Woodcutter and Part Charlatan': Tom Paulin's Heidegger

When the full extent of Martin Heidegger's commitment to Nazism emerged in the 1980s, the resulting 'Affair' provoked many poetic, dramatic and fictional treatments. In his substantial poem 'The Caravans on Lüneberg Heath' (1987), Ulster poet Tom Paulin initially responded with an impassioned critique, and he has returned to Heidegger several more times in his poetry and criticism. The result is one of the subtlest and most ambivalent treatments of the Heidegger case, which touches on some of Paulin's most urgent poetic concerns regarding hermetic language, 'dwelling without roots', and the role of the committed intellectual within an oppressive state.

Introduction: The 'Heidegger Affair'

In the history of post-war German thought, one 'text crime' stands out, namely the so-called 'Heidegger Affair' that erupted in the late 1980s, involving the pre-eminent German thinker of the twentieth century and his political stance *vis-à-vis* the National Socialist regime, especially during his time as Rector of the University of Freiburg in 1933-4. Exhibit A in any arraignment of Heidegger has to be the inaugural address which he gave in May 1933, on the assumption of the rectorship, 'Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universität' (The Self-Assertion of the German University). Heidegger's son Hermann is at pains to point out: 'The words "National Socialism" and "National Socialist" do not occur in this address; "the Führer", the "Reich Chancellor" or "Hitler" are not named'[1] – but no amount of special pleading can take away from the fact that Heidegger intervened politically at a crucial moment in the establishment of the National Socialist regime. Having put his name forward for the rectorship and then accepted the appointment, he joined the Party (on 1 May 1933, the same day as Carl Schmitt) and gave a high-profile speech which, at the very least, gave the new regime a thinly veiled approval by thematising concepts such as 'Entschlossenheit' (resoluteness) and 'Führerschaft' (leadership), making no secret of the speaker's 'völkisch' nationalism and enthusiasm for the destiny of the Movement. Heidegger resigned the rectorship after less than a year, in February 1934, and the speech was withdrawn from publication, but the

damage was done, especially since – even after the war, after the Holocaust – Heidegger refused to recant and distance himself publicly from the regime and its crimes.[2]

Heidegger really didn't do 'Vergangenheitsbewältigung' (coming to terms with the past): the closest he came was in an egregiously evasive, self-justificatory interview with *Der Spiegel* recorded in 1966 but released (at his insistence) only after his death in 1976. The Rectorial Address was then republished in 1982, initially in a bilingual German/French edition, and the whole 'Heidegger Affair' took off in 1987, with the publication – first in French, but soon afterwards in thirteen other languages – of the book *Heidegger et le nazisme* by the Chilean historian (and professor at the Freie Universität in Berlin) Víctor Farías.[3] Farías created a stir by documenting the true extent of Heidegger's Nazi affiliation and arguing that he was not just a duped fellow-traveller – like, for example, in another field, the composer Richard Strauss[4] – but rather a 'true believer'. Nor is it a coincidence that the Affair should have originated and had its most explosive impact in France, for French Heidegger reception had achieved international pre-eminence in the post-war period, with what Vincent Descombes calls the intellectual 'generation of the three H's' (Hegel and Husserl being the other two).[5] Farías' book led to a flurry of publications by leading intellectuals of the French left who felt obliged to take a stance: Jacques Derrida's book *De l'esprit: Heidegger et la question* (1987) is the best known, but there were also rather less well-known books by Pierre Bourdieu, Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, Jean-François Lyotard and others.[6] These publications (and the many more that have followed since, notably by American Heideggerians)[7] have all been exercised by the question of the extent to which Heidegger's philosophy and politics are related, indeed whether the philosophy might be *predicated* on the politics. Not that this question is exactly unique to Heidegger's case, though, or even to German-language culture, for the question of the relationship between the work of an intellectual or artistic genius and their rebarbative politics continues to exercise scholars of, say, Martin Luther, Richard Wagner or Stefan George, not to mention Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot, Louis-Ferdinand Céline, Gabriele d'Annunzio and many others. Since the late 1980s the philosophical community has come to terms with the Heidegger Affair and absorbed its impact, though: ten years after Farías, Julian Young even managed to argue, against the grain, that Heidegger's thought was not compromised by his Nazi affiliation and instead consistent with 'a commitment to orthodox liberal democracy'.[8] Heidegger's popularity

remains unabated, especially in the USA, and the *Gesamtausgabe* chugs on (in German and various translations) at the rate of around two volumes per year, edging its way towards the 102 volumes of its completion. The controversy was reignited, again in France, by the publication in 2005 of Emmanuel Faye's book on the seminars of 1933-5, *Heidegger, l'introduction du nazisme dans la philosophie*, but the debate is essentially concluded, and the coals have been well and truly raked over.[9]

Heidegger's Literary Reception

For the purposes of this chapter, though, my interest in the Heidegger Affair springs less from the – by now very well analysed – philosophical reception than from its literary reception. In many respects Heidegger's relation to literature is also very well studied, for he was one of the most literary of philosophers, who not only wrote poetry himself and showed a poet's fascination with words in his philosophical writings,[10] but gave several lecture courses on the poetry of Hölderlin, which he regarded as the most compelling expression of philosophical truth, and published a monograph on Hölderlin, important essays on Trakl, Rilke and George, and shorter pieces on several other poets.[11] Heidegger cultivated a number of living poets, too (notably Ernst Jünger), keeping up with their work and corresponding with them, visiting them and receiving their visits, with the result that their work had a significant impact on his.[12]

Not surprisingly, then, Heidegger and his work have in turn had a profound impact on many poets and writers, both within the German-speaking world and beyond. The most famous Heidegger-themed work of literature must surely be Paul Celan's great posthumously published poem 'Todtnauberg' (1970), which anticipates the Heidegger Affair by thematising the poet's frustrated hope for a word of contrition from the thinker, his 'Hoffnung, heute, / auf eines Denkenden / kommendes / Wort / im Herzen' (hope, today, / of a thinking man's / coming / word / in the heart).[13] Günter Grass began his published engagement with the philosopher by parodying 'Heideggerdeutsch' in *Hundejahre* (Dog Years, 1963), although by the time he returned to Heidegger in *Mein Jahrhundert* (My Century, 1999) he had reached a kind of accommodation and presented a more balanced appreciation.[14] The other major German-language writers responding to Heidegger have all been Austrian. As early as 1949 Ingeborg Bachmann wrote her Vienna University doctoral dissertation on the philosopher,[15] while Peter Handke's use of Heideggerian discourse in his later work (from *Langsame Heimkehr* [Slow

Homecoming], 1979) led Ulrich Raulff to ask: 'Was wäre Peter Handke ohne Heidegger?' (What would Peter Handke be without Heidegger?)[16] On the other hand, in his 1985 novel *Alte Meister* (Old Masters) Thomas Bernhard mercilessly lambasted Heidegger even before the Affair broke, with a swingeing diatribe against the philosopher from his fictional protagonist, the art critic Reger.[17] In *Wolken.Heim* (Clouds.Home, 1988), Elfriede Jelinek took issue with Heidegger's Rectorial Address, and she returned to Heidegger in her next play, *Totenauberg* (1991), which dramatises the philosopher's relationship with Hannah Arendt.[18]

One of the most substantial fictionalisations of Heidegger's biography is the novel *La sombra de Heidegger* (Heidegger's Shadow, 2005) by the Argentinian novelist José Pablo Feinmann.[19] In France, the consuming interest in Heidegger among post-war philosophers has also been matched by the poets and writers. The two categories are not necessarily distinct, of course, and generations of philosopher-writers from Sartre, Bataille and Blanchot to Philippe Sollers have responded to Heidegger's work, including Catherine Clément with her Heidegger/Arendt novel *Martin et Hannah* (1999).[20] When Heidegger first travelled to France in 1955 he made a point of calling on the poet (and former Resistance fighter) René Char, whose work he had already read and admired; the two men became friends and organised 'Les séminaires du Thor' together in the late 1960s, when Heidegger debated with French colleagues and their students.[21] Heidegger was fortunate to have several of his key works translated into French by fine poets: Roger Munier first visited him at Todtnauberg in 1949 and went on to produce the first French translation of the *Brief über den Humanismus* (Letter on Humanism, 1953);[22] the French translators of *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung* (Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry, 1962) included Michel Deguy;[23] and both volumes of *Nietzsche* were translated single-handedly by Pierre Klossowski (1971). Plausible cases have been made for influences, affinities and parallels between Heidegger and several other leading figures in post-war French poetry and letters, from Saint-John Perse and Samuel Beckett to André Frénaud, Philippe Jaccottet and Yves Bonnefoy.[24]

In the English-speaking world there have likewise been increasing numbers of Heideggerian readings of various poets with whom Heidegger had no direct connection, such as Gerard Manley Hopkins, Edward Thomas, W.B. Yeats, T.S. Eliot, Wallace Stevens and John Ashbery.[25] Many poets have also taken direct inspiration from Heidegger, though. As early as 1943 the Scottish modernist poet Hugh

MacDiarmid incorporated extensive, multilingual Heidegger references and commentary into the extraordinary found poetry of *Lucky Poet*,[26] and in the next generation his compatriot W.S. Graham would take inspiration from Heidegger for his late collection *Implements in their Places*.[27] The greatest Anglo-Welsh poet of the post-war period, R.S. Thomas, also turned latterly to Heidegger and co-opted him for mystical Christian theology in the meditative late poem entitled simply 'I':

> Kierkegaard hinted, Heidegger
> agreed: the nominative
> is God, a clearing
> in thought's forest where truth
>
> breathes, coming at us
> like light itself, now
> in waves from a great distance,
> now in the intimacy of our corpuscles.[28]

A wide variety of post-war American poets have drawn inspiration from Heidegger, including Hayden Carruth, Norman Dubie, Jorie Graham, Maxine Kumin, Sandra McPherson, Armand Schwerner and Anne Waldman.[29] Heidegger's literary reception in the English-speaking world has not just been restricted to poetry, either, although the two leading prose treatments – Donald Barthelme's first novel *Snow White* (1967) and Jerzy Kosinski's *Being There* (1971) – have both been parodic of Heideggerian discourse.[30] In the last decade there has been a flurry of further dramatisations of the Heidegger-Arendt relationship in English, too (following Jelinek's *Totenauberg*), including Kate Fodor's *Hannah and Martin* (2004), Argentinian-American playwright Mario Diament's *A Report on the Banality of Love* (2009), Israeli playwright Savyon Liebrecht's *The Banality of Love* (2009), and *Heidegger's Shadow* by David Cherrill and Carroll Jacobs (2010).[31]

When the Heidegger Affair broke in the late 1980s it alerted many poets to the true nature of Heidegger's involvement with the Nazi regime, and led to a number of poetic treatments in the immediate aftermath which went far beyond parody and ridicule to outright condemnation, such as the American poet Tom Clark's 'Uses of Being', which begins: 'careermanagementwise / a writer can make few moves / more useful than justifying / submission to repression' and criticises the philosopher's 'oracular gravity'.[32] In the remainder of this article, though, I want to focus on one of the most extensive and nuanced treatments of

the Heidegger Affair in English-language literature, by the Northern Irish poet and critic Tom Paulin.

Tom Paulin and German Culture

Thanks to his many appearances on BBC2's late-night television arts programmes *Late Review* and *Newsnight Review*, Paulin – who recently retired from his day job as a Lecturer in English Literature at Hertford College, Oxford – is perhaps best known as an abrasive but insightful media don. He is also a considerable poet in his own right, though, and routinely classed as one of the great cohort of (for the most part politically engaged) post-war Ulster poets, which includes such figures as Ciaran Carson, Michael Longley, Medbh McGuckian, Derek Mahon, Paul Muldoon and, of course, Nobel laureate Seamus Heaney. In this context, though, a further lineage is more apposite, and I would place Paulin within the noble tradition of English-language poets who have shown a significant interest in German culture – a tradition which stretches from, say, Coleridge to Paulin's former Oxford colleague David Constantine. Unsurprisingly, Paulin shows a predominant fascination with Irish culture and politics, but he has also frequently written on (and got himself into hot water over) Israel and Palestine, for example, and many figures from German-language culture and politics make recurrent appearances in his work. Indeed, Paulin's interest in German and propensity to create compounds has led the critic Ian Sansom to remark: 'Among his many other unusual talents, Paulin is the only northern Irish poet who can make English sound like German'.[33]

Paulin's 1994 collection *Walking a Line* takes its title (and inspiration) from Paul Klee (*WL* 1-2, 49, 55, 77-9), and other collections include references to the painters Kokoschka (*WD* 12, *IH* 28), Kurt Schwitters (*IH* 32) and Joseph Beuys (*WD* 44-6). Several collections include poems explicitly inspired by Goethe (*F* 20/*RI* 42, *RI* 9, 20, 82, 95, 96), Heine (*WL* 38/*RI* 8, *F* 52-3/*RI* 66-7, *RI* 12), Rilke (*RI* 2, 63, 87) and Brecht (*WD* 71/*IH* 95/*RI* 46). Among the many donnish allusions peppered around Paulin's work, one finds figures such as the writers E.T.A. Hoffmann (*IH* 27-8), Jünger and Toller (*IH* 27), Elias Canetti (*WD* 12) and Stefan Zweig (*IH* 180). Among philosophers and other intellectuals he frequently cites Kant (*F* 57, *IH* 28, 31, 33, 35, 87, 118) and Hegel (*M* 1-4, *WL* 42-3, *IH* 150f.); there are passing mentions of Luther (*F* 18, *IH* 150) and Melanchthon (*F* 18), Leibniz (*WD* 17), Schopenhauer, Haeckel (*F* 40) and Marx (*IH* 47), plus more substantial treatments of Freud (*IH*

19-22), Walter Benjamin (*IH* 177f.) and Victor Klemperer (*IH* 201), but the object of his greatest fascination is, precisely, Heidegger. There are no references or allusions to Heidegger in Paulin's first three collections (*A State of Justice*, 1977; *The Strange Museum*, 1980; *Liberty Tree*, 1983), but, provoked by the Heidegger Affair, Paulin concluded his 1987 collection *Fivemiletown* with a long poem entitled 'The Caravans on Lüneberg [*sic*] Heath'.[34] He then returned to Heidegger in 1990 for the poem 'Hegel and the War Criminals' (where the latter are Himmler and Heidegger) and the major essay 'Dwelling without Roots' (on Elizabeth Bishop), and Heidegger plays a significant role in three of the poems from *The Invasion Handbook* (2002). Paulin has insistently returned to mine this seam, then, showing a nagging disquiet about Heidegger, a conviction that there is something essentially fraudulent, 'phoney' (*M* 190) about the man and his thought.

'This Old Smooth Fuck': Paulin's Heidegger

Paulin's verdict on this aspect of Heidegger's character is summed up in the phrase from 'The Caravans on Lüneberg Heath' (hereafter 'Caravans') which I have taken as my title: 'part woodcutter / and part charlatan'. 'Caravans' is one of Paulin's most complex poems, interweaving meditations on (among many other things) contemporary Northern Ireland (and his own childhood there) and the German unconditional surrender at the end of World War Two with intertextual references to the German baroque poet Simon Dach and Günter Grass's *Das Treffen in Telgte* (The Meeting at Telgte, 1979), but also Celan's 'Todtnauberg' and the life and work of Heidegger. In the most telling section he ventriloquises the philosopher at the nadir of his career, when he was drafted into the Volkssturm in 1944:

> the West's last thinker, part woodcutter
> and part charlatan
> is digging trenches on the Rhine
> – lonely uncanny violent
> the artist and the leader
> without expedients
> *apolis*
> without structure and order
> among all that is –
> in the summer of '44
> a memo named me the most expendable

member of my university

I was thankful digging
this will be useful to me
like an alibi
I was thinkful dagging
in the firebreak
the firebreak between armed forests
Herr Professor
must keep his head down
– bridge and hangar
stadium and factory
are buildings
but they're not dwellings
Bahnhof und Autobahn
Staudamn [*sic*] *und Markethalle* [*sic*]
sind Bauten
aber keine Wohnungen –
if I refused to drop
three Jews from the faculty
had I not praised
Totenbaum
rooftree
coffin
tree of the dead
– a farmhouse in the Black Forest
built two centuries back
by the dwelling of peasants?
as I praised the Führer
it was like all the dead feet
walked into our room
where my wife stood by the fire
cleaning my hairbrush
and I complained to her
about that thin singed aftersmell
its bony frazzle and suddenness

*

he digs deep in the earth
or stands with small tight goggles against the snowglare
a survivor like you and me
outside the ski hut at Todtnauberg
this old smooth fuck

tried stare through history
at the very worst moment (*F* 59-60)

Paulin's condemnations of Heidegger can be very blunt and uncompromising – and in one sense this is hardly surprising, coming from a former member of the Trotskyite Socialist Labour League who retains an outspoken commitment to progressive politics. His invective is directed specifically at the Nazi-era Heidegger of the *Einführung in die Metaphysik* (Introduction to Metaphysics, 1935), from which the first indented quotation is taken, and the post-war, post-'Kehre' Heidegger whose versions of pastoral valorised the rootedness of rural dwelling (the second indented quotation is from Heidegger's 1951 essay 'Bauen Wohnen Denken' [Building Dwelling Thinking]). In the wake of the Heidegger Affair, Paulin – like many others – can no longer stomach such invocations of rootedness without relating them intimately to 'Blut und Boden' ideology, and he dismisses the later Heidegger for his self-serving theorisations. As Jonathan Hufstader puts it in the most penetrating critical discussion of this poem: 'For Paulin, Heidegger's politics are no worse than his metaphysics, his post-romantic search for deep origins.'[35] Not for Paulin, then, the benign associations with digging of Heaney's celebrated poem with that title, or of R.S. Thomas's character Iago Prytherch – although implicitly he is critiquing all such evocations of the romance of the soil.[36]

In many of the poetic treatments of the Heidegger Affair the philosopher is used as little more than a two-dimensional cipher and functions as an easy target for opprobrium, but from the outset Paulin is attuned to the complexities of the Heidegger case and more subtle in his response. In contrast to the 'old smooth fuck', 'Caravans' offers an alternative model in the shape of Simon Dach, the Thirty-Years'-War intellectual who responded humanely to conflict by presiding over weekly meetings of poets and musicians in a 'Cucumber Lodge': the 'Kürbishütte' society of Königsberg (Kaliningrad).[37] John Kerrigan points out that Paulin sides with Dach partly out of sympathy with a different kind of lodge: 'Paulin has been engaged in retrieving the Enlightenment origins of a masonic and Orange Lodge tradition which, in the wake of the French Revolution, made common cause with Irish Catholics and joined in the 1798 rebellion'.[38] The situation is also more complex, though, for the description of Heidegger as 'a survivor like you and me' implicates both the poet and the reader in the kind of ethical decisions at which the historical Heidegger so signally failed. As

Hufstader remarks: 'By opposing Heidegger and Dach, Paulin confronts himself, another intellectual living at another time of hostility and betrayal' (p. 213). Heidegger the compromised philosopher-academic forces Paulin the poet-academic to examine his own conscience: he 'implicitly accuses the poet of complicity with corrupt governments' (p. 214) so that 'Paulin, whose salary is paid by a social system which he loathes, cannot but consider himself as Heidegger's *semblable, son frère*' (p. 215).

As Paulin commentators have pointed out, then, the stakes are high in this poem because Paulin has a lot invested in the dilemma to which Heidegger responded so catastrophically. Nor are the analogies restricted to the political domain, either: reviewing *Fivemiletown* in the *TLS*, Hugh Kenner cites Paulin's concluding note explaining that he drew on 'certain evasive, and probably mendacious, public statements which Heidegger issued in order to justify his conduct under the Nazi regime' (*F* 67) and makes a parallel with the hermeticisms of Paulin's own poetic style: 'In a nutshell, that's the premiss of the book: regimes breed mendacities. People hold back, say as little as possible, say it often in a private language, needn't mean all they seem to say'.[39]

Given Heidegger's importance to Paulin in this period, it is not surprising that his next collection, *Walking a Line*, includes another poem that features the philosopher, and the forthright title of 'Hegel and the War Criminals' (1990) makes it clear that the tone will be as condemnatory as before. Again it is the philosopher's feints and equivocations that are thematised:

> During denazification
> the Allies banned a cunning brownshirt
> from giving classes and lectures
> so Heidegger's fans
> gathered in Freiburg
> to hear a voice drone and spit
> behind a net curtain
> – half-pope half-fortuneteller
> almost a popular figure
> he rambled on about oaktrees
> – you can still watch his acquittal
> behind this text and that text (*WL* 43)[40]

Paulin suggests, then, that in Heidegger's case the texts' crime is their failure to disclose the crimes which can only be read between their lines. The 'oaktrees' allude to Heidegger's early post-war essay 'Der Feldweg'

(The Country Path), which highlights a large oak tree by his mountain retreat, under which he liked to read,[41] and they recall the American lieutenant's words of abuse in 'Caravans': "'Go chew acorns / Mr Heidegger / you went with the Nazis'" (*F* 62), but 'almost a popular figure' also links Heidegger to the subjects of this poem's previous two stanzas, the youthful Hegel planting a poplar ('Hegel dug in the roots / of a liberty tree') and the 'screen of quickgrowing poplars' planted to conceal the Auschwitz crematorium. The parallel between Hegel and Heidegger that the poem sets up both implicates the earlier philosophical digger – by drawing on critiques of the 'totalitarian' Hegel that go back at least as far as Karl Popper's *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1945) (cf. *M* 1) – and mitigates Heidegger's fault by generalising it to encompass an entire tradition of thought. Moreover, the potentially self-reflexive reference to 'this text' continues the equivocations of 'Caravans' by suggesting that Paulin's poem, too, is implicated in the war criminal's acquittal.[42] Reviewing *Walking a Line* in the *TLS*, Lachlan MacKinnon goes so far as to suggest that the Heidegger theme touches on a central issue in Paulin's poetics: 'the question whether Heidegger's ontology can, as many argue, really be detached from its forest and clearing metaphors, with their blood-and-soil implications, raises a possibility of transcendence that his own poetic method insists on denying'.[43]

Establishing a Counter-Canon

With its mobile caravans and makeshift Cucumber Lodge, though, Paulin's 1987 poem already represents a kind of counter-model to Heideggerian fixity, and in his critical work of this period he characterises the 'rootlessness' of a number of his favourite English-language poets in explicitly (anti-)Heideggerian terms. In a *TLS* review of *The Letters of John Clare* published in June 1986, the year before the Affair broke, Paulin writes that when Clare's early fame alienates him from his community, 'he begins to lose his sense of dwelling in the world – that "essence of dwelling" which Heidegger discusses in "Building Dwelling Thinking"'.[44] This theme is further developed in 'Out of the Closet', a review essay on Emily Dickinson first published in the *LRB* a few weeks after *Fivemiletown*. A revised version of the Dickinson essay was published as 'Writing beyond Writing: Emily Dickinson' in *Minotaur* (*M* 99-111), but in the course of revision Paulin excised a substantial section of the original piece in which he contrasts Dickinson with Heidegger:

> I dwell in Possibility –
> A fairer House that [*sic*] Prose.

> This ironic idea of dwelling in possibility is related to the theme of Being in Dickinson's poetry, and we can contrast her exploration of this subject with the sinister conservatism of Heidegger's philosophy of Being. For Heidegger, *Das Wesen des Bauens ist das Wohnenlassen* (the essence of building is letting dwell) [DL: another quotation from 'Building Dwelling Thinking'], and he insists on the authority with which 'the forces stemming from earth and blood' imbue dwellings. Lacking those mystic forces, stations, autobahns, stadiums and warehouses are merely buildings: they are not dwellings. For Heidegger, peasant costumes, crafts, an old cottage in the Black Forest, embody the idea of dwelling. Although Dickinson draws on folklore and ideas of natural magic, her writing is thrown towards the future in its insistent contemporaneity. Her imagination dwells only on the instant of its perceptions and has no sense of a hallowed ancestral past. It exists in a condition of profound ontological insecurity and unfinished knowing, where the *Angst* of consciousness is often imaged as oppression, threat, terror – that 'certain Slant of light' which oppresses like the 'Heft' of cathedral tunes.[45]

Perhaps Paulin cut the Heidegger material from his discussion of Dickinson because he would go on to make a very similar point in the 1990 essay on Elizabeth Bishop, 'Dwelling without Roots'.[46] Here he comments: 'How easily Romantic ideas of authenticity, rootedness, traditional crafts, folklore, take on the stink of power politics and genocide' (*M* 190), and he praises what he calls Bishop's 'tourist verse' in contrast to Heidegger's 'Black Forest cottage whose walls are impregnated with race memories' (*M* 191).

Paulin's critical work of the early 1990s forges a strong association between Clare, Dickinson and Bishop as a kind of anti-Heideggerian trinity allied in their ontological rootlessness. When he revised the 1986 piece on Clare for republication in *Minotaur* in 1992, he added immediately after the passage quoted above: 'It is this ontological theme that Clare shares with Emily Dickinson and Elizabeth Bishop' (*M* 49). He makes a similar point in an article written for the Clare bicentenary in 1993: 'Clare is the poet of dwelling, of Being, of *Dasein*. He inhabits his native landscape with all the nervous intensity of someone who knows he's been evicted from where he belongs. [...] Like Emily Dickinson he is a poet of anxiety of consciousness'.[47] The exploration of an anti-Heideggerian counter-tradition of 'dwelling without roots' culminates a

decade later in the collage poem 'Schwarzwald oder Bauhaus', included in *The Invasion Handbook*. Here, Paulin begins by quoting extensively from Heidegger's 1933 radio talk 'Schöpferische Landschaft. Warum bleiben wir in der Provinz?' (Creative Landscape: Why Do We Stay in the Provinces?) – which stresses that 'the inner relationship of my own work / to the Black Forest and its people / comes from a centuries-long / and irreplaceable rootedness / in the Alemannian Swabian soil' (*IH* 88). The Heidegger excerpts are followed seamlessly by brief quotations from Goebbels and Hitler, before the poem's second section then juxtaposes quotations from Walter Gropius, Hannes Meyer, Edgar Wedepohl and other theorists of the International Style, praising the prefabricated 'mail order houses' (*IH* 89) of the Bauhaus, Le Corbusier's 'nomad's tent / of concrete and glass' (*IH* 92).[48]

In response to 'the sinister conservatism of Heidegger's philosophy of Being', then, Paulin honours rootlessness, mobility and exile.[49] His ultimate concern is that the Heidegger Affair might not be just a little local difficulty, or even a specifically German one,[50] but a malaise of continental proportions, and he asks: 'doesn't [Heidegger's] exaltation of the poet reflect two centuries of *European* aesthetics?' (*M* 191). So he deliberately constructs a counter-canon of writers who reject this 'dangerous cultural lumber', and it includes the two American women poets Emily Dickinson and Elizabeth Bishop, as we have seen, but it also includes the 'peasant poet' John Clare, and it includes the exiled Jew Heinrich Heine. In addition to their other references, the 'oaktrees' in 'Hegel and the War Criminals' resonate with Heine's poem of exile 'In der Fremde' (Abroad), which begins (in A.S. Kline's translation):

> I had a lovely homeland long ago.
> The oak trees seemed
> So tall there, and the violets blew so sweet.
> It was a dream.[51]

Even more explicitly, placed two poems before 'Caravans' in *Fivemiletown*, the poem 'Chucking it Away' is subtitled 'after Heine's *In der Fremde*', and in it the poet reflects on his own displacement and cultural differentiation (Paulin was born in Leeds but grew up in Belfast; his wife Giti is of Sikh extraction, and his two sons are mixed-race). He recounts his anxiety at being driven down an Autobahn into the Black Forest when he was eighteen, before continuing:

> I was born in the Jewish quarter of a big ugly city

> on the other island
> [...]
> but when my kids pin a map of Ireland in their room
> or sit crosslegged under a portrait of Guru Nanak
> I'm twinged by different musics
> – it's one thing being British
> but you need a white skin to be English
> then you can shout things in public places
> at kids of a different complexion
> and feel rooted or threatened or part of the land
> while the rest of us keep our heads down feel grateful or angry (*F* 52-3)

Against the Nazi, Paulin sets Jews (Heine and Celan, elsewhere Freud and the 'Luftmensch' Walter Benjamin); against the 'dark and scary' Black Forest (*WD* 10), he sets the Bauhaus (*IH* 88-94); against rootedness, he sets the caravans of the World War Two surrender, the Königsberg Cucumber Lodge of Dach and his circle, and his own family's multi-racial, multicultural identity.

'The Next Best Key in the Lock': Early Heidegger

Interestingly, though, against late(r) Heidegger Paulin also sets early Heidegger. Specifically, *The Invasion Handbook* includes a poem entitled 'Being and Time', which begins: 'After Hegel / this might be the next best key in the lock' (*IH* 83). We are not told which is the lock to which Heidegger's early *magnum opus* is the key, but Paulin's respect for *Sein und Zeit* (Being and Time, 1927) is clear: 'it despises loose or careless talk / like a poster in wartime / and locates the ecstatic / in the practical'. In this poem, for the first time, Paulin reveals a more substantial engagement with Heidegger's earlier philosophy, and a knowledge of *Being and Time*, or at least with the secondary literature on the text, for he raids with impunity Hubert Dreyfus's commentary on Heidegger's definition of 'In-Sein' in section 12.[52] In fact Paulin misreads Dreyfus, though: whereas Dreyfus writes: '*Dasein* alone can be touched, that is, moved, by objects and other Daseins',[53] Paulin's first stanza concludes: 'all that's vague will / not connect with Dasein / it alone cannot be touched / – that is moved by objects / or by other Daseins'. Paulin, in other words, turns 'Dasein' into some kind of latter-day Leibnizian monad, precisely inverting Heidegger's point as summarised by Dreyfus.

Irrespective of the niceties of Heidegger interpretation, in *The Invasion Handbook* Paulin's Heidegger becomes rather more nuanced than before.

He is still interested in borrowing anecdotes from Heidegger's biography for shock effect – such as his obsession with Hitler's hands in 'The Night of the Long Knives' (*IH* 96), which begins: 'No matter the Führer is uncultured / he has Heidegger says / such beautiful such sculptured / hands'.[54] Nevertheless, Paulin's personal 'three H's' of German culture turn out to be Hegel, Heine and, precisely, Heidegger, but not the 'half-pope half-fortuneteller', the 'part woodcutter and part charlatan' of the Third Reich and post-war periods, rather the 1927 Heidegger of the first edition of *Being and Time* (before he dropped the dedication to his teacher Husserl – cf. *F* 61).

This should not really come as a surprise, for in his critical writing since the mid-1980s Paulin actually has a track record of mobilising Heideggerian terminology for his own purposes, especially the key term 'Dasein'. Discussing Derek Mahon's much-anthologised poem 'A Disused Shed in Co. Wexford' in his introduction to the *Faber Book of Political Verse* (1986), Paulin may not explicitly contrast Mahon's shed with Heidegger's hut but he does draw on Heidegger in arguing that 'the formal intuitions of *Dasein* which his verse embodies owe much to Elizabeth Bishop's work' (*FBPV* 51/*WM* 137). For Paulin, Bishop – even more than John Clare – is the quintessential poet of 'Dasein', and in the wake of the aggressively anti-Heideggerian 1990 essay 'Dwelling without Roots' he routinely reaches for Heidegger's term in describing her work (cf. *M* 199, 201; *WM* 221, 227). An unpublished poem from the period of *Walking a Line*, included in the Tom Paulin papers at Emory University in Atlanta, is entitled 'Kind of Dasein'.[55] Paulin also deploys Heidegger's term (more or less successfully) in more distant contexts, such as when writing on Robert Frost 'trying to define the actual *Dasein*' of the English language (*M* 180) or (more felicitously!) likening Hazlitt's prose style to Clare's term for country rambling, 'soodling', and arguing that 'such a way of walking or writing articulates what Heidegger, the notorious Black Forest walker, terms *Dasein*' (*DSL* 293). Nor is 'Dasein' the only piece of Heideggerian (*Being and Time*) terminology which Paulin picks up and incorporates into his critical writing. For example, he quotes with approval from (Dreyfus on) Heidegger on the 'transparency' of equipment, with reference to Defoe (*CS* 88) and, once more, Elizabeth Bishop (*CS* 334),[56] describes a key image of Clare's as an 'ontic image' (*CS* 215), and casually refers to 'the intensity of Hopkins's being-in-the-world' (*CS* 251).

Conclusion

After the Heidegger theme emerges in Paulin's work in 1986, the early phase of his engagement culminates in the magnificent 1987 poem 'The Caravans on Lüneberg Heath', which is followed in 1990 by a further poetic treatment in 'Hegel and the War Criminals' and the major critical essay 'Dwelling without Roots'. At the same time, though, it is clear that the Heideggerian idiom becomes part of Paulin's critical armoury, and he finds himself reaching for it even in very distant contexts. Heidegger still plays a significant role in the unfolding drama of *The Invasion Handbook* (2002), although to judge by Paulin's latest collection of poems, *Love's Bonfire* (2012), his poetic interest in Heidegger appears to have peaked. There is a Heideggerian echo in the title of 'Being in Time' (*LB* 24), one of the central group of 'Poems after Walid Khazendar', but although several of the poems in this collection thematise kinds of dwelling – houses and hotels, bothies, huts and bungalows (*LB* 14-15, 29), warehouses, sheds and barns (*LB* 34, 47-8) – he eschews any other Heideggerian allusions.

Perhaps the promised sequels to *The Invasion Handbook* will return to mine the Heideggerian seam, but in the meantime let us conclude with a provisional balance. Initially provoked by the Heidegger Affair, Paulin has returned to Heideggerian themes insistently over the last quarter century. Heidegger may be an easy target, as other writers have found, but Paulin is quick to move beyond cheap abuse and turn Heidegger's predicament into something more generalisable and personally involving. His response is highly critical but also marked by an ambivalent fascination and indeed identification, so that despite lambasting the later Heidegger a number of times, he is willing to find admirable things – and usable insights – in Heidegger's *oeuvre*, especially in the earlier period. In this respect, Paulin shows an awareness (which is highly unusual among poets) of the differentiatedness of Heidegger's output, and the evolution of his concerns.[57]

Notes

The following abbreviations are used for Tom Paulin's books (all: London: Faber & Faber): *CS – Crusoe's Secret: The Aesthetics of Dissent*, 2005; *DSL – The Day-Star of Liberty: William Hazlitt's Radical Style*, 1998; *F – Fivemiletown*, 1987; *FBPV – The Faber Book of Political Verse*, 1986; *IH – The Invasion Handbook*, 2002; *LB – Love's Bonfire*, 2012; *M – Minotaur: Poetry and the Nation State*, 1992; *RI – The Road to Inver: Translations, Versions, Imitations 1975-2003*, 2004; *SP – Selected Poems*

1972-1990, 1993; *WD – The Wind Dog*, 1999; *WL – Walking a Line*, 1994; *WM – Writing to the Moment: Selected Critical Essays 1980-1996*, 1996.

1 'Die Worte "Nationalsozialismus" und "nationalsozialistisch" kommen in dieser Rede nicht vor, "Der Führer," der "Reichskanzler" oder "Hitler" werden nicht genannt': Hermann Heidegger, 'Vorwort', in: Martin Heidegger, *Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universität / Das Rektorat 1933/34*, ed. Hermann Heidegger, 2nd edn, Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 1990, p. 5. For a demolition of this 'official' view, see Tom Rockmore, *On Heidegger's Nazism and Philosophy*, 2nd edn, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1992, pp. 76-9.

2 For the biographical facts of the case, see Hugo Ott, *Martin Heidegger. Unterwegs zu seiner Biographie*, 2nd edn, Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 1992; Rüdiger Safranski, *Ein Meister aus Deutschland. Heidegger und seine Zeit*, Munich: Hanser, 1994.

3 Víctor Farías, *Heidegger et le nazisme*, trans. Myriam Benarroch and Jean-Baptiste Grasset, Lagrasse: Verdier, 1987.

4 Strauss was co-opted by the regime and accepted the presidency of the Reichsmusikkammer in 1933, allowing his *Olympische Hymne* to be used for the Berlin Olympic Games of 1936. On Strauss's relation to Nazism, see Michael P. Steinberg, 'Richard Strauss and the Question', in: Bryan Gilliam, ed., *Richard Strauss and his World*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992, pp. 164-89; Michael Kennedy, *Richard Strauss: Man, Musician, Enigma*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, Part IV: '1933-1949: The Dark Years'.

5 Vincent Descombes, *Le même et l'autre: Quarante-cinq ans de philosophie française (1933-1978)*, Paris: Minuit, 1979, p. 13. On French Heideggerianism, see Dominique Janicaud, *Heidegger en France*, 2 vols, Paris: Albin Michel, 2001; Ethan Kleinberg, *Generation Existential: Heidegger's Philosophy in France, 1927-1961*, Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2005; David Pettigrew and François Raffoul, eds, *French Interpretations of Heidegger: An Exceptional Reception*, Albany: SUNY Press, 2008.

6 See Jacques Derrida, *De l'esprit: Heidegger et la question*, Paris: Galilée, 1987; Pierre Bourdieu, *L'Ontologie politique de Martin Heidegger*, Paris: Minuit, 1988; Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, *Heidegger et les modernes*, Paris: Grasset & Fasquelle, 1988; Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *La fiction du politique: Heidegger, l'art et la politique*, Paris: Christian Bourgois, 1987 and *Heidegger: La politique du poème*, Paris: Galilée, 2002; Jean-François Lyotard, *Heidegger et 'les juifs'*, Paris: Galilée, 1988.

7 See especially Rockmore, *On Heidegger's Nazism and Philosophy*; Tom Rockmore and Joseph Margolis, eds, *The Heidegger Case: On Philosophy and Politics*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992; Richard Wolin, ed., *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, 2nd edn, Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 1993; Hans Sluga, *Heidegger's Crisis: Philosophy and Politics in Nazi Germany*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993. A useful summary of the different positions adopted in the debate is provided by Dieter Thomä in 'Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus. In der Dunkelkammer der Seinsgeschichte', in: Thomä, ed., *Heidegger-Handbuch. Leben–Werk–Wirkung*, Stuttgart: Metzler, 2003, pp. 141-62.

8 Julian Young, *Heidegger, Philosophy, Nazism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 5.

9 Emmanuel Faye, *Heidegger, l'introduction du nazisme dans la philosophie: Autour des séminaires inédits de 1933-1935*, Paris: Albin Michel, 2005. The impact of Faye is summarised (critically) by Holger Zaborowski in *'Eine Frage von Irre und Schuld?' Martin Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus*, Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, 2010. See also the recent double issue of the *Heidegger-Jahrbuch* devoted to the question: Alfred Denker and Holger Zaborowski, eds, *Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus*, 2 vols, Freiburg and Munich: Karl Alber, 2009.

10 Heidegger's own poetry is collected in vol. 81 of the *Gesamtausgabe* (*Gedachtes*, ed. Paola-Ludovika Coriando, Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 2007), which was reviewed illuminatingly by Botho Strauß in the Feuilleton of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on 19 September 2008 ('Heideggers Gedichte'). On Heidegger's poetry, see also Martin Travers, '"Die Blume des Mundes": The Poetry of Martin Heidegger', *Oxford German Studies*, 41:1 (April 2012), 82-102.

11 On Heidegger and literature, see William V. Spanos, ed., *Martin Heidegger and Literature*, special issue of *boundary 2*, 4:2 (1976); Véronique M. Fóti, *Heidegger and the Poets: Poiēsis/Sophia/Technē*, Atlantic Highlands, NJ and London: Humanities Press International, 1992; John D. Caputo, 'Heidegger's Poets', in *Demythologizing Heidegger*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993, pp. 148-68; Günter Figal and Ulrich Raulff, eds, *Heidegger und die Literatur*, Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 2012.

12 For Heidegger's writings on Jünger, see Heidegger, *Zu Ernst Jünger* (*Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 90), ed. Peter Trawny, Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 2004. Good recent treatments of their relationship include: Marcello Barison, 'Seynsgeschichte und Erdgeschichte. Zwischen Heidegger und Jünger', in: David Espinet, ed., *Schreiben Dichten Denken. Zu Heideggers Sprachbegriff*, Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 2011, pp. 145-60; Vincent Blok, 'An Indication

of Being: Reflections on Heidegger's Engagement with Ernst Jünger', *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, 42:2 (May 2011), 194-208; Günter Figal, 'Am Rande der Philosophie. Martin Heidegger liest Ernst Jünger', in: Figal and Raulff, eds, *Heidegger und die Literatur*, pp. 93-106. For the significance of Heidegger's reading of Gottfried Benn, see Martin Travers, 'Gottfried Benn's *Statische Gedichte* (1948) and the Final "Turn" towards the Poetic in the Work of Martin Heidegger', *German Life and Letters*, 63:2 (April 2010), 179-93.

13 Paul Celan, *Selected Poems*, trans. Michael Hamburger, London: Penguin, 1990, pp. 292-3. On Heidegger and Celan, see especially James K. Lyon, *Paul Celan and Martin Heidegger: An Unresolved Conversation, 1951-1970*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. See also Robert Quitta's 'Märchen-Drama' of their encounter, *Celan im Schwarzwald* (Theater des Augenblicks, Vienna, January 2006). The title of Safranski's Heidegger biography, *Ein Meister aus Deutschland*, is of course taken from Celan's most celebrated poem, 'Todesfuge'.

14 See Volker Neuhaus, *Günter Grass*, Stuttgart: Metzler, 1979, pp. 17, 93, 101; Sascha Kiefer, 'Frühe Polemik und späte Differenzierung. Das Heidegger-Bild von Günter Grass in *Hundejahre* (1963) und *Mein Jahrhundert* (1999)', *Weimarer Beiträge*, 48 (2002), 242-59. For other satirical treatments in German and French, see Dieter Thomä, 'Heidegger in der Satire. Das Herrchen des Seins', in: Thomä, ed., *Heidegger-Handbuch*, pp. 510-13, and Joachim Klein's more recent *Permafrost. Ein Heideggerroman*, Saarbrücken: Conte, 2006.

15 Posthumously published as Ingeborg Bachmann, *Die kritische Aufnahme der Existentialphilosophie Martin Heideggers*, ed. Robert Pichl, Munich and Zurich: Piper, 1985. See also Holger Gehle, 'Ingeborg Bachmann und Martin Heidegger. Eine Skizze', in: Dirk Göttsche and Hubert Ohl, eds, *Ingeborg Bachmann. Neue Beiträge zu ihrem Werk*, Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1993, pp. 241-52.

16 Ulrich Raulff, 'Der rebellische Mandarin. Heinz Schlaffers hochmütige Geschichte der deutschen Literatur', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26 February 2002. On Handke and Heidegger, see also Alfred Kolleritsch, 'Die Welt, die sich öffnet. Einige Bemerkungen zu Handke und Heidegger', in: Gerhard Melzer and Jale Tükel, eds, *Die Arbeit am Glück. Peter Handke*, Königstein im Taunus: Athenäum, 1985, pp. 111-25; Martin Todtenhaupt, 'Unterwegs in der Sprache mit Heidegger und Handke', in: Christiane Pankow, ed., *Österreich. Beiträge über Sprache und Literatur*, Umeå: Umeå University, 1992, pp. 119-33; Alexander Huber, *Versuch einer Ankunft. Peter Handkes Ästhetik der Differenz*, Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2005; Ulrich von Bülow, 'Raum Zeit Sprache. Peter Handke liest Martin Heidegger', in: Günter Figal and Ulrich Raulff, eds, *Heidegger und die Literatur*, Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 2012, pp. 131-55; and especially Volker Schmidt, *Die Entwicklung der Sprachkritik im Werk von Peter*

Handke und Elfriede Jelinek. Eine Untersuchung anhand ausgewählter Prosatexte und Theaterstücke, unpublished PhD diss., Heidelberg, 2008. Mark Oliver Johnson makes a similar case for the influence of Heidegger's later thought on Botho Strauß, in *A Poetics of Dwelling: The Prose Work of Botho Strauß and Late Thought of Martin Heidegger*, unpublished PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 2005.

17 Thomas Bernhard, *Alte Meister. Komödie*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1985. See also Franziska Schößler, 'Erinnerung zwischen Aura und Reproduktion. Heidegger in Thomas Bernhards *Alte Meister* und Elfriede Jelineks *Totenauberg*', in: Franziska Schößler and Ingeborg Villinger, eds, *Politik und Medien bei Thomas Bernhard*, Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2002, pp. 208-29.

18 Elfriede Jelinek, *Wolken.Heim*, Göttingen: Steidl, 1990, and *Totenauberg. Ein Stück*, Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1991. On Jelinek's Heidegger reception – aside from Schmidt, *Die Entwicklung der Sprachkritik*, and Schößler, 'Erinnerung zwischen Aura und Reproduktion' – see also Nancy C. Erickson, 'Echoes of Celan and Heidegger in Jelinek's *In den Alpen*', in: Matthias Piccolruaz Konzett and Margarete Lamb-Faffelberger, eds, *Elfriede Jelinek: Writing Woman, Nation, and Identity. A Critical Anthology*, Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007, pp. 174-88; Christian Jäger, 'Dichtung und Lichtung. Elfriede Jelinek und Martin Heidegger', in: Sabine Müller and Cathrine Theodorsen, eds, *Elfriede Jelinek. Tradition, Politik und Zitat*, Vienna: Praesens, 2008; Christine Kiebuzinska, 'Elfriede Jelinek: Staging a Heideggerian Postmodern Debate in *Totenauberg*', in: Daniel K. Jernigan, ed., *Drama and the Postmodern: Assessing the Limits of Metatheatre*, Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2008, pp. 183-203; Claus Zittel, 'Heidegger-Variationen. Elfriede Jelineks *Totenauberg. Ein Stück*', in: Marian Holona and Claus Zittel, eds, *Positionen der Jelinek-Forschung*, Bern: Peter Lang, 2008, pp. 187-218. The latest German-language dramatisation of the Heidegger/Arendt relationship is Fanny Brunner and Eva Bormann's *Geburtlichkeit und Sein zum Tode*, premiered at the Theater Marburg, May-June 2012.

19 José Pablo Feinmann, *La sombra de Heidegger*, Buenos Aires: Planeta/Seix Barral, 2005. For other Spanish-language reception, especially the work of the Spanish poet, essayist and translator José Ángel Valente, see Jonathan Mayhew, 'Valente's "Lectura de Paul Celan": Translation and the Heideggerian Tradition in Spain', *diacritics*, 34:3-4 (Autumn-Winter 2004), 73-89.

20 Catherine Clément, *Martin et Hannah: Roman*, Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1999. Other French literary treatments of the relationship include Gérald Messadié's novel *Ma vie amoureuse et criminelle avec Martin Heidegger*, Paris: Robert Laffont, 1992, and Antoine Rault's play *Le démon de Hannah* (Comédie des Champs Elysées, Paris, 25 September – 31 December 2009).

21 See Safranski, *Ein Meister aus Deutschland*, pp. 446-7. On Char, see Michael Worton, '"Between" Poetry and Philosophy: René Char and Martin Heidegger', in: Russell King and Bernard McGuirk, eds, *Reconceptions: Reading Modern French Poetry*, Nottingham: University of Nottingham, 1996, pp. 137-57; Jean-Baptiste Dussert: 'Chemin faisant: Heidegger et Char', in: Espinet, ed., *Schreiben Dichten Denken*, pp. 197-209.

22 See Sébastien Hoët, *La critique de la subjectivitié dans l'œuvre de Roger Munier*, unpublished PhD diss., University of Paris VIII, 2006.

23 See Michel Deguy, 'Un poète devant Heidegger', *Critique*, 743 (April 2009), 276-96.

24 See Marcel Achard Abell, 'Heidegger et la poésie de Saint-John Perse: Un rapprochement', *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, 71:3 (1966), 292-306; Steve Barfield, 'Beckett and Heidegger: A Critical Survey', in: Richard Lane, ed., *Beckett and Philosophy*, Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, 2002, pp. 154-65; Christine Dupouy, *La question du lieu en poésie: du surréalisme jusqu'à nos jours*, Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2006, esp. ch. 5.1, 'Le lieu est-il réactionnaire?', pp. 149-61; Chantal Colomb-Guillaume, 'Philippe Jaccottet et Heidegger: pour une poésie de la présence', *Europe*, 955-56 (November-December 2008), 144-57; Marlène Zarader, 'Entre parole et présence: Yves Bonnefoy et Martin Heidegger', in: Daniel Lançon and Patrick Née, eds, *Yves Bonnefoy: poésie, recherche et savoirs*, Paris: Hermann, 2007, pp. 219-36.

25 See Brian Willems, *Hopkins and Heidegger*, London and New York: Continuum, 2009; Jonathan Bate, *The Song of the Earth*, London: Picador; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000, pp. 273-81; Wit Pietrzak, *Myth, Language and Tradition: A Study of Yeats, Stevens, and Eliot in the Context of Heidegger's Search for Being*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011; Thomas J. Hines, *The Later Poetry of Wallace Stevens: Phenomenological Parallels with Husserl and Heidegger*, Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1976; Barbara Malinowska, *Dynamics of Being, Space, and Time in the Poetry of Czeslaw Milosz and John Ashbery*, New York: Peter Lang, 2000. The most influential study of this kind has been Paul A. Bové, *Destructive Poetics: Heidegger and Modern American Poetry*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1980, which subjects Walt Whitman, Wallace Stevens and Charles Olson to Heideggerian readings. See also Krzysztof Ziarek's review essay 'The Reception of Heidegger's Thought in American Literary Criticism', *diacritics*, 19:3-4 (Autumn-Winter 1989), 114-27.

26 Hugh MacDiarmid, 'Further Passages from "The Kind of Poetry I Want"' (1943), in: *Complete Poems: Volume I*, ed. Michael Grieve and W. R. Aitken, Manchester: Carcanet, 1993, pp. 621-4.

27 W.S. Graham, *Implements in their Places*, London: Faber & Faber, 1977. See also Robin Purves, 'W.S. Graham and the Heidegger Question', in: Robin Purves and Sam Ladkin, eds, *Complicities: British Poetry 1945-2007*, Prague: Litteraria Pragensia, 2007, pp. 4-29.

28 R.S. Thomas, 'I', in: *Mass for Hard Times*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Bloodaxe, 1992, p. 58. On R.S. Thomas and Heidegger, see especially Ned Thomas, 'R.S. Thomas: The Question about Technology', *Planet*, 92 (April/May 1992), 54-60.

29 See Hayden Carruth, '23' and '53', in: *Collected Shorter Poems 1946-1991*, Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon Press, 1992, pp. 333, 343, and 'Working', in: *Tell Me Again How the White Heron Rises and Flies Across the Nacreous River at Twilight Toward the Distant Islands*, New York: New Directions, 1989, pp. 20-1; Norman Dubie, 'The Open Happens in the Midst of Beings', in: *Radio Sky*, New York and London: Norton, 1991, pp. 14-15; Jorie Graham, 'What is Called Thinking', in: *Region of Unlikeness*, New York: Ecco Press, 1991, pp. 80-3; Maxine Kumin, 'The Envelope', in: *Selected Poems, 1960-1990*, London and New York: Norton, 1997, p. 148, and 'Early Thoughts of Winter', in: *Connecting the Dots: Poems*, New York and London: Norton, 1996, p. 50; Sandra McPherson, 'Poem Whose First Stanza Is Martin Heidegger on Georg Trakl', in: *The Year of Our Birth*, New York: Ecco Press, 1978, p. 12; Armand Schwerner, '"A Setting Up in: the Unconcealed" (Heidegger)', *boundary 2*, 4:2 (1976), 492-3; Anne Waldman, 'Self Other Both Neither', in: *Iovis: All Is Full of Jove*, Minneapolis: Coffee House Press, 1993, p. 307. See also the page of links to online 'Poems Inspired by Heidegger' at the main Heidegger website, 'Ereignis', www.beyng.com/hlinks/poemlinks.html (1997-2009; accessed 16 April 2012).

30 See Martin Woessner, *Heidegger in America*, New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, pp. 1-2; Nicholas Sloboda, 'Heteroglossia and Collage: Donald Barthelme's *Snow White*', *Mosaic*, 30:4 (December 1997), 109-23. A more serious novelistic treatment in English is Thaisa Frank, *Heidegger's Glasses* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint, 2010). For the influence of Heidegger on Iris Murdoch's fiction, especially *The Time of the Angels* (1966), see Miles Leeson, *Iris Murdoch: Philosophical Novelist*, London and New York: Continuum, 2010, and Justin Broackes, ed., *Iris Murdoch, Philosopher: A Collection of Essays*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

31 Kate Fodor, *Hannah and Martin*, Epic Theatre Center, New York City, March-April 2004; Mario Diament, *A Report on the Banality of Love: A Play in Five Encounters* (premiered Promethean Theater, Davie, FL, January 2009), Cranston, RI: The Writers' Collective, 2009; Savyon Liebrecht, *The Banality of Love* (premiered Beit Lessin Theatre, Tel Aviv, 2009), Tel Aviv: Or Am, 2009; David Cherrill and Carroll Jacobs, *Heidegger's Shadow*, Courtyard Theatre, London,

February-March 2010. See also Daniel Fidel Ferrer's unpublished *Trialogue between Heidegger, Nietzsche, and Nāgārjuna in Todtnauberg*, 2011.

32 Tom Clark, 'Uses of Being', in: *Disordered Ideas*, Santa Rosa, CA: Black Sparrow Press, 1987, p. 53.

33 Ian Sansom, 'Inimitable Imitations' [review of Paulin, *The Road to Inver*], *The Guardian*, 18 December 2004.

34 Silently corrected to 'Lüneburg' for reprinting in *SP* (102-13) and thereafter *RI* (51-62), as were the three other misspellings of German words in the poem itself. Paulin's German is clearly not that strong, as is evident also from his repeated use of the term 'volkisch' (*M* 191, *WD* 63). In *Fivemiletown* he acknowledges the assistance of University of Nottingham Germanist colleagues Elizabeth Boa, Steve Giles, Hamish Reid and Gudrun Sowerby in (re)translating texts by Celan, Dach and Heidegger (*F* [vi]).

35 Jonathan Hufstader, *Tongue of Water, Teeth of Stones: Northern Irish Poetry and Social Violence*, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999, p. 214. Further page references to Hufstader will be given in parentheses in the main text.

36 On Heaney and Heidegger, see: Richard Kearney, 'Appendix: Heaney, Heidegger and Freud – The Paradox of the Homely', in: *Transitions: Narratives in Modern Irish Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 113-22; John Kerrigan, 'Earth Writing: Seamus Heaney and Ciaran Carson', *Essays in Criticism*, 48:2 (April 1998), 144-68; Greg Garrard, 'Heidegger, Heaney and the Problem of Dwelling', in: Richard Kerridge and Neil Sammells, eds, *Writing the Environment: Ecocriticism and Literature*, London: Zed Books, 1998, pp. 167-81.

37 In a note on the poem, Paulin explains that the translation of Dach's 'Kürbs-Hütte' as 'Cucumber Lodge' rather than, say, 'Pumpkin Hut' comes from Ralph Manheim's version of Grass's *Das Treffen in Telgte* (*F* 67).

38 Kerrigan, 'Earth Writing', pp. 146-7.

39 Hugh Kenner, 'In a Private Tongue' [review of Tom Paulin, *Fivemiletown*], *Times Literary Supplement*, 4433, 18 March 1988, 303.

40 First published in *London Review of Books*, 12:1 (11 January 1990), 10.

41 See Heidegger, 'Der Feldweg', in: *Aus der Erfahrung des Denkens, 1910-1976* (*Gesamtausgabe*, vol. 13), ed. Hermann Heidegger, Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 1983, pp. 87-90.

42 See Des O'Rawe's review of *Walking a Line*, 'Responsibilities/Responses', *The Irish Review*, 16 (Autumn-Winter 1994), 136-41 (here: 140).

43 Lachlan MacKinnon, 'Uneasy Swagger' [review of Tom Paulin, *Walking a Line*], *Times Literary Supplement*, 4762, 8 July 1994, 7.

44 Tom Paulin, 'Clare in Babylon', *Times Literary Supplement*, 4342, 20 June 1986, 675-6 (here: 675).

45 Tom Paulin, 'Out of the Closet' [review of new books on Emily Dickinson], *London Review of Books*, 9:19 (29 October 1987), 22-3. *Fivemiletown* was first published on 12 October 1987.

46 Tom Paulin, 'Dwelling Without Roots: Elizabeth Bishop', *Grand Street*, 36 (Fall 1990), 90-102.

47 Tom Paulin, 'Northamptonshire Visionary', *Independent on Sunday*, 11 July 1993; reprinted as 'Strinkling Dropples: John Clare' (*WM* 161-71, erroneously ascribed to 1992), here pp. 166-7 (cf. *CS* 215).

48 Aside from a handful of linking lines by Paulin, 'Schwarzwald oder Bauhaus' is entirely composed of texts – by Heidegger, Goebbels, Hitler, Gropius, Meyer, Wedepohl, Adolf Behne and Paul Westheim, Rudolf Arnheim, Marcel Breuer, and Franz Roh – quoted (without attribution) from translations included in: Anton Kaes, Martin Jay and Edward Dimendberg, eds, *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1994. It should not be forgotten that *The Invasion Handbook* is Paulin's next collection after *Walking a Line*, which honours the Bauhaus teacher Paul Klee.

49 This is a theme on which Paulin criticism has focused. See Clair Wills, *Improprieties: Politics and Sexuality in Northern Irish Poetry*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993, pp. 148-55; Scott Brewster, 'Building, Dwelling, Moving: Seamus Heaney, Tom Paulin and the Reverse Aesthetic', in: Gerry Smyth and Jo Croft, eds, *Our House: The Representation of Domestic Space in Modern Culture*, Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2007, pp. 141-59; Elmer Kennedy-Andrews, *Writing Home: Poetry and Place in Northern Ireland 1968-2008*, Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2008, ch. 8, 'Tom Paulin: Dwelling without Roots', pp. 180-202; Benjamin Keatinge, 'Responses to the Holocaust in Modern Irish Poetry', *Estudios Irlandeses*, 6 (2011), 21-38 (especially pp. 26-7).

50 In the Introduction to *Minotaur* Paulin refers to the similar scandal surrounding the Belgian-American deconstructive theorist Paul de Man, which broke simultaneously with the Heidegger Affair in 1987 when it emerged that de

Man had published anti-Semitic wartime journalism in a pro-Nazi newspaper (*M* 10-13).

51 Trans. A.S. Kline. 'Ich hatte einst ein schönes Vaterland. / Der Eichenbaum / Wuchs dort so hoch, die Veilchen nickten sanft. / Es war ein Traum'. Heinrich Heine, 'In der Fremde', in: *Werke und Briefe in zehn Bänden*, ed. Hans Kaufmann, 2nd edn, Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau, 1972, vol. 1, p. 279.

52 Dreyfus writes: 'Heidegger points out that "in" does not originally mean inclusion. The primordial sense of "in" was, rather, "to reside," "to dwell" [...]. This is supposed to help us get over the idea that the "in" of inclusion, like chalk in a box, is basic' (Hubert L. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World: A Commentary on Heidegger's 'Being and Time', Division I*, Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 1991, p. 42). The second stanza of Paulin's poem begins: 'from this it isn't much / to argue the intact / idea we must get over / the *in* of inclusion / a concept that's stacked / like chalk in a box'.

53 Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, p. 44.

54 The quotation is from a 1933 conversation between Heidegger and Karl Jaspers widely reported e.g. by Safranski, *Ein Meister aus Deutschland*, p. 264.

55 See the Irish Literary Collections Portal at Emory University Library: http://irishliterature.library.emory.edu (2001-8; accessed 16 April 2012).

56 Cf. Dreyfus, *Being-in-the-World*, pp. 64-6 ('The Transparency of Equipment').

57 Thanks to my Swansea colleagues John Goodby and M. Wynn Thomas for their help in researching this piece.

Áine McMurtry

Writing Wrongs: Ingeborg Bachmann's Poetic Drafts of the 1960s and their Contemporary Reception

Ingeborg Bachmann's executors – her siblings – released raw drafts of poems of the 1960s into the public realm in *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt*, in 2000. This act was, in the view of many critics, a heinous text crime: it exposed the private suffering of the poet to prurient public view and undermined the persona of the sovereign High Poetess projected in her published work and protected by the guardians of her flame since her death in 1973. This chapter challenges the initial vitriolic reactions, situating the drafts in the context of Bachmann's evolution as a writer – in particular, her move towards prose vehicles – and her enduring preoccupations with female identity and linguistic and social crimes.

Ich habe die Feder
wieder in der Hand
härter gespitzt in
Gesichter springend
und zurück ins eigene
Gesicht, ich kratze, reiße, schärfe
ein grausames Lied
und richte an ein
Blutbad […][1]

(I have the quill
again in my hand,
sharpened to a finer point,
leaping into faces
and turning back to its own
face. I scratch, rip, sharpen
an awful song
and initiate
a bloodbath […])[2]

Composed during a period of intense crisis in the early 1960s, this lyric call to arms marks an extreme point in Ingeborg Bachmann's late poetic writing, where the 'awful song' is asserted as the last possibility for expression by a speaker set on lyric destruction. Whilst the determination

to do violence to language is rarely voiced in such uncompromising terms in Bachmann's work, the crucial ambivalence towards lyric poetry highlights the determining paradox in her late experimental verse. Time and again, Bachmann returned to the lyric to articulate disillusion with lyric forms, culminating most famously in her renowned farewell to poetry, 'Keine Delikatessen', which she published in the *Kursbuch* journal in November 1968.[3] Yet, although preoccupation with experience of crisis is found throughout Bachmann's late oeuvre, the publication of the rawest drafts of crisis in a volume entitled *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt* provoked intense critical outcry in the year 2000. Voices in the German media immediately accused the editors of the volume – the author's siblings and nephew – of a heinous text crime.[4] As unfinished poetic drafts, 39 of which are handwritten, these 103 texts were never published by Bachmann herself, who died, aged 47, in October 1973 following a house-fire in Rome. The unauthorised publication, therefore, was castigated as a cynical marketing exercise and gross invasion of the dead poet's privacy on the part of her heirs. Particularly outraged at the unfamiliar material and its debunking of the myth of Bachmann, High Poetess, the reviewers objected to the fragmentary form of the drafts and their urgent declaration of suffering, identifying the texts as mere testimonies to personal distress and rejecting their aesthetic value.

This alleged text crime forms the starting point for my examination of the poetic drafts. I will interrogate media reaction to the volume and consider what the outcry suggests about the abiding power of normative poetics in relation to the feted poet, dubbed 'einen neuen Stern am deutschen Poetenhimmel'[5] (a new star in the German poetic universe) following the publication of her first volume of verse, *Die gestundete Zeit* (1953), as her poetry of the 1950s offered a lyrical means of engaging with recent historical atrocity that proved enormously popular in the post-war era. In the writings of the 1960s, however, I will examine the rejection of those lyrical forms for which Bachmann had won such acclaim. Seen as unfit for giving authentic expression to human suffering in its real social context, the natural and mythical imagery that permeates her earlier poetry comes to be rejected in favour of an experimental mode that is concerned to express experience of human suffering and historical catastrophe after Auschwitz. In the context of this volume, my concern is to present Ingeborg Bachmann as a writer both accused and accusing, by demonstrating the new light that the poetic fragments shed on a politically and aesthetically radical stage in her oeuvre. I argue that the poetic drafts are to be understood as an experimental stage of writing

that was to prove significant for the development of the prose *'Todesarten'-Projekt* (Manners of Death Project) that came to dominate the final decade of Bachmann's life and was fundamentally concerned to expose a state of inextricable individual and cultural malaise. It is striking how little scholarship on these drafts exists. Indeed, the majority of critical response is found in those newspaper articles and reviews that appeared in the months directly after the publication of *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt*. Since then, only a handful of articles, two slim monographs[6] and, most significantly, in 2010, a collection of scholarly essays have been published, which take the drafts as their main focus.[7] In accounting for the neglected place of the drafts within scholarship, my discussion will highlight the challenging form and content of the lyric material, as well as examining how the struggle for expression actualised in this material is crucially associated with the aesthetic effort to uncover the hidden crimes and abuses of the post-war order.

Critical Reaction to *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt*

> Unveröffentlichte Gedichte von Ingeborg Bachmann! Das tönt nach einer Sensation, aber ist eher ein Skandal, jedenfalls ein elender Etikettenschwindel. Denn in diesem Band findet sich kein einziges abgeschlossenes, geschweige dann ein geglücktes Gedicht und schon gar nicht eines, das Ingeborg Bachmann je zur Publikation freigegeben hat. Was wir vor uns haben, ist ein Konvolut aus Gestammel und Geheul, aus Hilfe- und Racherufen, Wahn- und Todesfantasien, kurz: der ungereinigte Lebensschlamm […].[8]
>
> (Unpublished poems by Ingeborg Bachmann! That sounds like a sensation but really it is a scandal, or at least a heinous misnomer. Since in this volume no single finished, let alone successful poem is to be found, and certainly not one that Ingeborg Bachmann would ever have released for publication. What we have in front of us is a bundle of stammers and howls, of calls for help and revenge, fantasies of death and delirium, in short, impure biographical muck.)

This response by Peter Hamm, published in *Die Zeit* in October 2000, set the tone for many early reviews of *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt*. Hamm was writing as part of a pro/contra debate with Reinhart Baumgart on the drafts' posthumous inclusion in Bachmann's oeuvre. Even Baumgart's defence of the publication opens by rejecting the idea that the texts might be considered poems: 'Natürlich sind das keine Gedichte. Darüber

ist nicht zu streiten' (Of course these are not poems. There can be no argument on that point). Instead, he labels the texts 'die persönlichsten Schmerz-Dokumente der Ingeborg Bachmann' (Ingeborg Bachmann's most personal testimony to pain).[9] Franz Haas, writing for the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, echoes the caustic tone of Hamm's attack. He objects that in the edition 'Persönliches, Allzupersönliches kommt vor' (things appear of a personal, all-too-personal nature) and emphasises his distaste for the 'shameless' nature of its texts, which he terms 'Urschleim' (primal sludge) for the author's later prose.[10] In an article for the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, Joachim Kaiser notes '[o]ft tönt das Selbstmitleid hier gigantisch' (the tone of self-pity is often overwhelming), suggesting that the drafts are of interest not as lyric documents but for the personal insights they reveal into Bachmann's crisis: 'Sucht man freilich bei der großen Lyrikerin keine Lyrik mehr, fragt man weniger nach ihrer Kunst, als nach ihrer Hölle – dann beginnen manche dieser Gedicht-Texte zu faszinieren'[11] (But if you no longer look to the great poet for poetry, ask less about her art than her hell, then many of these lyric texts begin to fascinate). Writing in the *Kieler Nachrichten*, Rainer Paasch-Beeck similarly distinguishes between texts describing personal pain and those with literary status. Paasch-Beeck labels the edition a fraudulent 'Mogelbuch' (sham-book) that does not fulfil its promise to reveal unpublished poems, and justifies this stance with a dubious claim:

> Denn einige der offensichtlich in größter persönlicher Not entstandenen Texte 'illustrieren' gerade nicht 'die Arbeitsweise Ingeborgs', wie uns das Vorwort weismachen will, sondern geben den Blick frei auf die Leiden und Ängste eines tief verletzten Menschen.[12]
>
> (Since some of these texts, which were obviously written in a condition of personal extremis, precisely do not 'illustrate Ingeborg's working methods' as the preface leads us to believe, rather they expose the fears and suffering of someone deeply wounded.)

In their condemnation of the drafts' engagement with real-life pain, the reviews recall the terms of Marcel Reich-Ranicki's notorious dismissal of Bachmann as 'eine gefallene Lyrikerin'[13] (a fallen poetess). This epithet, which appeared in a 1972 review of Ingeborg Bachmann's contemporary prose collection *Simultan*, formed the climax of a sustained campaign over more than a decade in which the critic attacked Bachmann's prose publications, comparing their depiction of human emotion in its social context unfavourably with the high lyricism of her poetry from the

1950s. In his appraisal of Bachmann's final prose collection, Reich-Ranicki took issue with the alleged triviality of Bachmann's subject matter and 'das Dunkle und Mysteriöse, das Wirre und Chaotische'[14] (the dark and mysterious, vague and chaotic) that he identified at the heart of her prose engagement with human emotion. And indeed, his verdict against the 'fallen poetess' still stands as the extreme condemnation of the cultural establishment that had laid claim to Bachmann as a lyric icon of the post-1945 era. In this light, the critique of the representation of emotion in many of the *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt* reviews can be seen to reflect the perpetuation of those cultural conventions, which preclude certain forms of expression from public utterance and are found so oppressive by the lyric speakers in the drafts.

Bachmann's rebellion against the aesthetic conventions of her culture is legible in the fractured forms of her lyric drafts. Consistently, the female speakers articulate felt experience of pain, loss and speechlessness, as well as frustration with inadequate forms of language. Concern with the destructive effects of crisis is dominant, which is often conveyed through engagement with states of physicality. Descriptions of bodily injuries, and of bodily symptoms – including those of disease and ageing – feature prominently. Not only do the speakers voice crisis as a turning-point in their subjective emergency but, consistently, the impact of the experience is reflected in the ruptured forms of the language which seek a new kind of poetic expression:

> Meine Gedichte sind mir abhanden gekommen.
> Ich suche sie in allen Zimmerwinkeln.
> Weiß vor Schmerz nicht, wie man einen Schmerz
> aufschreibt, weiß überhaupt nichts mehr.
>
> Weiß, daß man so nicht daherreden kann,
> es muß würziger sein, eine gepfefferte Metapher.
> müßte einem einfallen. Aber mit dem Messer im Rücken. […] (*Welt*, 11)

> (I've misplaced my poems.
> I search for them in each nook and cranny.
> Because of pain I know nothing, not even how
> one writes about pain, for I simply know nothing else.
>
> I know only that it cannot be spoken of,
> that it's spicier, that a peppery metaphor
> must occur to one. But with a knife in the back. [*Darkness*, 359])

Here, the lyric consequences of crisis are evoked in material terms. The speaker describes searching high and low for her poems and relates a condition of corporeal injury – 'mit dem Messer im Rücken' (with a knife in the back) – to the need for penetrating linguistic forms. In this light, the insistent inclusion of graphic material may be read not only as evidence of the lyric speaker's consuming distress but as part of a wider refusal to yield to oppressive aesthetic norms which seek to curb the extent and immediacy of the crisis. Silvia Bovenschen singles out the determined linguistic engagement with physical pain as the starting point for many of the late poetic drafts. Her commentary underlines the radical nature of the project, suggesting it pushes the boundaries of not only lyric but literary possibility in the widest sense:

> Das ist nicht nur eine Absage an eine kulinarische Verskunst, es ist Zweifel an den Möglichkeiten der Literatur überhaupt. Die Abscheu vor 'gesunder Kunstfertigkeit' und 'literarischen Delikatessen' treibt diese Gedichte an den Rand der Sprache […]. Einige Gedichtfragmente können gelesen werden als ein radikaler Akt der Destruktion: der Destruktion der Lyrik in der Lyrik.[15]
>
> (That is not only a rejection of culinary lyric verse, it fundamentally calls into question the possibilities of literature. Distaste for 'healthy craftsmanship' and 'literary delicatessen' drives these poems to the boundaries of language […]. A few lyric fragments can be read as a radical act of destruction, namely the destruction of poetry in poetry itself.)

Bovenschen concludes that the apparent psychological crisis articulated in the drafts of *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt* must therefore be considered a primarily poetological one. This point is expanded by Klaus Dieter Post who explores how the drafts actualise the shift from the expression of distress at crisis itself to a radical questioning of the status of language as a medium for communication. Post highlights the calculated and deliberate effort to denounce corrupt linguistic forms. Disillusion with reality is said to engender a process of critical re-evaluation that, through rejection of prettifying forms of language, ultimately seeks to construct a radical means of cultural critique.[16]

Hans Höller's response to the Hamm/Baumgart debate in *Die Zeit* argues that Hamm's condemnation of the drafts stems from an unwillingness to engage with Bachmann's concern to sublimate personal crisis in the creation of a universalising work of art.[17] By identifying the

lyric crisis within *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt* as synonymous with that provoked by the separation from Max Frisch, Hamm reduces the poems to documents of private melodrama and dismisses their urgent questions about the individual's capacity for expression in a social order where convention dictates so oppressively what can and cannot be said in public. In their refusal to grant literary status to texts documenting the experience of personal pain in a raw way, the negative reviews illustrate a central aspect of the lyric speaker's expressive problem. The ease with which so many critics dismiss the drafts' artistic worth demonstrates the rigid conventions of aesthetic judgement which prohibit the intimately subjective articulation of suffering. Bachmann's effort to find a language capable of expressing suffering with graphic immediacy may thus be identified as a project working at the boundaries of aesthetic convention. Writing for *Die Welt*, Alexander von Bormann elucidates precisely this point, as he emphasises the necessarily fragmented form of the drafts and argues that the loss of faith in language and life driving the creative bid assures their inherent rawness. Bormann shows that the central lyric depiction of physical emergency demonstrates the determination in Bachmann's late verse to confront the reader with essential felt experience and avoid generalising commentary: 'Diese Themen sind für sie keine Themen, sondern Einschreibungen in den Körper, finden sich ganz im "Körper, auf dem die Geschichte, und nicht die eigene, ausgetragen wird"'[18] (These themes are not themes to her, but instead inscriptions into the body, they are entirely located in the "body on which history, and not one's own, is played out"). Seen as unfit for giving authentic expression to human suffering in its real social context, the lyrical forms for which the poet won acclaim in the 1950s are rejected in favour of an experimental mode that takes its starting point in experience of felt pain.

For many literary scholars, the real text crime pertaining to *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt* lies not in the decision to publish its drafts but in the editorial shortcomings of the volume, exemplified in its imprecise foreword by the author's siblings, Isolde Moser and Heinz Bachmann. Bovenschen expresses dismay at the seemingly impulsive nature of the decision to publish the drafts; the heirs describe their chance find amongst Bachmann's papers in the foreword.[19] Although their preface emphasises the real-life context of the writing and its relation to later prose, no attempt is made to elucidate individual aspects of the drafts:

> Geschrieben wurden diese Gedichte in Zürich, Berlin und Rom, den Lebensstationen Ingeborgs der letzten Jahre, in der Zeit zwischen 1962 und 1964, einige auch später. Hinweise auf reale Orte sind vielfältig, und vielfältig ist die Verbindung mit dem Prosawerk. Eine genaue chronologische Zuordnung der Texte ist nicht rekonstruierbar, denn Datierungen sind nicht vorhanden. (*Welt*, 5)
>
> (These poems were written in Zurich, Berlin and Rome, the stations of Ingeborg's final years, during the period between 1962 and 1964, some later still. There are numerous references to real places and numerous links to her prose oeuvre. An exact chronological mapping of the texts is not to be reconstructed, since datings are not available.)

Whilst the fragmentary nature of the many handwritten drafts and the absence of dates complicate the editorial task and, as the preface suggests, render exact dating impossible, more could have been done to provide a context for some of the poems in the collection. The disparate nature of the drafts, found in very different states of composition, and the volume's lack of explanatory apparatus leave many readers struggling to make basic sense of the drafts, as well as their relation to Bachmann's wider oeuvre. Bovenschen is particularly critical of the failure to provide notes, dates or critical commentary.[20] Kurt Bartsch describes ways in which the edition might be improved, highlighting both the range of references to people, places and other works of art and the points of comparison with Bachmann's later work which, if examined, could substantially elucidate understanding of the drafts.[21]

More sympathetic responses to the texts highlight the complex character of the lyric crisis. Ernst Osterkamp's sensitive critique warns against reductive attempts to identify a single reason for the crisis, commenting that 'das seelische Elend, das sich in diesen Gedichten ausspricht und in ihnen bewältigt werden soll, sehr viel komplexeren Ursprungs ist, als daß es auf nur eine Ursache zurückgeführt werden dürfte'[22] (the mental anguish voiced in these poems and to be overcome in them is clearly of much more complex origin than as if it were to be traced back to only one source). Peter Surber, in his short account of the debate between Hamm and Baumgart, insists on the drafts' 'durchaus literarische Qualitäten' (thoroughly literary qualities) and comments on the crassness of critical efforts to sever art from life: 'Eine säuberliche Trennung – hie Literatur, da Leben – ist ein hoffnungsloses Unterfangen, weil es diese Trennung nicht gab'[23] (a clean distinction – literature here, life over there – is a hopeless undertaking because this

distinction never existed). Franz Haas similarly recognises the effort to move beyond the personal in the drafts; he emphasises the therapeutic motivation for writing: 'Einmalige Urschriften sind diejenigen Skizzen, in denen es Bachmann langsam gelingt, den überdeutlichen Zusammenhang mit ihrem persönlichen Jammer zu vermeiden, wo die allgemeinen Motive ihrer späteren Prosa auftauchen'[24] (One-off drafts are precisely those sketches in which Bachmann slowly succeeded in getting away from too obvious connections with her personal distress, where the common motifs of her later prose appear). Writing thus constitutes a means of survival for Bachmann through which personal crisis was worked into aesthetic form.

It is the aesthetic status of the drafts as evidence of a new poetics in Bachmann's writings of the 1960s that proves of central concern in the recent collection of essays edited by Arturo Larcati and Isolde Schiffermüller, the most substantial examination of the drafts published to date.[25] The editors argue that the discovery of the drafts, which display striking differences to Bachmann's hitherto published poems, necessitates fundamental revision of the established image of the poet. Common to many essays in the collection is the concern – articulated by Hans Höller in his opening chapter on the politicizing portrayal of illness in the drafts – to examine the texts as evidence of 'ein[e] neu[e] "Politik" des Schreibens'[26] (a new politics of writing). Höller identifies the starting point for this writing in physical experience, highlighting the lyric attempt to articulate 'psychische und physische Krankheitssymptome' (mental and physical symptoms of illness) which he associates with the speaker's determination 'in der eigenen Krankheit etwas Allgemeines, Politisches mitzudenken'[27] (to think through something general, political, in personal illness). This focus on Bachmann's politicizing preoccupation with symptoms forms the starting point for my readings of the poetic drafts in this chapter. By elucidating the new form and subject matter of the poetic drafts from the 1960s, I will outline the female writer's strengthening political concern to depict the socio-cultural roots of individual crisis. This lyric endeavour will be read through Frankfurt School thought in the context of Bachmann's late prose project to expose the unspoken crimes of the post-war era, and – crucially – her understanding of the ambivalent place of literature within her criminalized culture.

Writing Crisis

Preoccupation with the inability to give expression to distress recurs throughout the poetic drafts. Instead, depictions of physical symptom and injury seek displaced form for states of distress and abuse whose source cannot easily be named. But it is not only in the lyric subject matter that concern with the symptomatic is to be found. In formal aspects of this experimental writing, the beginnings of a symptomatic literary mode are to be seen. By this, I mean a form of writing whose insistent repetitions, dislocated syntax and frequent breaks evoke an underlying condition of distress that cannot be voiced directly. In their dislocated form and stammered character, the lyric texts enact the destructive linguistic consequences of consuming physical and mental distress. Explicit preoccupation with the symptomatic is to be discerned in both the form and content of the draft entitled 'Alkohol', whose speaker is preoccupied with the relation between a drinking habit and her inability to express an underlying psychological condition. Spoken in the first-person, the draft depicts addiction:

> Trinken, was trinken,
> ich trinke, trinke den Staub auf den Flimmer auf
> ich trinke in mich hinein soviel Schilling
> ich trinke meine Arbeit in mich hinein trinke
> heraus, ich kann nur mehr trinken
> mich aus allem heraus trinken, das säuft
> den Geschmack weg aus allem, aus Staub aus
> ich sags nicht weil keiner es sagt
> warum es trinkt, sich zu Tod säuft,
> ich bins ja ja nicht, es säuft sich
> an ich sag nicht, weil keiner sagt
> man soll mich nicht aufrütteln
> mich zwingen zu sagen, es weiß ja jeder
> warum es säuft, sich besäuft, sich
> sich betäubt, es betäubt sich
> Und was Liebe und Krätzen und Fortschritt
> es weiß ja jeder und wer nicht säuft, weiß
> auch, es weiß ja jeder, das sag ich nicht mehr,
> weiß weiß weiß weiß weiß weiß
> weiß weiß weiß
> weiß
> mehr sag ich nicht
> als das jeder weiß (*Welt*, 151)

(Drink, drink something,
I drink, drink the dust from what glimmers,
I drink up so much money,
I drink up my work, drink
it dry, I can only keep drinking,
drink myself dry, guzzling down
the taste of everything, of dust, of
what I won't say, because no one says
why one drinks, drinks oneself to death,
though not me, not me, it guzzles itself,
though I say nothing, because no one says
I should not be woken up,
be forced to admit it, everyone knowing
why I drink, get drunk, am
dead drunk, dead drunk,
and what love and scabies and progress there are
everyone knows and who doesn't drink also
knows, everyone knows, I won't say it again,
knows knows knows knows knows knows
knows knows knows
knows
I'll say no more
than that everyone knows [*Darkness*, 565])

Caught in the inevitable cycle of an alcoholic, the draft begins with half-sober description of the compulsion to drink. The incantatory variations on 'trinken' in its first half give symptomatic form to the ritual that determines the structure of the speaker's existence and crisis. As the text progresses, its rhythms become more and more erratic as the speaker spirals out of control in reckless boozing. Shorter clauses begin to dominate and, as 'trinken' (drink) gives way to 'saufen' (booze), building agitation is conveyed, which is compounded by the speaker's alienated recourse to the impersonal third person: 'ich bins ja ja nicht, es säuft sich' (not me, not me, it guzzles itself). The lines highlight the contribution of social convention to the refusal to divulge the reasons for drinking – 'weil keiner es sagt' (because no one says). They emphasise, instead, the relentless descent into numb speechlessness. The symptomatic lyric employment of 'es' recurs throughout Bachmann's late writing. Here, the impersonal pronoun appears nine times within ten lines, gesturing towards the disturbance that resists language. Similarly, tenfold repetition of 'weiß' in the poem's dying stammer finds

symptomatic manifestation for the affective state, which cannot be rationally articulated.

In those drafts that give graphic portrayal to the female speaker's body, further attempts can be seen to engage with experience excluded from public discourse. The draft poem entitled 'Abschied' (*Welt*, 37) voices sadness at a sudden realisation of physical ageing. The speaker suggests that the pain of being rejected by her lover is compounded by the overnight appearance of wrinkles on her face and hands, which she reads as symptoms of lost possibility:

Abschied

Das Fleisch, das gut mit mir gealtert ist,
die pergamentene Hand, die meine frisch hielt,
sie soll auf dem weißen Schenkel liegen,
das Fleisch sich verjüngen, augenblicksweise,
damit hier rascher der Verfall vor sich geht,
Rasch sind die Linien gekommen, etwas gesunken,
schon alles über der straffen Muskulatur.

Nicht geliebt zu werden. Der Schmerz könnte größer
sein, Der befindet sich wohl, dessen Tür zufällt.
Aber das Fleisch, mit der Einbruchslinie an dem Knie,
die faltigen Hände, über Nacht gekommen alles,
das verwitterte Schulterblatt, auf dem kein Grün wächst,
Es hat einmal ein Gesicht geborgen gehalten. (*Welt*, 37)

(The flesh that has aged so well with me,
the parchment hand, which held mine so tenderly,
should rest upon my white thigh
in order to make it young, instantly,
if only to speed up its sure decay.
How quickly the lines have come, sunken in,
right across the tense musculature.

Not to be loved. The pain could be worse.
One whose door shuts is well.
But the flesh, with its invasive scar on the knee,
the creased hands, all of it happening overnight,
the weathered shoulder blade on which nothing green grows.
Once it held a face nestled within it. [*Darkness*, 397])

The draft's quiet tone and short clauses work to suggest the speaker's resigned acceptance of her situation. She describes the secondary pain of no longer being loved and suggests that the implications of the new barrenness of her body, once a place of tender refuge for another, are what distress her. As the speaker gazes on her physical self, describing an assortment of frail limbs, her withered body comes to stand for the shattered possibilities brought by the end of the relationship. In the poem's closing line, the past-tense allusion to an intimate gesture of reassurance – now no longer valid – implicitly signals unspoken vulnerability and regret.

In other drafts, evocations of bodily injuries, fluids and functions, of extreme medical treatments, as well as of sexual desire and gratification, rebel against drives that promote conformity through regulated speech and behaviour. In 'Gerüche', a condition of physicality, said to provoke general opprobrium, is described in first-person perspective:

> Immer habe ich den Geruch geliebt, den Schweiß,
> die Ausdünstung am Morgen, auch die Exkremente,
> den Schmutz nach langer Bahnfahrt und in einem Bett
>
> Mein Geruch ist verdammt geworden, ich war eine
> Schnapsfahne in einem wohlbestellten Haus.
> Dreimal Baden auch keine Seltenheit. Am Monatsende
> Bin ich gemieden worden wie ein Kadaver. (*Welt*, 38)
>
> (I have always loved odors, be it sweat,
> morning breath, even excrement,
> the dirt of a long train journey and in a bed.
>
> My odor was cursed. I was
> a whiff of schnapps in a lovely house.
> Bathing three times a day was not unheard of.
> By month's end I was avoided like a cadaver. [*Darkness*, 399])

The politically charged foregrounding of the female body here and in many of the poetic drafts may be elucidated through contemporary Frankfurt School concern with the repression of the physical realm within Western culture, particularly as set out by Horkheimer and Adorno in their seminal *Dialektik der Aufklärung* of 1947. Comments from the third section of the study describe the Enlightenment project to cast suspicion on natural human functions and instincts:

> Vom Ekel vor den Exkrementen und dem Menschenfleisch bis zur Verachtung des Fanatismus, der Faulheit, der Armut, geistiger und materieller, führt eine Linie von Verhaltensweisen, die aus adäquaten und notwendigen in Scheußlichkeiten verwandelt wurden. Diese Linie ist die der Zerstörung und der Zivilisation zugleich. Jeder Schritt war ein Fortschritt, eine Etappe der Aufklärung.[28]
>
> (From the reflex of disgust at excrement or human flesh to the suspicion of fanaticism, laziness, and poverty, whether intellectual or material, there is a long line of modes of behavior which were metamorphosed from the adequate and necessary into abominations. This is the line both of destruction and of civilization. Each step forward on it represents some progress, a stage of enlightenment.)[29]

In the draft, the resolute listing of social unmentionables – sweat, excrement, dirt – compounds the shocking character of the speaker's opening declaration that she has always loved their smell. Terming herself 'Schnapsfahne' and 'Kadaver', the speaker underlines her socially outcast position. By engaging with her body as that which is treated as threatening and obscene by civilised society, the female speaker attempts to write out from the isolated place to which she has been banished.

A recent strand in Bachmann scholarship – inspired by Sigrid Weigel's 1999 intellectual biography – is concerned to trace parallels between the thought of twentieth-century intellectuals and the author's oeuvre. Weigel elucidates the influence of Adorno and Horkheimer on the novel *Malina*, identifying Malina and Ich, who comprise the dual subject position at the centre of the novel, as embodiments of a dialectic of Enlightenment.[30] Weigel traces a trajectory of gendered critique in Bachmann's writings, disputing common interpretations of Ich as Malina's alter ego and stressing, instead, 'vielmehr ist das Ich das Andere von Malina'[31] (rather Ich is Malina's Other). The alignment of the masculine with the rational and abstract and the feminine with the irrational and corporeal found in the *Dialektik der Aufklärung* is similarly to be recognised in that increasingly sophisticated gender critique at the centre of Bachmann's late work. In this light, the lyric drafts can be read as manifesting the beginnings of Bachmann's late effort to engage with how Woman, as embodiment of objectified nature, comes to stand for the repression of those aspects of existence that bourgeois society considers a threat to the rational system and strives to exterminate. The female writer thus occupies the place of those excluded by society

through experimentation with a politicised aesthetic mode that restores the body to a place of cultural significance.

'Virus Verbrechen'

In the course of the 1960s, the depiction of extreme physical states and preoccupation with symptomatic modes in Bachmann's work becomes increasingly related to a criminal state of interwoven individual and social malaise which, during a 1971 discussion of her novel *Malina*, the author termed 'die Krankheit unserer Zeit'[32] (the illness of our time). This conception has succinctly been defined by Monika Albrecht as a short-hand for the violence within modern Western society and the hidden relation between the patriarchal social order, National Socialism, and the cultural oppression and exclusion of the Other.[33] Like other writers and thinkers of her era, Bachmann began to employ the terminology of disease to characterise the continuing existence of fascism in supposed peacetime.[34] The portrayal of states of suffering and, particularly, the preoccupation with physical symptoms, manifest the author's developing *'Todesarten'-Projekt* to find viable form through which to convey the human crisis provoked by a morally sick order.[35] One of Bachmann's most explicit appraisals of the corruption inherent in post-war society is found in a series of draft introductions written to preface four public readings from the *Franza* manuscript in March 1966. The unfinished *Franza* novel, largely composed between late summer 1965 and May 1966, is concerned with fascism as a word that describes private behaviour. Questioning where the murderous impulses have gone which were so recently sanctioned in the public realm, the draft introductions emphasise the dual conception of sickness and wrongdoing at the centre of the narrative: 'Das Buch ist aber nicht nur eine Reise durch eine Krankheit. Todesarten, unter die fallen auch die Verbrechen. Das ist ein Buch über ein Verbrechen'[36] (But the book is not only a journey through an illness. Manners of Death include crimes. It is a book about a crime).

The introductions repeatedly employ the term 'Virus Verbrechen' (virus crime) to suggest the malignant force at work in the post-1945 order. Explicitly criticising the drive for progress and renewal, as well as superficial modes of engagement with past abuse, Bachmann underlines the need to address that which has been repressed and censored by civilised society. Indeed, Bachmann can be seen to accuse the culture of her time of perpetrating its own 'text crimes', as she stresses the contribution of literature to the widespread failure to acknowledge

present forms of abuse:

> Die Todesarten wollen die Fortsetzung sein, in einer Gesellschaft, die sich die Hände in Unschuld wäscht und nur keine Möglichkeit hat, Blut fließen zu lassen, zu foltern, zu vergasen. Aber die Menschen, die sind nicht so, nicht plötzlich zu Lämmern und Entrüsteten geworden. Unsere Literatur möchte kühn sein, auf Kosten der Vergangenheit, aber ich habe herausgefunden, daß sie unbewußt einer Täuschung unterliegt. Daß sie, ohne es zu wissen, verheimlicht, welche Dramen sich abspielen, welche Arten von Mord.[37]
>
> (Manners of Death are intended as a continuation in a society that washes its hands in innocence and only does not have the opportunity to cause blood to flow, to torture, to gas. But people are not like that, they have not suddenly disarmed or become lambs. Our literature wishes to be daring, at the cost of the past, but I have found out that it is subject to an unconscious deception. That, without realising, it covers up those dramas happening all around, those forms of murder.)

Inge von Wiedenbaum was the first to note the relation between Bachmann's understanding of her own project and a short story entitled 'La Vengeance d'une Femme' by the nineteenth-century French writer Jules A. Barbey d'Aurevilly that is similarly concerned with the relation between the failings of literature and hidden forms of abuse.[38] In his story, Barbey d'Aurevilly specifically identifies the danger inherent in literature's 'impérissable pudeur' (enduring modesty), emphasising that superficial notions of the taboo and the immoral lead to a much more ethically dubious tendency to repress very real issues that must be dealt with in the public sphere.[39] Bachmann echoes this sentiment when she notes: '[d]as Jetzt ist schwer aufzufinden, weil alles in Watte verpackt ist, aber nur zum Schein. Und Mord und Grausamkeit in dieser Gesellschaft, die sind zu entdecken'[40] (the now is difficult to locate because everything is wrapped in cotton wool, but it's only a pretence. And murder and brutality in this society, they are to be uncovered). She thus sets out her project to develop a literary mode through which to give representation to deathly present dramas, and their relation to historical wrongdoing, in the post-war era. My concern in what follows is to explore an earlier stage in this expressive project by charting, in the poetic drafts, the developing political preoccupation with physical symptoms and injuries, as well as with symptomatic linguistic modes. This chapter thus closes with a reading of an early example of Bachmann's politicising aesthetic experimentation, in order to show how, through graphic depiction of the

distressed body, the draft poem manifests an early stage of the project to construct a gendered mode of socio-cultural critique that accuses the criminal order to which the lyric speaker belongs.

The Body as Crime-Scene

Nach vielen Jahren
nach viel erfahrenem Unrecht,
beispiellosen Verbrechen rundum,
und Unrecht, vor dem nach Recht
schreien sinnlos wird.

Nach vielen Jahren erst, alles
gewußt, alles erfahren,
alles bekannt, geordnet, gebucht,
jetzt erst geh ich da, lieg ich da,
von Stromstößen geschüttelt,
zitternd über das ganze Segeltuch
ganz Haut, nach keinem Ermessen,
in meinem Zelt Einsamkeit,
heimgesucht von jeder Nadelspitze,
jeder Würgspur, jedem Druckmal,
ganz ein Körper, auf dem die Geschichte
und nicht die eigne, ausgetragen wird,
mit zerrauftem Haar und Schreien, die
am Bellevue die Polizei dem Krankenwagen
übergibt, auf Tragbahren geschnallt, im Regen,
von Spritzen betäubt, von Spritzen
ins Wachen geholt, ins Begreifen,
was doch niemand begreift.

Wie soll einer allein soviel erleiden können,
soviele Deportationen, soviel Staub, sooft hinabgestoßen
sooft gehäutet, lebendig verbrannt, sooft
geschunden, erschossen, vergast, wie soll einer
sich hinhalten in eine Raserei
die ihm fremd ist und der heult über eine erschlagene Fliege.

Soll ich aufhören, da zu sein, damit dies aufhört.
Soll ich die Qual mir abkürzen, mit 50 Nembutal,
soll ich, da ich niemand in die Hände falle,
aus allen Händen fallen, die morden (*Welt*, 60)

(After many years,
after having seen so much injustice,
now everywhere countless crimes
and injustice, about which it would be
senseless to raise a hue and cry.

After many years, for the first time,
everything known, having seen everything,
everything familiar, orderly, set up,
now for the first time I go there, I lie there,
convulsed with electric shocks,
trembling upon the entire sail cloth,
the entire skin, from end to end
there in my tent of loneliness,
afflicted by every injection,
every trace of choking, every pressure mark,
the entire body, on which a history,
and not only mine, is inscribed,
with a bundle of rent hair and screams which
the police hand over to the ambulance at Bellevue,
buckled to a stretcher in the rain,
numbed by injections, awakened
by injections, made aware
of what no one is aware of.

How can one bear so much by oneself,
so many deportations, so much dust, so often knocked down,
so often flayed, burned alive, so often
tortured, shot, gassed, how should one
handle oneself amid a rage
that seems strange to one who howls over a swatted fly.

Shall I cease living so that this stops?
Shall I end the agony with 50 Nembutal?
Shall I, since I fall into no one's hands,
fall out of all hands, those that murder, too? [*Darkness*, 433-4])

This untitled typewritten draft poem opens as a memory articulated by a first-person speaker who describes long experience of wrongdoing. The reference to emergency services at Bellevue suggests the text's likely composition during Bachmann's Berlin residence in 1963-5. Manifesting the struggle for words, the generalising first lines of the poem convey the misdeeds whose excess renders meaningless all notion of justice. The

text presents the speaker as so mentally unable to deal with past horror that she collapses in physical breakdown. The gradual return of repressed memories is conveyed through faltering repetitions, and the opening emphasis on this belated response further suggests a state of repression. In the second section, scenes of flashback to past abuse merge with those of present suffering to evoke the speaker's temporal disorientation. The sudden precision of the images of bodily distress is underscored by heavy punctuation and alliteration, which convey the relentlessness of crisis. The destructiveness of the experience is conveyed as the speaker declares herself 'ganz Haut' (entirely skin) and, a few lines later, 'ganz ein Körper' (entirely a body), aligning herself with an alienated physical realm. Unable to cope psychologically with society's history of violating others, the sick female body brings forth symptoms relating to what society has done.

Figures for the atrocities of the Holocaust are seen in the lyric references to deportation, dust and being burnt alive. Devoid of any identifiable aggressor, injuries appear as symptoms on the speaker's body. The sense of affinity with suffering creatures declared in contemporary poetic drafts, where laboratory animals are described as 'comrades' (*Welt*, 9) and 'brothers' (*Welt*, 21), assumes a historical dimension in the speaker's hyper-identification with victims of abuse. Allusion to Nazi characterisation of Jews as vermin can be read in the image of a crushed fly in the penultimate section. A further passage from the *Dialektik der Auklärung* serves to elucidate the draft's historical resonance:

> Die Erklärung des Hasses gegen das Weib als die schwächere an geistiger und körperlicher Macht, die an ihrer Stirn das Siegel der Herrschaft trägt, ist zugleich die des Judenhasses. Weibern und Juden sieht man es an, daß sie seit Tausenden von Jahren nicht geherrscht haben. Sie leben, obgleich man sie beseitigen könnte, und ihre Ängste und Schwäche, ihre größere Affinität zur Natur durch perennierenden Druck, ist ihr Lebenselement. Das reizt den Starken, der die Stärke mit der angespannten Distanzierung zur Natur bezahlt und ewig sich die Angst verbieten muß, zu blinder Wut.[41]
>
> (The justification of hatred for woman that represents her as intellectually and physically inferior, and bearing the brand of domination on her forehead, is equally that of hatred for Jews. Women and Jews can be seen not to have ruled for thousands of years. They live, although they could be exterminated; and their fear and weakness, the greater affinity to nature which perennial opposition produces in them, is the

> very element which gives them life. This enrages the strong, who must pay for their strength with an intense alienation from nature, and must always suppress their fear.)[42]

The identification of women and Jews as the physically weak objects of patriarchal violence illuminates the likely theoretical background to the lyric evocation of the female body as the site of returning abuse. In its re-inscription of cultural stereotypes, such recourse to a theoretical tradition that associates women and Jews with physical weakness proves hugely problematic, displaying crass racial stereotyping. Nonetheless, the lyric parallels with Horkheimer and Adorno's analysis could be understood to reflect Bachmann's ongoing project to represent that which is victimised and excluded by culture. In a draft text, likely written around 1960, Bachmann articulates the problem thus: 'Auf das Opfer darf sich keiner berufen. Es ist Mißbrauch. Kein Land und keine Gruppe, keine Idee, darf sich auf ihre Toten berufen. Aber die Schwierigkeit das auszudrücken!'[43] (No-one may invoke the victim. That is a violation. No country and no group, no idea, may invoke their dead. But the difficulty of expressing that!) In the poetic draft a few years later, the female author uses her own body as the matter in which to ground the portrayal of historical violation. By compounding past participles which detail acts of torture and genocide, 'geschunden, erschossen, vergast' (tortured, shot, gassed), urgent form is given to the historical suffering assumed by the speaker. Through a shocking portrayal of injuries which appear as physical symptoms, the speaker attempts to lay bare civilisation's repressed crimes and their hidden relation to acts of everyday exclusion.

Leslie Morris has argued that both Bachmann and Sylvia Plath approach the portrayal of the Holocaust and Jewishness through the representation of a fragmentary female subjectivity. Morris draws on Jacqueline Rose's reading of Plath to suggest the inseparability of history and subjectivity for both writers.[44] In the poetic draft, the rhetorical question – 'Wie soll einer allein soviel erleiden können' (How can one bear so much by oneself) – can be read to denote the attempt to convey the inextricability of history and subjectivity. Yet, from the reader's point of view, the questionable character of this endeavour is seen in the speaker's undifferentiated identification with a universal victim position. As Sigrid Weigel argues, such straightforward identification with the victims of genocide leads all too easily to a false sense of reconciliation with past events.[45] And so, whilst the developing preoccupation with symptomatic modes and states in the lyric writing manifests a drive to

engage with those aspects of experience repressed within contemporary Western culture, the straightforward alignment of the female speaker with the body in these drafts leads ultimately to a re-inscription of patriarchal norms. Relegated to a deathly physical realm, the speakers frequently move towards a position of speechless despair that does not permit sustained reflection about the social conditions which engender such states of suffering. Indeed, as seen in the fragmentary character of the long-unpublished drafts, the issue of how to find a viable means of representing urgent crisis was not one that Bachmann resolved in lyric form. The writing consistently refuses artistic resolution. It thus retains an inherent provisionality that proves unsettling for the reader, as the urgent attempt to speak the unspeakable inevitably collapses. It was not until after a further decade of writing and rewriting, which brought the publication of the seminal *'Todesarten'* novel *Malina* in 1971, that Bachmann devised an aesthetic solution to the representation of continuing fascist structures and their relation to subjective crisis in the post-Holocaust situation. Moving beyond the person of the poet through construction of a dual subject position, the novel devises an abstract mode of gendered cultural critique that uses oblique depiction of the crimes of the symbolic father figure to denote the patriarchal roots of socio-cultural violence.

In their attempt to give expression to the complex interrelation of subjective suffering and the socio-cultural context, Bachmann's long-neglected poetic drafts make a radical contribution to debates about the persistence of fascism, the cultural exclusion of the Other, and the relationship between art and politics central to German culture in the post-1945 era. The perceived 'text crime' committed with the publication of *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt*, which released uncrafted drafts into the public domain, can be understood to transgress aesthetic boundaries of which Bachmann herself was well aware, seen in the fact that she never published these writings during her lifetime. As literary outsiders, however, Bachmann's siblings found themselves in a position to make public the texts, in a way that displayed disregard not only for the guardians of the sacred flame but also for the literary project to understand the wider context and significance of these documents. Yet scholars must take up this challenge to engage with the new insights offered by these fragmentary writings into Bachmann's politicizing poetics of the 1960s. The drafts abandon the artful poetic subject that is omnipresent in Bachmann's earlier verse and introduce a speaker who is not easily differentiated from the person of the poet. In the lyric refusal

to resolve the damage done on an aesthetic level, the texts subvert those artistic conventions which seek to sublimate the articulation of crisis – an act that Bachmann had begun to regard as politically suspect, if not indeed criminal. As seen in the abortive instances of lyric expression, however, the ongoing inability to establish structural distance from the crisis prevents the formal resolution necessary for the public work of art. With the gradual shift into prose, Bachmann came to devise a means of abstracting from the all-too personal articulation of distress. The experimental prose of *Malina* draws on lyric forms and motifs to construct a voiced narrative that both sounds and narrates a state of human emergency. Through the act of writing, Bachmann ultimately found a means of overcoming the experience of violence and victimization. What can be seen in the poetic drafts of the 1960s, however, are radical first efforts to generate a symptomatic form of expression that takes the female poet's subjective crisis as a basis for hard-hitting linguistic accusation and critique of unspoken crimes in the post-war order.

Notes

1 Ingeborg Bachmann, *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt: Unveröffentlichte Gedichte*, ed. Isolde Moser, Heinz Bachmann and Christian Moser, Munich: Piper, 2000, p. 89 (hereafter cited as *Welt*).

2 Ingeborg Bachmann, *Darkness Spoken: The Collected Poems*, trans. Peter Filkins, Brookline, MA: Zephyr, 2006, p. 467 (hereafter cited as *Darkness*).

3 'Keine Delikatessen' appeared along with three other poems, 'Enigma', 'Prag Jänner 64' and 'Böhmen liegt am Meer', in: Ingeborg Bachmann, 'Vier Gedichte', *Kursbuch*, 15 (1968), 91-5.

4 See, for example: Reinhard Baumgart and Peter Hamm, 'Ingeborg Bachmann', *Die Zeit*, 5 October 2000; Franz Haas, 'Die Schnäppchenjäger', in *Neue Zürcher Zeitung. Internationale Ausgabe*, 16 November 2000; Joachim Kaiser, 'Dokumente wahnsinniger Verzweiflung. Zur Edition von Ingeborg Bachmanns unveröffentlichten Gedichten aus dem Nachlass', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 6 October 2000.

5 Günter Blöcker, 'Die gestundete Zeit', in *Kein objektives Urteil nur ein lebendiges: Texte zum Werk von Ingeborg Bachmann*, ed. Christine Koschel and Inge von Weidenbaum, Munich: Piper, 1989, pp. 13-15 (here: p. 13).

6 Cf. Francesca Falconi, *L'opera de Ingeborg Bachmann alla luce della raccolta lirica postuma 'Ich weiß keine bessere Welt'*, Trieste: Parnaso, 2004; Isabella Rameder, *Ich habe die Gedichte verloren. Ingeborg Bachmanns lyrische Texte aus dem Nachlaß und ihre Beziehung zum 'Todesarten-Projekt'*, Klagenfurt and Celovec: Wieser, 2006.

7 For publication details of reviews and secondary literature on *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt*, see the relevant section in this essay collection: *Ingeborg Bachmanns Gedichte aus dem Nachlass: Eine kritische Bilanz*, ed. Arturo Lacati and Isolde Schiffermüller, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2010, pp. 221-5.

8 Baumgart and Hamm, 'Ingeborg Bachmann', 61.

9 Ibid.

10 Haas, 'Die Schnäppchenjäger', 35.

11 Kaiser, 'Dokumente wahnsinniger Verzweiflung', 19.

12 Rainer Paasch-Beeck, '"Kein Zeugnis ablegen". Zum 75. Geburtstag: Gedichte und Entwürfe aus dem Nachlass Ingeborg Bachmanns', *Kieler Nachrichten*, 26 June 2001.

13 Marcel Reich-Ranicki, 'Die Dichterin wechselt das Repertoire', in *Kein objektives Urteil*, pp. 188-92 (here: p. 189).

14 Ibid.

15 Silvia Bovenschen, 'In den Händen der Erben', in *Literaturen*, December 2000, 46.

16 Klaus Dieter Post, '"Seht ihr, Freunde, seht ihrs nicht!" Ingeborg Bachmanns Nachlaß-Zyklus *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt* im Spannungsfeld von Verstörung und poetischer Reflexion', in *Grenzgänge: Studien zur Literatur der Moderne*, ed. Helmut Koopmann and Manfred Misch, Paderborn: Mentis, 2002, pp. 273-95 (here: p. 284).

17 Hans Höller, 'Ingeborg Bachmann', in *Die Zeit*, 9 November 2000.

18 Alexander von Bormann, '"Ich bin ganz wild von Tod": das ungereinigte Schluchzen der Verzweiflung in den nachgelassenen Gedichten von Ingeborg Bachmann', *Die Welt*, 23 December 2000.

19 'Bei Durchsicht des Nachlasses, auf der Suche nach ein paar bestimmten Blättern, fielen uns die unveröffentlichten, gesperrten Gedichte unserer Schwester in die Hand. Das Wiederlesen nach fast drei Jahrzehnten war für uns faszinierend, berührend und so beeindruckend, dass der Gedanke aufkam, diese Texte nicht länger unter Verschluß zu halten, sondern auch den Leserinnen und Lesern von Ingeborg Bachmann zugänglich zu machen.' *Welt*, 5.

20 Bovenschen, 'In den Händen der Erben', 46.

21 Kurt Bartsch, Review (Ingeborg Bachmann: *Ich weiß keine bessere Welt*; '*Über die Zeit schreiben' 2*, ed. Monika Albrecht and Dirk Göttsche; Sigrid Weigel, *Ingeborg Bachmann*), *Sprachkunst* 31 (2000), 371-80 (here: 372-3).

22 Ernst Osterkamp, 'Wer ein Messer im Rücken hat, dem fällt keine gepfefferte Metapher ein', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 12 December 2000.

23 Peter Surber, 'Hie Literatur, da Leben', *St. Galler Tagblatt*, 7 October 2000.

24 Haas, 'Die Schnäppchenjäger'.

25 Arturo Larcati and Isolde Schiffermüller, 'Einleitung', in *Ingeborg Bachmanns Gedichte aus dem Nachlass*, p. 7.

26 Hans Höller, 'Krankheit und Politik. Bachmanns "Eintritt in die Partei"', in *Ingeborg Bachmanns Gedichte aus dem Nachlass*, pp. 19-32 (here: p. 25).

27 Ibid., p. 25.

28 Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, 'Dialektik der Aufklärung', in: Theodor W. Adorno, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, 20 vols. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1970-86, III (1981), pp. 7-336 (here: p. 112).

29 Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming, London: Verso, 1997, p. 92.

30 Weigel, *Ingeborg Bachmann*, p. 530.

31 Ibid.

32 Bachmann, *Wir müssen wahre Sätze finden. Gespräche und Interviews*, ed. Christine Koschel and Inge von Weidenbaum, Munich: Piper, 1983, p. 72 [Interview with Dieter Zilligen, 22 March 1971].

33 Monika Albrecht, 'Nationalsozialismus', in *Bachmann-Handbuch*, pp. 237-46 (here: p. 244).

34 Cf. Adorno, 'Was bedeutet: Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit', in *Gesammelte Schriften*, X. ii, pp. 555-72 (here: pp. 555-6).

35 Cf. Johanna Bossinade, *Kranke Welt bei Ingeborg Bachmann. Über literarische Wirklichkeit und psychoanalytische Interpretation*, Freiburg: Rombach, 2004, p. 11.

36 Bachmann, *'Todesarten'-Projekt*, ed. Monika Albrecht and Dirk Göttsche, 5 vols, Munich: Piper, 1995, II, p. 77.

37 Ibid.

38 Inge von Weidenbaum, 'Seien wir geizig mit Leichtgläubigkeit. Zu Werk und Leben von Ingeborg Bachmann', in: Josef Strutz and Endre Kiss, eds, *Genauigkeit und Seele. Zur österreichischen Literatur seit dem Fin de siècle*, Munich: Fink, 1990, pp. 211-20 (here: pp. 214-5).

39 J.A. Barbey d'Aurevilly, 'La Vengeance d'une Femme', in *Les Œuvres Complètes de Jules Barbey d'Aurevilly*, 17 vols, Paris: Bernouard, 1926-7, I (1926), p. 333.

40 Bachmann, *'Todesarten'-Projekt*, II, p. 17.

41 Horkheimer and Adorno, 'Dialektik der Aufklärung', in Adorno, *Gesammelte Schriften*, III, pp. 132-3.

42 Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, p. 112.

43 Bachmann, *Kritische Schriften*, ed. Monika Albrecht and Dirk Göttsche, Munich: Piper, 2005, p. 351.

44 Leslie Morris, 'The Ladies Lazarus: Sylvia Plath and Ingeborg Bachmann. Versuch einer vergleichenden Lektüre', in Monika Albrecht and Dirk Göttsche, eds, *'Über die Zeit schreiben' 2: literatur- und kulturwissenschaftliche Essays zum Werk Ingeborg Bachmanns*, Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2000, pp. 75-91 (here: pp. 83-4).

45 Cf. Weigel, *Ingeborg Bachmann*, p. 475.

David Barnett

Offending the Playwright: Directors' Theatre and the 'Werktreue' Debate

This chapter investigates the relationship between text and performance through the lens of 'Werktreue', which broadly translates as 'faithfulness to the play'. 'Werktreue' emerges as an intellectually contradictory term which has little basis in the practical business of theatrical production. Theresia Walser and Rolf Hochhuth are used as case studies to examine what offended playwrights might tell us about 'Werktreue' in the real world of the theatre before ethical and legal questions are addressed. The chapter concludes that there is no solution to the aporias at the centre of the realisation process and that playwrights may simply have to accept this condition.

'Werktreue' and the German Theatre System

Text crimes are not only perpetrated by authors. In the theatre, productions themselves, constructed by a collective of collaborators, often driven by a director, may similarly be read as texts,[1] especially by playwrights, keen as they may be to compare their scripts with a finished production. The quality of the production may vary, yet, for the most part, playwrights tend to take such fluctuations in their stride. A problem arises, however, when the playwright perceives the difference between the play text and the performance text to be so great that similarities may only extend to the common employment of dialogue. That is, primarily, when the production includes a host of extra-textual devices which do not ostensibly appear in the play text itself. (A familiar example would be a modern-dress Shakespeare production.) In contemporary German-speaking theatre, directors have assumed a dominant role in the realisation process, and this has often brought them into conflict with playwrights, who have defended themselves by invoking a concept which has had something of a chequered history.

'Werktreue' is a curious term which is used routinely but perhaps rather uncritically in discourse surrounding the relationship between text and performance. The term is not easily translated into English; this 'faithfulness to the play' is something of an alien concept in English-speaking theatre because of the different dynamics of the two theatre systems, in particular the relative importance of the playwright and the

director. To generalise somewhat, English-language systems, in both the UK and the USA, tend to valorise the hallowed, almost untouchable words of the playwright. In the German-speaking countries, directors are central figures and their work has unleashed a debate on the problematic tenets of 'Werktreue' by adulterating the play text and viewing it as material to be (radically) reprocessed. In this chapter, I shall consider how 'Werktreue' has become such an issue in German theatre and examine its intellectual bases. I shall then use a series of case studies as a means of understanding the practical ramifications of the term before reaching conclusions concerning just how justified playwrights might be when taking offence in the face of the director's work.

In order to understand this debate, one must first chart the rise of the director in the context of the German theatre system where, for over a century, directors have played a far more central role in the business of theatrical production than those in the English-speaking world. To an extent, this phenomenon is connected to the highly decentred nature of the system. Prior to unification in 1871, the rich patchwork of states, dukedoms and principalities meant that there were theatres all over the country, many with a central place in the cultural life of the particular province. Consequently, after that momentous date, major theatres existed all over Germany as opposed to being found exclusively in the capital city. One way of differentiating theatrical output within such a richness of provision was to emphasise the production itself over the play or the actors, but for this to happen the role of the director needed to develop. The director was no longer a realiser of a text and became an autonomous creative force. Georg II, Duke of Saxe-Meiningen, effectively initiated many of the approaches to directing still found in the theatre today, although at the time, in the second half of the nineteenth century, his drive to instil realism into stage production was considered 'revolutionary'.[2] Georg did not view the director's task as realising what was in some way innate in the script but as imposing his aesthetic decisions on it and thereby transforming it. That said, his bid to heighten the realism of a play's performance was perhaps surprisingly annexed to an idea of 'Werktreue'. And herein lies one of the term's contradictions: through an authentic use of costume and setting, and the belief that unstylised acting made the characters more 'real', he helped to establish processes which would reinforce the idea of 'Werktreue' as a set of conventions which were nonetheless based upon the active input of the director. However, the quest for authenticity betrays one of the ironies of an apparently 'werkgetreue Inszenierung': Meiningen actually visited

Fotheringay Castle to research the setting for the production of Bjørnson's *Mary Stuart in Scotland*.[3] The company also had Schiller's *Maria* Stuart in its repertoire. Unfortunately, the confrontation between Elizabeth and Mary never took place in Fotheringay and so the accuracy of the representation belied the fact that the playwright himself had taken liberties with history. Thus, the term 'Werktreue' already tells us that theatrical processes might find their own legitimation within the theatre without due reference to the world outside.

The idea of directors actively intervening in the production process rather than merely serving up the text was further developed in German theatre in the early twentieth century when directors such as Leopold Jessner and Erwin Piscator problematised the relationship between text and performance more fundamentally, often outraging more conservative elements of the audience.[4] In the Federal Republic of the 1960s, the impulse was re-awakened by what became known as 'Regietheater' (directorial theatre), a theatre in which a new breed of young directors tore into the classics in the name of fresh, vibrant interpretations. And while the term specifically dwells in the period and the types of plays approached, a directors' theatre has emerged over the decades which has, by its nature, called the authority of the play text into question. The term 'Regietheater' still has a great amount of currency despite its links with a particular period in German theatre history, and while 'Regisseurstheater' (directors' theatre) is more accurate, theatre people and the press tend to use the former when discussing 'Werktreue' and so I have retained it in the following discussion. Michael Patterson's observation of the mid-1970s that 'if there are any stars in the German theatre, then they are the directors' holds true, for the most part, today,[5] although it should be noted that something of a backlash has gained momentum in the past few years. This reaction was even championed by the Federal President who used a speech to mark the 'Schillerjahr' of 2005 to plead for productions which respected the integrity of Schiller's plays.[6] This position itself is somewhat ironic, as neither Schiller nor, for that matter, Goethe were afraid of adulterating plays themselves. In 1815, for example, Goethe advocated a conciliatory ending to a production of *King Lear*. He did make the distinction, however, between watching a text in performance and reading the play in the original.[7]

The Contradictions of 'Werktreue'

The dominance of the director in German theatre has led to a tension between text and performance and to the rise of a debate surrounding 'Werktreue', although, as I have already noted, it is a term which is marked by contradiction. At their most fundamental, proponents of 'Werktreue' imagine a relationship between text and performance in which the play offers a blueprint for production, which may or may not then be felicitously realised. The very metaphor of a blueprint or of a 'Partitur' (musical score)[8] is intensely problematic. A blueprint gives minute measurements and descriptions of materials without which the product will not function properly. The blueprint is precise; there is no room for manoeuvre – cutting corners on materials may lead to catastrophic results. The difference between a blueprint and a play is obvious: the play is alive with ambiguity and offers space for interpretation. Even the most naturalistic plays suffused with the most elaborate stage directions cannot inhibit the explorations of the rehearsal process or control its outcome. The metaphor of the musical score raises different concerns in that it concedes a degree of interpretation but retains the dominance of the text over performance. This position is exemplified by Richard Hornby's comments, which seek to naturalise the relationship even further: 'a playscript, like a human being, is a complete entity. Like a human, it has a "personality" that will vary in differing production circumstances but which remains at bottom a unity'.[9] The idea here is that the script has an organic set of meanings which may well be contradictory but which nonetheless maintain an integrity marking a boundary between the acceptable and the unacceptable production. While Hornby's ideas may be rooted in structuralism, they still support several of 'Werktreue"s tenets today.

Criticising 'Werktreue' involves a consideration of two aspects, the status of words in the play text and the processes by which theatre is made. While Roland Barthes, following Saussure, argues against words having any particular meanings at all in his essay 'The Death of the Author', Richard Sheppard widens the lens by addressing text in a literary work: 'the signified of any text is not a unifying idea, principle, energy or repertoire, but a meta-textual dialectic out of which that text has been generated and which consists, simultaneously, in a set of problems and set of responses'.[10] The location of a meaning which is then to be 'translated' into performance is clearly a nonsense. The same is true of a belief that 'translation' is possible at all, because the very

processes of theatrical realisation are complex and multi-faceted. Lenz Prütting summarises this point neatly: 'jeder einzelne Arbeitsschritt ist […] immer zugleich ästhetische Werk-Erstellung (Poiesis) und Interpretation (Hermeneutik)' (every single stage of realisation is […] always simultaneously an aesthetic development of the work [Poiesis] and an interpretation [hermeneutics]). [11] The emphasis is on transformation rather than translation.

In the light of its practical impossibility, 'Werktreue' becomes more a socio-aesthetic idea which is rooted in specific prejudices surrounding theatrical processes. 'Werktreue' allies itself with cultural conservatism,[12] a position neatly summed up by Ferdinand Piedmont who sees the allegedly faithful realisation of a play rather as 'die Darstellung ewig-gültiger Werte und verbindlicher ästhetischer Formen' (the depiction of eternally valid values and aesthetic forms necessary to achieve such ends).[13] In short, 'Werktreue' seeks to fix meanings imputed to plays and stifle the process of imaginative theatrical exploration by confining productions to a narrow set of parameters. These parameters, however, are closely bound to conventions, which, by their very definition, are the product of human intervention and are thus not inevitable.

Nevertheless, the question arises as to what kind of yardstick emerges to measure the discrepancy between text and performance if 'Werktreue' has proved so fundamentally flawed. Erika Fischer-Lichte invokes the category of 'Adäquatheit' (adequacy) which is ultimately 'das Resultat eines subjektabhängigen Deutungs- und Wertungsprozesses' (the result of a subjective process of interpretation and evaluation). [14] Her conclusion, as is clear, offers no concrete measures, and Prütting is similarly unwilling to commit to a fixed definition when he calls on Hans-Peter Bayerdörfer's contribution to the discussion. Bayerdörfer avoids the trap of positing a direct relationship between text and performance and insists that both have a 'Gleichwertigkeit des Problemniveaus' (an equivalence in how they deal with the issues).[15] But again, a harmony between the two categorically different sides of the production process is eminently difficult to quantify. While one can acknowledge the impasse both critics have identified, the problem of the offended playwright still persists. It may thus be sensible to consider some real-life examples in which playwrights and directors have been embroiled to understand the practical ramifications of the tension away from the theoretical flaws implicit to 'Werktreue'.

Case Studies: Playwrights and their Discontents

In recent years, Theresia Walser has clashed with directors on two notable occasions, and both incidents shed light on the 'Werktreue' debate. Walser had enjoyed national success in 1998 with her play *King Kongs Töchter* (King Kong's Daughters). In 2004 *Wandernutten* (Wandering Whores) was commissioned by the Staatstheater Stuttgart under their programme 'Dichter ans Theater' (Getting Playwrights into the Theatre). The programme sought to address the perceived asymmetry in the relationship between playwright and director in favour of the playwright, but what emerged on stage very much undermined the programme's good intentions. *Wandernutten* is a play about sex and relationships. It takes place discretely in three different locations: a middle-aged couple who have performed together for many a decade in the adult-film industry find themselves on the outskirts of a city, reflecting on their lives and work; four men discuss their wives and loves over dinner; and three businesswomen await an Italian businessman with whom one has been flirting by correspondence, only to discover that the businessman is in fact a businesswoman. There are connections between the three groups – one of the men has dumped his collection of adult videos and they are discovered by the porn stars, and one of the men's wives is the would-be adulterous businesswoman – but the three constellations are quite distant from each other, a 'hinreißendes Stückwerk unter Tesastreifen' (captivating patchwork held together by sellotape), as reviewer Christoph Schmidt put it.[16] Despite its structural looseness, the play lives from the comedy and irony in its language. Indeed, Walser sees her use of language as central to the success of her plays: 'die Figuren bringen ihre Themen mit, oder sagen wir besser, in der Musikalität der Sprache verschärfen sie ihre Themen' (the characters bring their themes with them, or rather their themes are intensified by the musicality of the language).[17] However, director Jacqueline Kornmüller took an approach to the play which effectively bracketed off the movement of the language and gave pre-eminence to the visual plane.

Kornmüller first removed the action from its original settings and offered a sparse stage on which all the dialogues took place. The women, for example, drove around on stage in a real car, rather than chatting to each other at a hotel bar. On the surface, this would not seem that excessive an intervention: the locations for the action are not described in any detail and the transposition of a theme of, in this case, feisty businesswomen into the macho symbol of a car does not seem especially

out of place. The problem, however, was that the images developed took precedence over Walser's language and dramaturgy. Martin Halter wrote that the production was 'gnadenlos an ein schickes Design verspielt' (ruthlessly sold down the river on a smart design).[18] The decision to foreground a series of directorial ideas came at the cost of the language which, reviewers universally agreed, was robbed of its humour and its irony by a flatter delivery and the soundtrack. Mournful music was specially composed for the production, and this actively undermined the text's own rhythms. Claudia Gass, whose comments typify the reception overall, maintained: 'die theatralen Mittel bringen die verborgenen Schichten des Textes nicht zum Funkeln. Stattdessen erstickt die Qualität des Stücks in einem überfrachteten Konzept' (the theatrical means don't allow the text's hidden layers to sparkle. Instead the quality of the play is stifled by a bombastic concept).[19] The critique clearly makes a distinction between text and performance in which the hypostatisation of a directorial vision obscures the perceived implicit worth of the play itself. One reviewer noted the audience's response: 'In Stuttgart wurde nicht ein Stück, sondern die Regie urausgebuht' (in Stuttgart, it wasn't the play but the direction which was booed at the premiere).[20]

The second incident, which came but weeks after the premiere of *Wandernutten*, is interesting for different but related reasons (although the quick succession has marked Walser, however unwillingly, as the playwright's playwright and the high critic of 'Regietheater'). *Die Kriegsberichterstatterin* (The Woman War Reporter) was also a commissioned piece, but here the play was actually cancelled before its premiere in Konstanz in late October 2004 with the consent of both playwright and director. The official press release cited the customary euphemism, 'wegen künstlerischer Meinungsverschiedenheiten' (due to artistic differences),[21] although the real reasons were more complex. On the one hand, Walser, by her own admission, was late in submitting the final revision of the script, causing problems in rehearsal.[22] On the other, she identified a similar trend to that of Kornmüller in the direction of Dagmar Schlingmann, who was also the 'Intendantin' at the theatre at the time, that 'die Regie von Anfang an zu sehr die Figuren außerhalb des Textes suchte und grundlegende Situationen, die das Stück vorgibt, missachtet hat' (from the very start the director was looking too hard for the characters outside the script and ignored the fundamental situations which the play suggests).[23] Obviously, little is known about the abandoned production because it was never performed. However, the subsequent world premiere in Munich was revealing.

Dieter Dorn, the 'Intendant' at the Bayerisches Staatsschauspiel, had worked with Walser before and did not hesitate in providing her with the Marstall, the theatre's more intimate stage. He also made director Florian Boesch available, someone known as a 'Textermöglicher' (realiser of the speeches), […]that is, someone who was not concerned with imposing his 'vision' but letting the texts 'speak' for themselves.[24] The problem with this 'safe pair of hands' was that, either through his own methods and/or because of the furore surrounding Walser at the time, the production was generally received as somewhat bland.

Die Kriegsberichterstatterin, is, to an extent, a middle-class comedy, gentle but biting. It is set in an academic institute responsible for the protection of unusual German words. Its existence is under threat from Berlin, although its eccentric director is blissfully unaware of this. There are tensions, both professional and amatory, among the staff, and a peculiar and sinister practice whereby staff selected for a special mention at the annual meeting end up disappearing mysteriously. So, this is a quirky comedy with hints of darkness. What calls the whole fabric of the play into question is the appearance, well into the action, of the war reporter herself. This disjunctive figure finds herself in the institute's garden, presumably reporting about a conflict which is taking place live and all around the characters although there is no evidence on stage to support this.[25] The other characters respond to the disruptive influence in a variety of ways, from initial dismissal to gradual acceptance.

The reviews of the premiere not only signalled the director's unwillingness to make his mark on the production, but also his apparent trepidation to probe the text in any detail. Christine Dössel's impression was shared by many of the reviewers: 'Boesch inszeniert nie mehr als das, was vordergründig im Text steht, erfindet nichts hinzu, lotet aber auch nichts aus, schon gar nicht den latenten Schrecken, der in Walsers Sprache lauert' (Boesch never stages any more than what's on plain view in the text, he adds nothing, but also digs nothing out, certainly not the latent terror that lurks in Walser's language).[26] She also noted that the attempt to bring out the comedy of the play was superficial and slapstick. Dössel's evaluation suggests that this director saw his task as merely to realise that which was written on the page. This position, as we have already noted, is something of a phantom, as no realisation process is compatible with such a strategy. Boesch thus chose to treat the text with a respect which did not extend to an exploration of its richness, and indeed, the war reporter herself did not become a problematic disruption

but rather something of a nuisance to the other characters in this production.

The examples taken from Walser's experiences in the German theatre system are not that far removed from those of Rolf Hochhuth, although, as we shall see, his demonstrate a noticeably different aspect of the debate. Hochhuth's *Wessis in Weimar* (Westerners in Weimar) was perhaps the most scandal-ridden play of the 1990s. *Wessis*, subtitled 'Szenen aus einem besetzten Land' (Scenes from an Occupied Country), is a thesis play in the worst sense. Rather than exploring the situation of the former GDR, it uses documentary material, largely taken from newspapers, and dramatises highly partisan approaches to themes such as unemployment and the restitution of confiscated property. It makes its points in the most inelegant of ways and sacrifices its own aesthetic of realism in order to make them.[27] The play hit the headlines before it was finished when its first scene was published in *manager magazin* in the middle of 1992. The prologue to the play argues that the assassination of the head of the Treuhand, the institution entrusted with overseeing the privatisation of GDR business and industry, was in some way justified. This provocation, which was clearly designed to solicit attention for the play, had its desired effects but the result was that the play became a victim of its own notoriety. On the one hand, there was a clear condemnation from the major political parties, including the greatest 'accolade' for Hochhuth, the then Chancellor Helmut Kohl's rebuke that Hochhuth had written a 'Freibrief für Mörder' (charter for murderers).[28] On the other, the play came to the notice of the Berliner Ensemble (BE) which, as a theatre based in the erstwhile East Berlin and not disinclined to engage with topical political themes, sought and gained the rights to stage the world premiere. The BE commissioned Einar Schleef to direct the production, something which would ultimately provoke the ire of the playwright.

Schleef was a true innovator on the German stage.[29] His rediscovery of the chorus and its power to examine the phenomenon of Fascism, and the relationship between the individual and the collective in contemporary society, marked his mature work, and this choral approach was deployed in his staging of *Wessis*. Hochhuth, however, is the champion of the individual and he confers on it the moral responsibility one may associate with the nineteenth rather than the twentieth century. [30] Consequently, after an initially friendly collaboration, Hochhuth threatened to withdraw the rights to the play on the eve of its premiere on 10 February 1993, after announcing his decision on ZDF's

breakfast TV show on 5 February. His main objections were that characters' dialogues were being delivered by choruses; his extensive stage directions and notes were being performed on stage; roughly ten per cent of his text actually appeared in the production; and other material, from Goethe, Schiller and Brecht amongst others, was present without any apparent reason.[31] It is undeniable that Schleef was taking liberties with Hochhuth's text and that 'Werktreue' was very much being flouted. Yet there was no shortage of opinion at the time that Hochhuth had simply been naïve if not downright stupid for entrusting the play to Schleef, given the latter's reputation.[32]

Although I shall discuss the legal position a little later, suffice it to say for now that Hochhuth's attempts at getting the premiere banned ran into trouble and Rowohlt, the publisher which held the performing rights to the play, advised him that all he could insist upon was for his name to be removed from the programme.[33] A compromise was later reached in which Hochhuth agreed to permit the performance but only if the audience at the premiere were all given a free copy of the book edition (paid for by the BE). As a result the show did go on and was almost universally praised for its approach to the subject matter. Themes of nationalism, collective identity, violence and its consequences ran through the almost four-hour production. Matthias Pees wrote: 'aus der hochhüthigen Materialschlacht macht Schleef eine denkwürdige sinnfällige deutsche Vision' (Schleef creates a thought-provoking, uncompromising German vision out of Hochhuth's mountain of material).[34] Petra Kohse, who reflected many of the other reviewers' responses noted: 'der geflederte Autor sollte sich freuen, daß seine Sätze hier mit eingeflossen sind' (the plundered author should be grateful that his lines play a part here).[35] The production was certainly hard work, for both the performers and the audience, but there was very much the sense that it had transformed its weak source material into an utterly compelling theatrical experience.

The cleavage between text and performance in this production appears to be enormous, yet Schleef defended his decisions in an interview published a week or so after the opening night. In it, he expressed nothing but his admiration for Hochhuth's original play, of which little was to be seen in the final published version, for saying what no-one else had dared to say. Schleef maintained: 'was [Hochhuth] uns zu lesen gab, war nichts anderes als ein Aufruf zum Bürgerkrieg, vielleicht auch ein Szenarium der Angst vor einem in Deutschland nach der Einigung drohenden Bürgerkrieg' (what Hochhuth gave us to read

was nothing other than a call to civil war, perhaps an architecture of a terror of an approaching civil war spawned by unification).[36] He also noted that to him Hochhuth was 'berauscht' (intoxicated) by political violence and that 'Mord wird ihm zum Heldentat' (to him, murder becomes a heroic act), something which is not contradicted by some of the scenes in the final script. With these ideas in mind, one can start to understand that Schleef's production was not an example of directorial arbitrariness which merely happened to make use of selections from Hochhuth's play. Instead, the production betokened a carefully considered reflection on a subject matter which was present in the text, although its means were not at all sanctioned by the playwright.

In order to right the wrong Hochhuth perceived had been done to him, he let it be known that the production in Hamburg, which followed the Berlin premiere by a mere fifteen days, was the true premiere in his eyes.[37] Hochhuth had collaborated with the Swiss director Yves Jansen on the script for the production, which took place in a hitherto unimportant private theatre, the Ernst-Deutsch-Theater. Together they made several cuts to the lengthy play, but Jansen insisted that he was the director and that Hochhuth did not attend rehearsals.[38] Of course, Hochhuth had nothing to worry about and the director delivered precisely the sort of production the playwright had hoped for. The reviewers found their fears confirmed: the play was fundamentally flawed and craved imaginative direction. Mechthild Lange wrote that the director 'hat redlich und treu gedient. Zwar wurde eine ganze Szene ausgelassen, auch sonst manches gestrichen, letztlich war das immer noch zu wenig' (served honestly and loyally. And although a whole scene and a lot more material had been cut, at the end of the day, it was still too little).[39] Not satisfied with this effort, Hochhuth, who is untrained as a director, decided to direct the play himself not once but twice, first in 1994 in Meiningen and five years later at the Schloßpark-Theater, Berlin. Rolf Michaelis wrote of Hochhuth's debut: 'wir fühlen uns plötzlich in das DDR-Theater der Ulbricht-Zeit versetzt' (we suddenly feel like we're back in the GDR, in the theatre of Ulbricht's times), due to the black-and-white interpretation of the characters in this apparently accurate realisation of the play.[40] Gerhard Ebert condemned the second production when he noted: '[Hochhuth's] konventionell theaternde Inszenierung macht die Problematik lächerlich […]. An diesem Abend erschüttern nicht menschliche Schicksale, sondern die Unbeholfenheit, mit der ein Schreiber mit seinem Text umgeht' ([his] conventional production makes the play's issues ridiculous. […] It's not human

tragedies that disturb you, it's the awkwardness with which the author has approached his own play).[41] Hochhuth's interpretation of 'Werktreue' merely served to expose the weaknesses of his script, although his own technical shortcomings as director did not help.

Hochhuth had further trouble with a production of one of his plays in 2006. The self-styled tragicomedy *Heil Hitler!* was due to be premiered at the Nationaltheater Weimar. The plot centres on a young man, Till Reineke, who seeks to avenge his father: he was murdered by the Nazis after being sent to a camp because he did not say 'Heil Hitler' to the 'Blockwart' Willi Rotter. In addition, he has himself sectioned in an asylum for greeting virtually every address to him with the words 'Heil Hitler'. The original director had planned to have two women play the male Nazis who persecuted Till and his family. This time Hochhuth was successful in preventing the performance and intervened three weeks before the planned premiere on 24 June, claiming that the production amounted to 'Geschichtsfälschung, denn nicht Frauen, von seltenen Ausnahmefällen abgesehen, sondern Männer waren die Mörder der Hitlerjahre' (a falsification of history, because it wasn't women – apart from a few rare exceptions – but men who carried out the murders under Hitler).[42] Theatre, however, is involved in the business of representation, a process which is always selective and subjective, and the 'Intendant', Stephan Märki, retorted that Hochhuth had known that all the roles in the production were to be played by only five actors. The production was cancelled and, ironically enough, replaced by Schleef's *Nietzsche-Trilogie* plays. Hochhuth, rather than directing the world premiere, used money from his own Ilse-Holzapfel-Stiftung to fund what can only be called a vanity production in January 2007 at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin, of which he is also a member. Reviewer Irene Bazinger duly noted with reference to the venue: 'an Kunst schienen weder Stück noch Inszenierung interessiert' (neither the play nor the production seemed interested in art).[43]

The examples of Walser and Hochhuth bring counter-perspectives to the 'Werktreue' debate, which, as noted earlier, cannot be sustained theoretically or theatrically because complete faithfulness to a written text is a practical impossibility on the stage. Yet before evaluating their contribution, one should be aware that while Walser and Hochhuth might be considered more conventional writers whose work is not that formally challenging, the 'Werktreue' issue is not confined to such playwrights. Heiner Müller, whose work actively seeks directorial input due to its radically open forms, intervened in a production of *Der Auftrag*

(The Mission) in Düsseldorf in 1989. He had been contacted by his publisher, the Verlag der Autoren, alerting him to certain changes made by the director. The production's programme consequently stated: 'gegenüber dem Original in wesentlichen Punkten verändert, vor allem in seiner Komposition, im Ablauf der Szenen' (altered in substantial ways with respect to the original, especially in its composition and the order of scenes).[44] Müller was certainly active in the protest and he confirmed his involvement in an interview with me in 1995.[45] The irony of the position was commented upon in the press: 'doch daß der Verlag ausgerechnet bei seinem Schutzbefohlenen Heiner Müller auf Werktreue pocht, ist schon bizarr' (that the publishers are insisting on 'Werktreue' on behalf of its ward Heiner Müller of all people is utterly bizarre).[46] There is an even more contradictory example in the figure of the prolific playwright and director René Pollesch. In an interview in 2005, Pollesch apparently saw the two sides of the theatrical equation as mutually independent: 'Dramatiker stellen einen Text dar, ein anderer setzt ihn um' (playwrights produce a text; someone else puts it on). This position was, however, swiftly revised when the interviewer reminded Pollesch that he had recently prevented the director Jan Ritsema from staging one of his plays: 'Jetzt haben Sie mich einerseits erwischt. Andererseits besagt das Beispiel aber nur, dass ein Autor sich glücklich schätzen darf, wenn er eingreifen kann, sollte er der Ansicht sein, man werde seinem Text nicht gerecht' (on the one hand, you've caught me out. On the other, the example only tells you that an author can consider himself fortunate to be able to intervene, should he be of the opinion that his play isn't being treated properly).[47] The defence is hardly credible. Pollesch is clearly having his cake in theory while eating it in practice.

Thus a broad spectrum of writing for the German theatre can be included in a discussion of conditions under which playwrights deem certain performances of their work unacceptable. However, as my brief survey has demonstrated, the 'rules' for these conditions are highly contentious. In the case of Walser, one finds two contrasting models of directorial practice. The world premiere of *Wandernutten* was considered a poor rendition of a play which apparently did not require a raft of additional dimensions. However, the second attempt at staging *Die Kriegsberichterstatterin* showed what happened when a rich text was treated with either too much reverence or an anxiousness *not* to intervene, namely that the production became somewhat insipid. The example of Hochhuth pushes us in a rather different direction. Einar Schleef's *Wessis* was highly acclaimed for salvaging material from a play which stood

exposed in subsequent 'faithful' productions, directed by an approved director and the author himself. *Heil Hitler!* on the other hand was prevented from being staged by the author's objections to a mildly challenging directorial approach and was left to wilt at the hands of its author's self-endorsed production.

Ethical and Legal Difficulties with 'Werktreue'

In all the examples given (excepting Müller), the production was a world premiere. This leads one to the ethical position articulated by Peter Michalzik in an interview with Walser concerning the premiere of *Wandernutten*. While dismissing a debate around 'Werktreue' as 'Quatsch' (rubbish), he instead posits: 'es geht vielmehr um die Zerstörung von Stücken, bevor sie erkannt wurden' (it's more a question of ruining plays before they're established).[48] One may understand the commonsense basis of this argument, yet it nonetheless assumes that the process of becoming 'established' in some way involves two different kinds of directing practice, one 'pure' and one 'adulterated', and that an ethics may thus be applied to directorial style. As has already been discussed, there is simply no such practice which can render a play 'purely'. Direction always involves making decisions which put the productions at a remove from the play: even in Hochhuth's authorised productions of *Wessis*, the long text was cut, raising the question of how pure such a production remains. 'Pure' may also denote an unstylised mode of performance but again, such approaches can also deliver a great variation in interpretation. If, then, Michalzik's ethical reservation is untenable because it assumes an aesthetic impossibility, perhaps the law can come to the aid of the playwright who fears the interventions of an irreverent director.

The law, as far as the performance of plays is concerned, covers two areas: copyright and contract. Authors may question the use of their material, as set out in paragraph sixteen of the German copyright act:

> Der Urheber hat das Recht, eine Entstellung oder eine andere Beeinträchtigung seines Werkes zu verbieten, die geeignet ist, seine berechtigten geistigen oder persönlichen Interessen am Werk zu gefährden.[49]
>
> (The copyright holder has the right to ban a misrepresentation or any other distortion of his or her work which has the effect of compromising

> his or her justified intellectual or personal interests with respect to the work.)

The legal route was potentially open to Hochhuth when he protested against Schleef's *Wessis*, although as Corinna Brocher, the head of Rowohlt, writes:

> Rechtlich unstrittig war die Urheberrechtsverletzung. Problematisch war nur, ob mit der Wahl des Regisseurs Einar Schleef dem Autor nicht klar gewesen sein musste, welche Art der Inszenierung sein Stück erfahren würde. […] Da eine einstweilige Verfügung eine sehr teure Angelegenheit werden kann, wurde versucht, im Vorfeld einen Kompromiss zu erzielen, was ja auch gelang.[50]
>
> (The infringement of copyright was indisputable in law. What was, however, problematic was whether the author understood the consequences of choosing Schleef as director and the kind of production the play would receive. […] Since a legal injunction can prove a very costly affair, a compromise was sought out of court, which we indeed achieved.)

Hochhuth could use the legal route to prevent the Nationaltheater Weimar production because his text designated the two characters as male while the production sought to cast women in those parts, thus violating the integrity of his published work, and the theatre was unable to defend its position based on the reputation of the director. In terms of contract, an author or the firm managing his or her performing rights does not, of course, have to enter into an arrangement with any theatre or director, and may insert any number of specific clauses to regulate the production. Yet, as we shall see, theatres often resist such clauses.

Walser notes the ways in which the law did not come to the aid of the discontented playwright with respect to the disputed productions of *Wandernutten* and *Die Kriegsberichterstatterin*: 'urheberrechtlich war an beiden Inszenierungen nichts zu beanstanden, immerhin wurden die Worte Silbe für Silbe gesprochen' (in terms of copyright, there was nothing to fault in both productions; the speeches were delivered word for word after all).[51] The argument acknowledges that directors are responsible for a lot more than just the delivery of the text and that legal means cannot be used to compare the two very different categories of text and performance. Later in the same essay, Walser draws our attention to an instance in which the law comes into conflict with the freedom of art, a principle established in article five of the

Grundgesetz.[52] Here she writes that she had recently added a clause to a contract which stipulated that any music was only to be included after due consultation. The theatre was reportedly indignant and she withdrew the clause after being accused of impinging upon the director's artistic freedom. A similar tension arose around the production of *Wessis* at the BE. Hochhuth let it be known that he had permitted the show, 'um sich nicht nachsagen zu lassen, er habe den Künstler Schleef in seiner Arbeit behindert' (so nobody could say he had hindered Schleef the artist in his work).[53] The cultural prestige of the theatre had forced both playwrights to cede ground otherwise supported by the letter of the law.

The law, however, is not that reliable an instrument, as may be seen in the wrangling surrounding a now infamous production of Hauptmann's *Die Weber* (The Weavers) in Dresden in 2004. Although this play was written in 1892, his estate still had rights because copyright law continues to offer protection for seventy years after the author's death, and Hauptmann died in 1946. Director Volker Lösch had used the play's speeches and performed them at the Staatsschauspiel with a chorus largely made up of unemployed locals. Extra material, taken from his cast's responses to five questions concerning their attitudes to work, their living conditions and aspirations, was also included. Small sections of speeches taken from this material personally attacked the then Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and talkshow host, Sabine Christiansen, amongst others.[54] The furore surrounding the insults brought the production national attention when the *Bild-Zeitung* carried the story on its front page shortly after the premiere on 30 October 2004. In this case, the playwright was being offended by proxy: granddaughter Anja Hauptmann went to the Berliner Landgericht and successfully obtained an injunction preventing any further performance of the production that included text from *Die Weber* on 23 November. The judgement in her favour was certainly a problematic one. Copyright was cited and Rüdiger Schaper reported: 'das Verbot wird mit "gravierenden Eingriffen in die Wertungsintensität" des Textes begründet' (the injunction is founded on 'serious damage to the interpretative intensity' of the play).[55] The grounds themselves were shrouded in legalese but, as it turned out, Hauptmann was using copyright as a way of attacking the additions made by Lösch's cast. Hauptmann said: 'ich distanziere mich aufs Schärfste von den volksverhetzenden Passagen, die dem Stück ohne Absprache und Genehmigung hinzugefügt wurden' (I distance myself in the strongest terms from the passages of incitement which were added to the play without discussion or permission).[56] Thus her anger was directed

more towards the association of the play with the sentiments that formed the basis of the *Bild* story than the damage done to the concept of 'Werktreue'. Indeed, Hauptmann previously had no problem with the use of her grandfather's text in Frank Castorf's *Weber* at the Volksbühne in 1997, where 'Werktreue' was undoubtedly in short supply.

As a result of the judgement, the production team was compelled to remove all traces of Hauptmann from their work. They returned on 14 February 2005 with *Die Dresdner Weber: Eine Hommage an Gerhart Hauptmann* (The Weavers of Dresden: A Homage to Gerhart Hauptmann) which played to sold-out houses. As Moray McGowan puts it: 'despite its textual absence, Hauptmann's play remains a formative presence'. [57] The enforced excision of Hauptmann's lines could not displace their themes and sentiments. Later that year, however, the higher Berliner Kammergericht reached a different conclusion which essentially permitted the performance of the original *Weber* production, thus restoring Hauptmann's text. In the spirit of defending copyright, the court nonetheless ordered the theatre to cut the "'Tötungsfantasien", die der Tendenz des Originals zuwiderliefen' ('murderous fantasies' which run counter to the spirit of the original).[58] Yet there was one final sting in the tail for the production, which had been invited to perform at the Berliner Ensemble in May. Performance rights for touring may be separately licensed, if the contract so demands. The publishers, acting for Hauptmann's estate, withdrew these rights, and the Berliners saw the *Dresdner Weber* version instead.[59]

Concluding Remarks

It is clear that, however hard one tries to regulate or calibrate it, the relationship between text and performance is defined by a central aporia – the difficulty of comparing two fundamentally different types of artistic product, the theatrical text and its production. However, it is similarly clear that offended playwrights continue to seek redress either with the theatres or through the courts, and so a question arises that strikes at the heart of the theatrical enterprise. Prütting says that it would be wrong to draw the conclusion that 'es gebe überhaupt keine Grenzen im poietisch-hermeneutischen Umgang mit Dramentexten und man könne mit ihnen machen, was man wolle' (there are no limits when it comes to the poietic-hermeneutic treatment of drama texts und that one can do with them what one will).[60] This common-sense approach, as we shall see, is sanctioned by nothing other than a subjective response to the

relationship between text and performance. Prütting insists that the interpretation of a dramatic work is the final criterion, and he criticises a deconstructive tendency in theatre production. Yet in a period in which postdramatic practices are widespread on the German stage as well as in plays which eschew character and plot, the very question of interpretation is often held in abeyance by the productions and the texts themselves.[61] Interpretation is itself an incommensurable category and the definitions of how well a play has been interpreted differ from spectator to spectator, from critic to critic. It thus appears that Prütting's sentiments regarding what one can or cannot do with the play text are also unsound and that the only final arbiters are the spectators. A case in point may well be Schleef's *Wessis* which indubitably infringed Hochhuth's 'Urheberrecht' (copyright) but which proved popular with the audience and opened up aspects of the text which Hochhuth wholeheartedly rejected. Ultimately, René Pollesch's position – 'playwrights produce a text; someone else puts it on' – is one from which there is no escape. Playwrights, like Barthes' author, may have to stop taking offence and accept their symbolic deaths after all.

Notes

1 See, for example, Marco de Marinis, 'The Performance Text', in: Henry Bial, ed., *The Performance Studies Reader*, London: Routledge, 2004, pp. 232-51. De Marinis helpfully delimits the metaphor when he writes: 'we could […] say that the performance text is a theoretical model of the observable performance phenomenon' (p. 233), thus disentangling the complexity and unreadability of performance from necessarily simplified descriptive approaches.

2 Ann Marie Koller, *The Theater Duke: Georg II of Saxe-Meiningen and the German Stage*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984, p. 64.

3 John Osborne, *Die Meininger: Texte zur Rezeption*, Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1980, p. 12.

4 See Michael Patterson, *The Revolution in German Theatre 1900-1933*, London: Routledge, 1981 for a discussion of the directors and their practices; and Gerwin Strobl, *The Swastika and the Stage: German Theatre and Society 1933-1945*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 3-35, who considers the conservative response to experimental theatre in the Weimar Republic.

5 Michael Patterson, *German Theatre Today. Post-War Theatre in West and East Germany, Austria and Northern Switzerland* (London: Pitman, 1976), p. 8.

6 See Horst Köhler, 'Grußwort von Bundespräsident Horst Köhler anlässlich der Schillermatinee im Berliner Ensemble', 17 April 2005, at: http://www.bundespraesident.de/Anlage/original_625082/Schillermatinee-17.04.2005.pdf (accessed 6 April 2009).

7 See Lenz Prütting, '"Werktreue": Historische und systematische Aspekte einer theaterpolitischen Debatte über die Grenzen der Theaterarbeit', *Forum Modernes Theater*, 21:2 (2006), 107-89 (here: 112-3). Prütting reminds us that Goethe revised his opinion in 1826.

8 Theresia Walser, a playwright I shall discuss below, uses the term with respect to her own plays in Nicole Golombek, '"Die Figuren bringen ihre Themen mit"', *Stuttgarter Nachrichten*, 9 October 2004.

9 Richard Hornby, *Script into Performance: A Structuralist Approach*, New York: Paragon House, 1977, p. 109.

10 Richard Sheppard, *Tankred Dorst's 'Toller': A Case Study in Reception*, New Alyth: Lochee, 1989, p. 9.

11 Prütting, '"Werktreue"', p. 132.

12 See Prütting, pp. 121-3; and Erika Fischer-Lichte, 'Was ist eine "werkgetreue" Inszenierung? Überlegungen zum Prozeß der Transformation eines Dramas in eine Aufführung', in: Fischer-Lichte, ed., *Das Drama und seine Inszenierung*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1985, pp. 37-49 (here: pp. 39-40).

13 Ferdinand Piedmont, 'Zur Frage der Rezeptionsleistung moderner Schiller-Inszenierungen', in: Wolfgang Wittkowski, ed, *Friedrich Schiller: Kunst, Humanität und Politik in der späten Aufklärung*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1982, pp. 351-65 (here: p. 352).

14 Fischer-Lichte, p. 47.

15 Hans-Peter Bayerdörfer, quoted in Prütting, p. 166.

16 Christoph Schmidt, 'King Kongs Tochter', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 12 October 2004.

17 Walser, quoted in Golombek, '"Die Figuren bringen ihre Themen mit"'.

18 Martin Halter, 'Der Augenblick der Liebe', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 11 October 2004.

19 Claudia Gass, 'Sex nach Schichtende', *die tageszeitung*, 12 October 2004.

20 Gerhard Jörder, 'Musik im Unterholz', *Die Zeit*, 14 October 2004.

21 dpa, 'Kein Kriegsbericht', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 21 October 2004.

22 See Walser, quoted in kis./wen., 'Theresia Walser gibt der Regie die Schuld', *Die Welt*, 21 October 2004.

23 Walser, quoted in Jürgen Berger, 'Leere Tiefe', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 27 October 2004.

24 Mirko Weber, 'Draußen vor der Hecke', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 28 February 2005.

25 The sudden irruption of an unexplained war is not dissimilar to a *topos* found in Sarah Kane's *Blasted*, although Walser assiduously avoids any trace of real events intruding upon the genteel gathering.

26 Christine Dössel, 'Der Partyschreck', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 28 February 2005.

27 See David Barnett, 'Tactical Realisms: Hochhuth's *Wessis in Weimar* and Kroetz's *Ich bin das Volk*', in: Arthur Williams, Stuart Parkes and Julian Preece, eds, *Whose Story? Continuities in Contemporary German-Language Literature*, Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang, 1998, pp. 181-95 (here: pp. 182-7).

28 Kohl, quoted in Volker Müller, 'Wirbel um *Wessis in Weimar*', in Hochhuth, *Wessis in Weimar. Szenen aus einem besetzen Land*, Munich: DTV, 1994, pp. 272-4 (here: p. 273).

29 See, for example, Wolfgang Behrens, *Einar Schleef. Leben und Werk*, Berlin: Theater der Zeit, 2003.

30 See Bernd Herhoffer, '*Wessis in Weimar*: Hochhuth, Schiller und die Deutschen', in: Osman Durrani, Colin Good and Kevin Hilliard, eds, *The New Germany: Literature and Society after Unification*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995, pp. 109-27 (here: p. 112). See also Hochhuth's 'Entgegnung', in *Wessis*, pp. 296-7 (here: p. 297).

31 See Anon., 'Hochhuth contra *Wessis* am BE', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 6 February 1993.

32 See, for example, Gerhard Stadelmaier, 'Sturm im Eimer', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 February 1993.

33 See dpa, 'Hochhuth: Schwer, Aufführung zu verbieten', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 7 February 1993.

34 Matthias Pees, 'Der zahnlose Rächer der Enterbten', *Berliner Zeitung*, 12 February 1993.

35 Petra Kohse, 'Archaische Rituale im besetzten Land', *General-Anzeiger*, 12 February 1993.

36 Schleef, quoted in Rolf Michaelis, 'Hochhuth ist ein Feigling', *Die Zeit*, 19 February 1993. The following quotations are also taken from this source.

37 See dpa/eb, 'Hochhuth läßt sich auf Kompromiß ein', *Berliner Zeitung*, 10 February 1993.

38 See Franziska Wolffheim, 'Die bösen Buben', *Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt*, 19 February 1993.

39 Mechthild Lange, 'Vom Blatt', *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 27 February 1993.

40 Rolf Michaelis, 'Leichenschau', *Die Zeit*, 16 December 1994.

41 Gerhard Ebert, 'Mächtiger Qualm aus den Kulissen', *Neues Deutschland*, 14 December 1999.

42 Hochhuth, quoted in Jürgen Berger, 'Heiliger Hochhuth', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 3 June 2004. The following quotation is also taken from this article.

43 Irene Bazinger, 'Kein Heil mit Heil und Regiegehorsam', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 15 January 2007.

44 Programme notes, quoted in aro., 'Brechts Erbe', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13 October 1989.

45 Unpublished interview with Heiner Müller, 20 June 1995.

46 Reinhard Kill, 'Spröde Abhandlung', *Rheinische Post*, 30 September 1989.

47 Pollesch, quoted in Jürgen Berger, 'Erlaubt ist, was zerfällt', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 8 January 2005.

48 Peter Michalzik, 'Die Schwierigkeit zu schweben', *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 12 October 2004.

49 See Bundesministerium der Justiz, '[Gesetz über Urheberrecht und verwandte Schutzrechte] § 14 Entstellung des Werkes', at: http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/urhg/__14.html (accessed 29 October 2009).

50 Email from Corinna Brocher, 22 October 2009. I should like to thank Frau Brocher for all her help in answering my questions on performing rights and *Urheberrecht* in German theatres.

An interesting postscript to this issue is that Barbara Brecht-Schall, the main holder of the rights to Brecht's estate, successfully had the extract 'Wer aber ist die Partei?' from Brecht's *Die Massnahme* removed from Schleef's *Wessis* shortly after it opened. According to her, Schleef had not asked for permission to use the text in good time and she was also no fan of Schleef's work (see SW, 'Der Prolog', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 22 February 1993). Thus Brecht-Schall was legally able to do what Hochhuth could not, despite their common response to the production.

51 Walser, 'Zweimal kein Tisch', *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 23 October 2004.

52 See Bundesministerium der Justiz, 'Grundgesetz für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland', at:
http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/bundesrecht/gg/gesamt.pdf, p. 2 (accessed 16 October 2009).

53 dpa/eb, 'Hochhuth läßt sich auf Kompromiß ein', *Berliner Zeitung*, 10 February 1993.

54 One member of the cast delivered a line suggesting that Christiansen should be shot. Christiansen, who perceived herself to have been threatened, began her own proceedings in Dresden. However, the action was thrown out of court in December. The judgement maintained that the offending remark could be interpreted in a number of ways within the context of the production. See Anon., 'Dresdner Weberschüsse', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 11 December 2004.

55 Rüdiger Schaper, 'Die armen Weber', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 25 November 2004.

56 Hauptmann, quoted in Matthias Heine, 'Ein Webfehler im Text bringt dreifachen Fluch', *Die Welt*, 25 November 2004.

57 Moray McGowan, 'What Was the *Wende* and What of the *Volk*? *Fidelio*'s Questions and the *Weavers*' Answers', in: Denise Varney, ed., *Theatre in the Berlin Republic: German Drama since Reunification*, Oxford et al: Peter Lang, 2008, pp. 115-39 (here: p. 134).

58 Anon., 'Ohne ein paar Worte', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 7 May 2005.

59 See Dirk Pilz, 'Und sie sprechen doch', *Berliner Zeitung*, 19 May 2005.

60 Prütting, '"Werktreue"', p. 158.

61 See, for example, Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatisches Theater*, Frankfurt/Main: Verlag der Autoren, 1999, pp. 96, 140 or 149.

Heike Bartel

Porn or PorNO: Approaches to Pornography in Elfriede Jelinek's *Lust* and Charlotte Roche's *Feuchtgebiete*

This essay explores the role of pornography in Elfriede Jelinek's *Lust* (1989) and Charlotte Roche's *Feuchtgebiete* (2008) and outlines the changes the genre of pornography has undergone in feminist discourses during the nearly 20 years separating the two texts. It starts out by engaging with feminist positions towards pornography from the 1980s to the present and by negotiating the concept of 'Frauenpornografie', pornography by and for women. The analysis of the two texts puts particular focus on the use of language when negotiating pornography and employs theories of parody to draw out the differences between the literary engagement with the genre in the two books.

At first glance Elfriede Jelinek's *Lust* (1989) and Charlotte Roche's *Feuchtgebiete* (2008) seem to have more in common than elements that separate them: both novels have been very publically labelled as pornography. Knut Ahnlund, the then 78-year-old member of the committee which awarded Jelinek the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2004, called her work in general 'whining unenjoyable public pornography', and resigned from the committee.[1] 'Elfriede Jelinek hat einen Porno geschrieben' (Elfriede Jelinek has written a porn novel) was the comment in the online Feuilleton of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, in one of the many reviews of *Lust* that try to gauge the relationship of the text with pornography.[2] Volker Hage's review for *Die Zeit* sums up the critics' uneasy engagement with the text: 'Ein weiblicher Porno? Ein Antiporno?' (Female porn? Antiporn?)[3] Similarly, Roche's début novel has been labelled 'New-Porno'[4] and described as 'literary porn with a difference',[5] or as 'Schleim-porno gegen Hygienezwang' (phlegm-porn against hygiene compulsion).[6] *Feuchtgebiete* was turned down by the publisher Kiepenheuer & Witsch for being too pornographic but was then published by Dumont. Like *Lust*, *Feuchtgebiete* enjoyed great commercial success. Roche's title became the first German book to make it to the top of Amazon's international bestseller list.[7] However, the German town of Witte put forward an application to list the book as pornography and hence as breaching the federal Treaty on the Protection of Minors in the Media (JMStV) because of its sexually

explicit nature. However, the Kommission für Jugendmedienschutz, a federal body, turned down the application.[8] From a legal point of view, for purposes of distribution neither book has been classified as pornography. However, the wide ranging and heated discussions they have caused indicate the huge cultural implications of the topic and the diverse approaches when it comes to labelling material as pornography.

In a contemporary context pornography is generally understood to mean the '[e]xplicit portrayal of human sexuality, designed to produce sexual arousal'.[9] Legal steps to regulate it have been undertaken since it started to be mass produced and distributed through literature or image-based media at the beginning of the 19th century. The US is at the forefront of government interference and tight laws also exist in Germany, Austria and the UK. The protection of minors and the prevention of crimes such as sexual abuse in the course of the production of pornography are usually cited as the main objectives of these legal actions. However, questions as to what is considered 'explicit' and 'sexually arousing', and by whom, elicit a great variety of often conflicting answers, heavily influenced by gender norms, moral or religious codes, ideologies, and by personal or socio-cultural circumstances. All these influences affect what is regarded as pornography in any legal, cultural or private context. The association of pornography with obscenity and offences against prevailing concepts of decency further complicate a discussion that generates several diverse points of view.

As to *Feuchtgebiete* and *Lust*, both authors have positioned themselves clearly in relation to pornography. Both texts include graphic representations of sexual acts and make references to mainstream pornography in the sense of explicit image-based depictions of sexual acts aimed at a heterosexual male market and produced by an almost exclusively male-owned industry. Jelinek's 1989 prose text describes violent female suppression through scenes of sexual abuse and rape. Roche's 2008 novel contains several explicit descriptions of auto-, hetero- and homosexual activity, and depicts actions involving what is perceived as disgusting: human excrement, bodily fluids, etc. In addition, both authors address the genre of pornography further in statements and interviews. In 1987, two years before the publication of *Lust*, Jelinek indicated that she was working 'an einer Art erotischem Roman […], einem weiblichen Gegenentwurf zur "Geschichte des Auges" von Georges Bataille' (a kind of erotic novel […] a female counter-project to Georges Bataille's *Story of the Eye*/*L'Histoire de l'oeil*).[10] Her use of the

contrasting terms 'weiblicher Porno' (female porn) and 'Anti-Pornographie' (anti-pornography) indicates highly critical awareness of the genre.[11] Roche voiced her approach to pornography in less critical terms, describing *Feuchtgebiete* as part of a project to write 'Porno für Frauen' (porn for women) and, in an interview with the magazine *Glamour* entitled 'Jetzt will ich Pornos drehen' (now I want to make porn films), calling her protagonist 'Pippi Langstrumpf in Hardcoresexuell' (Pippi Longstocking turned hard core sexual).[12]

Despite superficial similarities, however, there are great differences in how the two authors engage with male-centred word- and image-based mainstream pornography. Although both emphasise their engagement with the genre from a female position, the results are two contrasting texts and explorations of the subject shaped by the very different writing styles and different political, social and cultural backgrounds of the authors. Separated by nearly twenty years, *Lust* and *Feuchtgebiete* also mark opposite ends of the wide spectrum of female approaches to pornography in a feminist debate since the 1980s.

Pornography between Representation and Reality

Perhaps like no other topic pornography shows the diversity of feminist positions that make it difficult to talk about one 'feminism'. Heated debates amongst feminists took place during the so-called feminist sex wars of the 1980s regarding sexual representations of women in general and pornography in particular. Pornography became *the* issue amongst feminists both in North America and in Germany with highly public campaigns against pornography led by Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon in the US, and in Germany by Alice Schwarzer as the leader of the PorNO campaign and editor-in-chief of the feminist magazine *Emma*.[13] These campaigns were and still are aiming for laws against pornography and for the boycott of certain businesses. Their main arguments are that male-orientated and male-produced heterosexual pornography presents a distorted view of sexuality and of the human body, reduces women to sex objects, brutalises them in the production of image-based porn and, importantly, is an enticement to sexual violence. 'Pornography is the theory; rape the practice', so one prominent statement of this campaign coined by Robin Morgan. In this context pornography is seen as conflating violence and sex, 'making violence sexy'.[14] The title of MacKinnon's 1993 study *Only Words* signals that she regards pornography not as a form of representation but as

literally harming women in its production and as directly encouraging and condoning the behaviour it depicts.

Opposing these feminist anti-porn campaigns are feminist positions objecting to the views advocated prominently by Dworkin, MacKinnon and Schwarzer. A crucial counter-argument in these sex wars between feminists that seem to have reached their zenith in the US in the late 1980s is the emphatic acknowledgement of boundaries between representation and reality. Lynne Segal, a British scholar of psychology and gender studies, has published widely on the topic since the early 1990s. She is one example of an 'anti-anti-pornography' position as part of a theoretical feminist engagement with pornography. [15] Segal challenges what she perceives as the reductionist view of anti-pornography feminists, which she sees as being in line with a political shift towards the conservative Moral Right, especially in the US. Whilst acknowledging that mainstream heterosexual pornography shows women as passive and commodified objects, Segal criticises Dworkin and MacKinnon and challenges their perception of pornography as 'literal truths'. The title of her essay 'Only the Literal' can be read as a direct riposte to MacKinnon's *Only Words*. Here, Segal follows Judith Butler's call 'for a feminist reading of pornography that resists the literalisation of this imaginary scene, one which reads it for the incommensurabilities between gender norms and practices that it seems compelled to repeat without resolution'. [16] Segal stresses the need to understand the representational and social contexts of words and images rather than 'fix[ing] their meanings'.[17] For Segal, engaging with pornography and its cultural production does not mean promoting it but exploring ways to understand and critique it. It means resisting the censorship of any cultural output, including pornography, rather than condemning and aiming to eradicate it. Crucial to the argument is that it assumes the audience of this cultural output to be adult, successfully socialized and thus able to distinguish between representation and reality. However, the nature of image-based pornography, where staged sexual fantasy is created via the real intercourse of real people, may create problems in keeping these boundaries intact.

With particular reference to film, Werner Faulstich, a scholar of contemporary applied media studies, addresses this problem with the term 'fiktional wirklich' (fictionally real), which defines the oxymoronic nature of the action as fictional reality, 'die dennoch, da sie in einem Medium inszeniert wird, imaginär bleibt' (which nevertheless, because it is staged in a medium, remains imaginary).[18] Faulstich stresses the crucial

importance of representation for a critical engagement with pornography as cultural product. However, faced with the explosion of porn on the internet since the 1980s, the question of the medium and its role in indicating the representational character of the content has become crucial. The sale of porn films via specialized outlets may help to emphasise their representational character whilst strict laws control the content and distribution of these films as by, for and depicting consenting adults only. But the internet has opened completely new avenues. It has made pornography marketable to a much wider audience, including the under-age market, gives increased anonymity when viewing or purchasing pornography, minimises engagement with any legal constraints, thus contributing to disinhibition and de-individualisation, and it acts to 'mainstream' porn, as Adam Joinson argues.[19] The content of pornography on the internet differs considerably from the more controlled medium of the traditional porn film and allows highly explicit and illegal material such as child pornography to be distributed. In addition, technical aspects of the medium, including virtual engagement in cybersex and the trading of cyberporn, may influence attitudes towards sexuality. Importantly, taking photos or films of a sexual nature and posting them on the internet is easily done by nearly anybody. On websites like YouTube the distinction between what is reality and what is representation of sexual fantasies in the medium of film often collapses. However, this distinction is vital for the discussion of pornography as cultural product.

Pornography by and for Women

PorYES is a German initiative that has been honouring international contributions to 'Frauenpornografie' (women's pornography) and awarding prizes for the best European feminist porn film since 2009 at a bi-annual porn film festival held in Berlin. Modelled on similar awards in Canada and in the US it marks the movement of the feminist discussion of pornography into the 21st century. The name suggests at first glance that the initiative stands in direct opposition to the PorNO campaign started in *Emma* in 1987; however PorYES has abandoned the former strict opposition between anti- and pro-porn feminist positions:

> wir unterstützen die PorNo-Kampagnen von Alice Schwarzer, richten uns gemeinsam gegen Diskriminierungen, sexistische und rassistische Darstellungen und die Pornografisierung im Alltag. Wir ziehen allerdings

> andere Schlüsse: wir wollen einvernehmliche Sexualität von Erwachsenen positiv darstellen und künstlerische sexuelle Ausdrucksweisen honorieren.[20]
>
> (We support Alice Schwarzer's PorNo campaign, standing together against discriminations, sexist and racist representations and pornographisation in everyday life. However, we draw different conclusions. We want to represent consensual adult sexuality positively and honour artistic ways of expressing it.)

PorYES provides a recognized forum for the growing number of female directors who produce porn films with a feminist agenda for heterosexual and non-heterosexual women. PorYES shares a pro-sex feminist position in which since the 1980s the right to pornography has been seen as part of a right to personal freedom and sexual liberation. The male-centredness of mainstream pornography is to be replaced by an aesthetic and contents that are female orientated. Although it is difficult to pinpoint a clear strategy as to how the genre as a whole turns this theory into practice, female pornography is described as aiming 'die übliche Palette von Mainstream-Porno [zu] überschreiten und nicht linear auf den männlichen Höhepunkt hin[zu]arbeiten' (to surpass the usual range of mainstream porn and not to work in a linear way towards the male climax).[21] Attempts to achieve this in the language of female porn-films include the avoidance of elements such as: detailed shots of ejaculation and genitals that suggest a false authenticity; anal sex; clichéd dialogue and vulgar sex-talk. Emphasis is more on depicting women enjoying themselves with their partners or on their own and on a plot connecting the scenes and building erotic tension in an elaborate production.[22] Directors who have been awarded the PorYES Oyster for their work include: Candida Royalle who founded the American 'Femme Productions' in 1984 and was one of the first directors to produce adult films for couples that 'spoke from a woman's voice';[23] Annie Sprinkle, lesbian American sex-film producer, performance artist and sex educator whose aim is to increase women's awareness for their own bodies and in particular of ways to reach orgasm; and French filmmaker and bestselling author Cathérine Breillat whose work includes *A Real Young Girl* (1976) and *Anatomy of Hell* (2004) and whose début as an actress was in Bernardo Bertolucci's *Last Tango in Paris* (1972). These three women share with several other feminist filmmakers the aim to make films about female sexuality that create a new iconography and discourse and offer an alternative to the dominant male-centred view. The market share of

such films by women and for women is still small, estimated as only 1% in Germany, for example. However, for most feminist porn filmmakers it is also of great importance both economically and ideologically that they gain access to a male-dominated medium and industry, are able to change the production environment, especially the treatment of porn actresses, and introduce fair pay and fair conditions of trade. To offer an alternative take on a dominant discourse is naturally not simply a matter of content but also of gaining access to and influencing the market.

Whilst the pro-sex position of the PorYES initiative builds on feminist views elaborated since the 1980s, one relatively new aspect is its emphasis on the combination of practical and theoretical engagement with pornography. It brings together insights from (former) sexworkers and porn actresses, filmmakers, authors, therapists and academic scholars; and award winners like Candida Royalle or Annie Sprinkle embody all of the above. The jury for the PorYES award consists of prominent figures of international academic standing: feminist filmmaker and media scholar Ula Stöckl; Laura Méritt, communications researcher and feminist linguist with numerous books to her name as well as workshops on female sexuality and initiatives for the rights of sex workers; Claudia Gehrke, cultural analyst and publisher of *konkursbuch*; and author and filmmaker Corinna Rückert. The PorYES award signals that female pornography is now regarded as 'salonfähig', socially and academically acceptable and even chic, and has successfully overcome the boundaries between so-called 'high' and 'low' culture. Unlike its male counterpart the kind of female pornography deemed worthy of the PorYES label is not associated with the seediness of a dubious milieu but rather with fair pay, political correctness and even environmentally friendly and responsibly produced sex toys. Events and releases are covered with interest in media outlets ranging from the webpage of the 'Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung' to the *tageszeitung,* which also sponsors the PorYES initiative.

Particularly in the work of jury member Rückert, a new trend towards exploring women's engagement with pornography can be identified. It is what Rückert herself calls the 'Annäherung von weiblichen und männlichen Interessen' (convergence of male and female interests).[24] Rückert, who wrote a doctoral dissertation on 'Frauenpornografie', combines academic theory with the practice of filmmaking. Based on her research on how women engage with image-based pornography she produced the female porn film *Das Geburtstagsgeschenk* (The Birthday Present, 2000) under the pseudonym Cora Romanelli. Rückert's

dissertation builds on the feminist pro-pornography argument that pornography is a sexual fantasy that cannot be equated with sexual practices in real-life situations.[25] However, in a move that sets her apart from the feminist pro-porn position, Rückert shifts away from the films that started the trend towards female pornography in the 1990s: 'Diese Filme hatten ihren Ursprung in der Lesbenszene. Hier wurde der männliche Blick bewusst ausgeklammert' (These films had their origin in the lesbian scene. Here the male gaze was consciously excluded).[26] What Rückert emphasises in both her theoretical and her practical work is a move away from the previous gendered emphasis on the female gaze over the male gaze. This turn towards a heterosexual angle also marks a shift away from the non-heterosexual emphasis introduced by pioneers of the genre. Rückert's main criterion for 'good porn' is that all sexual partners depicted in the films should have enjoyable and fulfilling sex without limits.

Rückert's attempt at 'convergence' of the sexes in pornography appears problematic in the context of female pornography. Without making the point explicit, her approach is highly questionable in aiming to find and cater for *one* definition of what constitutes female desire and female sexuality. But the sheer diversity of the potential audience must undermine any notion of capturing women's 'real' desire. Moreover, she neither critically addresses nor solves the problem of how to avoid an orientation towards male pornography when it comes to the making of female porn. This is the crucial problem for women artists, be they filmmakers or authors: how to liberate themselves from the long-standing male domination of the language, iconography, working practices and industry of this – and any other – cultural medium. When it comes to pornography, the bringing together, let alone harmonisation, of female and male interests risks reverting to a dominating male gaze. What can be said about most cultural production by women is particularly relevant when discussing the making of female pornography: women work within a strongly male-defined cultural system in which it is very difficult to establish their own rhetorical or iconographical tools. The view of women's pornography is still undertaken with the squinting gaze which Sigrid Weigel defined a quarter of a century ago as the problem of navigating women's cultural production between past and future and between structures that are recognized as obsolete and new ones that have not been realized.[27] Rückert herself acknowledges the danger of 'Mogelpackungen' (misleading packaging),[28] the ideology of old male-centred mainstream pornography being sold under the new

label of 'Frauenpornografie'; similarly, Svenja Flaßpöhler writes critically about female pornography caught 'im Koordinatenkreuz dieser abendländischen Tradition' (in the cross-hairs of this western tradition) of male-centred views.[29]

Jelinek's *Lust* and Roche's *Feuchtgebiete* can be located within the very diverse field that ranges from anti- to pro-porn. The following analysis of the two texts outlines how, against the background of shifting feminist positions and in the medium of literature, they approach the challenge of finding a female voice for this topic.

Parodic *Lust*

'Today if one wants to promote a book, one has to have a personality to sell',[30] stated Susanne Kappeler in her study *Pornography of Representation* (1986). The author critically analyses representational practices which she applies to the book business just as much as to the production of mainstream male-centred pornography: the 'graphy' aspect of 'pornography'. Pornography, in Kappeler's view, is not a 'special case of sexuality' but offers a 'key-hole view on make-believe reality' and is a form of representation with a very specific background of economic interests, history and genesis in material production.[31] She sees the literary industry as a similar 'productive system grafted upon the business of publishing, influenced and controlled by industrial interests and its accompanying ideology'.[32] In the quarter century since the publication of Kappeler's book both the porn and the literary industry have undergone changes, particularly through the advent of the internet. However, the connections the study makes between a book and the (assumed) personality of its author as part of the sales package still has validity. Kappeler's findings are particularly relevant for *Lust* and *Feuchtgebiete* and can illuminate the workings of both texts.

Lust highlights aspects of the intricate relationship between media and literature and the creation of the author as a public persona:

> Jelinek-Auftritte sind ikonenhafte Inszenierungen, unentwegte Selbsterfindungen und Selbstvergrößerungen: jeder Auftritt eine Stilübung, sei's Rekonstruktion einer exquisiten Mode-Epoche oder Montage ausgefallener Designer-Stücke aus Tokio und Paris.[33]
>
> (Appearances by Jelinek are iconic stagings, ceaseless self-inventions and self-magnifications: every appearance [is] an exercise in style, be it the

> reconstruction of an exquisite period of fashion or a montage of recherché designer pieces from Tokyo and Paris.)

Here Sigrid Löffler attests to Jelinek's star quality as a celebrity with the kind of charisma that Kappeler views critically as 'the best capital for the promotion of the literary product'.[34] However, Löffler highlights too Jelinek's deliberate staging of this persona. Jelinek's playing with fashion and dress codes is not dissimilar to her distinct way of referencing and deconstructing genres, texts and codes in her literary work. Ellen Risholm and Erin Crawley emphasize the artificial constructedness of Jelinek's public persona, which collapses 'high culture's notion of the creative, private individual with mass culture's production of the star as public property'.[35] There can be no doubt that the image which Jelinek projects aids the marketing of her work and feeds the public appetite for recognisable and distinctive personalities. If Jelinek's projected self-image displays a high level of self-reflexivity and awareness of mass-orientated economic interests and ideology, similar strategies can be detected in the marketing of *Lust*.

The 'plot' of *Lust* can be quickly summarised. It centres on the abusive and violent marriage of the upper-middle class Austrian couple Gerti and Herrmann. Her attempts to escape, for example through alcohol or by attaching herself to an equally abusive young student, fail. There is no way out of this existence for Gerti and the novel ends with her killing her son, Hermann's offspring. *Lust's* arrival on the market in 1989 was a well-planned media and marketing spectacle, preceded by interviews in magazines like *Brigitte* and *Stern* but also *Playboy* and *Lui*, highlighting the novel's depiction of violence and its references to pornography, and by the pre-publication of sexually explicit excerpts. This 'hard sell' before publication contained 'skilful montages of ready-made fragments on the themes of women, sexuality and emancipation'.[36] It played deliberately to the interest of a mainstream audience that was fascinated by Jelinek's alleged masochistic tendencies in her private life, saw her as a 'Literatur-Domina' (literary dominatrix) (*Quick*) or a 'schreibende Erotomanin' (erotomaniac writer) (*Vogue*) and expected a thrilling read.[37] However, what followed this 'medial organisierte[r] Publikumstäuschung von beeindruckendem Erfolg' (impressively successful deception of the public organised by the media)[38] was a clash between mainstream expectation on the one hand and presentational indicators of a literary refinement proper to high-culture on the other. Notably the understated cover design by Klaus Detjen disappointed any

expectations of high-gloss explicitness, and with the expensive hardback binding and fine paper of the first edition, '*Lust* was ripe with the promise of consumption while adorned with the accoutrements of high culture', as Risholm and Crawley remark.[39] These ambiguous signals may explain why the text has raised questions that veer between 'weiblicher Porno', 'Antiporno', 'Erotisches Spiel oder […] endgültige Abrechnung mit den Männern' (erotic game or final reckoning with men) – this last being the subtitle of Volker Hage's review in *Die Zeit*.[40]

Whilst clearly subjected to the forces of a mass-orientated book industry, Jelinek displays awareness of its structures, plays with them or rather plays them off against each other 'in a postmodern gesture [that] deconstructs the validity of […] categories'.[41] *Lust* follows this pattern: it borrows the stylistic and iconographic characteristics of pornography, an endless and monotonous series of depictions of a male penetrating a female, and drives them to an extreme where everything is sexualised and sexualising. This can only disappoint the reader who expects mainstream porn but finds it adorned with a mass of highly sexualised imports from literature, culture and linguistics which distort and disturb the anticipated scenes. In the meantime, the reader aiming to tune into references to so-called high culture finds these charged with sexual connotations, following the monotonous rhythm of porn films and thus distanced and distorted. The text denies the usual stimulation of lust or triggers of sexual relief found in mainstream pornography, but there is also nothing that would allow an escape into any other non-sexual sphere. It is an overkill of pornography, thus pornography and antipornography at the same time; in Hans Hiebel's words, the 'Paradoxie einer anti-pornographisch-pornographischen Versprachlichung'. [42] The following example shows how the text engages in this way with the genre of mainstream pornography:

> Er reißt ihr den Arsch auf! Mehr braucht er eigentlich nicht, mit Ausnahme seines monatlichen Spitzengehalts. Sein Gebein erbebt, und er verschwendet seinen ganzen Inhalt, viel mehr als er an Geld einzunehmen vermochte, an die Frau, wie könnte sie nicht gerührt sein von diesem Strahl. Ja, jetzt enthält sie den ganzen Mann, soviel sie tragen kann, und der erhält sie solange er an ihrem Interieur und den Tapeten noch Gefallen findet. Er wirft ihr Vorderteil in die Badewanne und spreizt als Geschäftsführer dieses Lokals und ähnlicher Lokale ihr Hinterzimmer.[43]

> (He busts her ass! Actually he needs no more, aside from his monthly top salary. His bone shudders and he wastes his whole contents, far more than he could earn in money, on the woman, how could she fail to be moved by this jet. Yes, now she contains the whole man, as much as she can bear, and he retains her as long as he remains content with her interior and the wallpaper. He throws her forequarters in the bathtub and as the managing director of these premises and similar premises he spreads open her back room.)

Here, Gerti is subjected to anal rape by her husband in their home. The paragraph works with a multiplicity of reference systems which deliberately hinder an unobstructed voyeuristic view of the rape scene, although they do not obscure what is happening. The first sentence, despite its graphic descriptive character, 'Er reißt ihr den Arsch auf!', can be read as an intertextual element playing on the vulgar idiomatic expression, 'sich den Arsch aufreißen', meaning to make a great effort (mostly in vain). By manipulating the grammar of the phrase Jelinek turns this figure of speech into the bodily figure of anal rape, yet the original phrase is still recognisable. She deliberately manipulates the boundaries between the metaphorical and the literal. Thus she fulfils the violent potential inherent in the drastic realism of the phrase but also adds a new dimension to the literal meaning of the sentence by integrating it into a violent pornographic discourse. Here violent domination is depicted as part of language and realised through language. No respite can be sought in the realms of the metaphorical, no alternative way of reading, no way out is offered, the connotation of rape is unmistakable. In the sexual sphere language is an accomplice to violent behaviour, oppressive thought patterns and gendered power relations.

The last sentence can be read in a similar way: references to economic property and power are interwoven with rape. The established dominant position of the man as 'Geschäftsführer' is portrayed in terms of violent behaviour. His elevated position in society can be read as constituted through acts of brutal sexual domination, and this in turn is exposed as a normal part of a successful career in business. The double meaning of 'Lokal' as restaurant and private *locus* within the female body further interlinks this analogy of violent sexual and social structures. The woman is not only associated with the sphere of the house she keeps, with its 'Badezimmer', 'Interieur' and 'Tapeten', she *becomes* this property that belongs to the man. Her 'Vorderteil' linguistically does not correspond to her 'Hinterteil' but to a 'Hinterzimmer', a part of the property to be managed. Her violation does not become less obvious or less

recognisable through this adding of an additional reference system; the 'Hinterzimmer' clearly marks the raped female anus.

Lust undermines a one-dimensional reading; the text consists of a multiplicity of layers and references and is not singular in its approach but works within a system of double-voicing which has led scholars like Allyson Fiddler to read *Lust* as a parody.[44] Double-voicing is the focal point of contemporary theories of parody that can aid theoretical access to Jelinek's complex approach to writing pornography in *Lust*. At the forefront of modern approaches to a long literary tradition, critic Linda Hutcheon describes parody as 'repetition with critical distance [that] allows ironic signalling of differences at the very heart of similarity [and] enacts both change and cultural continuity'.[45] The self-reflexivity of parodic discourse 'allows an artist to speak *to* a discourse from *within* it, but without being totally recuperated by it'.[46] *Lust* shows a similarly self-reflexive approach towards pornography that refers to and depends on the genre in order to subvert its structures and deconstruct it. Parody here is to be understood not as a (humorous) denigration of pornography which remains unable to move beyond the 'ready-made conventions of character, setting and action', as Susan Sontag puts it when she argues in her 1967 essay 'The Pornographic Imagination' that pornography cannot parody itself.[47] Instead, in the sense outlined by Hutcheon, parody is a 'critical commentary' on the source.[48] This way of writing both uses and refuses the structures and categorisations of the source and thus bears in itself the potential for an alternative vision.

However, by engaging with the genre of pornography, *Lust* deliberately sets out to disclose the impossibility of such an alternative narrative. The above analysis of the short excerpt has shown that although the distancing created by the multi-layering of the text may not fulfil a mainstream pornographic aim, the narrative always remains part of the pornographic discourse. The text reflects Jelinek's critical assessment of modern culture where female sexuality can only be expressed in terms of male pornography and where the aim of finding pathways to make women the subject of desire is destined to fail:

> es [gibt] ja diese weibliche Sprache für Sexualität nicht […] die Frau ist nicht das Subjekt der Begierde, sondern immer das Objekt. Und deshalb müssen sich die Frauen, im Leben wie in der Literatur, letztlich immer an der männlichen Ästhetik orientieren.[49]

> (There is no female language for sexuality […] woman is not the subject of desire, but always the object. And this is why women, in life as in literature, always finally have to align themselves with male aesthetics.)

Lust graphically conflates male subjugation of female sexuality with the silencing of the female voice as a template for modern culture in the pornographic image of forced fellatio:

> Gleich will die Frau, aus der Geschlechtsnarkose erwacht, wieder zügellos den Mund zum Sprechen benutzen. Sie muß sich statt dessen aufsperren und den Schwanz Michaels in das Kabinett ihres Mundes einlassen. (120)
>
> (Awakening from the sex-narcosis, the woman wants to use her mouth rampantly again for speaking. But instead she must open herself wide again and admit Michael's prick into the cabinet of her mouth.)

Problematic *Feuchtgebiete*

Roche's 2008 novel *Feuchtgebiete* can also be located within the mass-market framework outlined by Kappeler: 'Today if one wants to promote a book, one has to have a personality to sell'.[50] This framework has recently expanded with the advent of YouTube and social media like Twitter and Facebook, so that readers are often only a mouse click away from ordering books on the web. The internet contributed considerably to catapulting Roche's début novel into the bestseller lists. This was helped by the fact that she was already a media personality. Her extensive showbiz experience as a video-jockey for the music broadcast stations VIVA and German MTV also shone through in her provocative performances at highly publicised reading tours promoting *Feuchtgebiete* throughout Germany, and in her appearances on talk shows. Here, a coquettish, deliberate blurring of the boundaries between the author and the sexually highly adventurous female protagonist of *Feuchtgebiete* helped to stimulate keen public interest in the book. 'Etwa 30 Prozent sind erfunden, etwa 70 Prozent bin ich' (About 30 per cent is invented, about 70 per cent is me), was Roche's claim regarding autobiographical parallels in an interview with *Der Spiegel*.[51] However, in 2011 she withdrew this conflation as a 'falsche Fährte' intended to trick readers and critics.[52] Led by an interest in the author, many talk-show viewers and people attending Roche's readings have admitted on social networking sites that they read her book only partly or not at all. Roche

brings together two factors that seem to guarantee commercial success: the promise of explicit talk about sex, marketed in a way that makes it socially acceptable, even chic, and the promise of (real or fake) insights into the life of a TV celebrity, 'someone one has already heard of' in Kappeler's terms.[53]

Roche's 18-year-old protagonist Helen Memel is confined to a hospital bed because she injured her sphincter whilst shaving. As a first-person narrator Helen presents the reader with reminiscences about a highly active sex-life as well as a wide range of masturbation practices and experiments with personal hygiene. These descriptions take up most of the novel but it remains unclear whether they are the 'real' experiences of a reliable narrator or fantasies of an unreliable narrator. This echoes Roche's calculated play with fiction and reality regarding the autobiographical character of her novel. A rudimentary narrative framework is provided, in which Helen attempts to bring her divorced parents back together at her hospital bed, addresses her problematic relationship with her mother (including the trauma of the mother's failed suicide attempt), and falls for the male nurse Robin. The novel ends with Helen and Robin leaving the hospital together.

Feuchtgebiete received mixed reviews, being hailed by some as 'a surprisingly accomplished literary work, which evokes the voice of J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*',[54] and criticized by others for its simplistic narrative style and scant literary merits as 'Pornografisches für Fortgeschrittene in einem Deutsch für Anfänger'.[55] The text is structured around Helen's recollection from her hospital bed of her numerous hetero-, homo- and auto-sexual experiences. This evokes parallels with a number of genres: literary erotica, non-fiction and feminist confessional. *Feuchtgebiete* shares with literary erotica such as John Cleland's *Fanny Hill* (1748) a minimal narrative frame that serves only to facilitate an otherwise unconnected variety of pornographic depictions, a method that is echoed in mainstream porn films and criticised by many feminist filmmakers. Roche's style of writing is also reminiscent of a non-fictional genre where physical details are described in a detached factual way. As she stated in an interview: 'Es hatte erst ein Sachbuch werden sollen: Charlotte Roche empfiehlt Frauen, wie sie mit ihrem Körper umzugehen haben' (It was first planned as non-fiction: Charlotte Roche advises women on how to treat their bodies).[56] Roche's oppositional stance towards cultural dictates concerning female shaving and hygiene, outlined by her as one of the main reasons for writing her 'unsanitized' novel, may also support parallels with the genre of the feminist

confessional. There, the 'most personal and intimate details of the author's life are presented in order to create a bond between female author and female reader' and thus facilitate a potential for social or cultural critique.[57] However, references to these genres in *Feuchtgebiete* remain random and unreflected. Correspondences between these very different approaches to female sexuality that might shed light upon cultural practices or facilitate parodic engagement are not developed. The result is a book that fails to take a clear stance regarding its own genre but rather jumbles competing approaches and contrasting codes. It neither addresses the problematic assumptions of mainstream pornography nor actively challenges or transmutes the genre in a parodic rewriting as outlined by Hutcheon.

The novel presents Helen's sexually inquisitive and uninhibited approach to life and sexuality, in which nothing is off limits: 'Dingen auf den Grund gehen, bis man fast kotzen muss' (to get to the bottom of things, till you nearly have to throw up).[58] This approach is taken very literally in the focus on the body and its sexual and other functions, combining 'the disgusting and the desirable' as Katie Jones highlights.[59] 'Throughout her narrative, Helen […] denies the validity of disgust […] in situations which are […] likely to disgust the reader. The absence of disgust allows Roche to use her character to explore all aspects of the female body in detail'.[60] One example, comparable with the passage cited above from *Lust*, is Helen's account of her preparations for anal sex (here 'Blumenkohl', cauliflower, is her pet name for her haemorrhoids):

> Wenn klar ist, dass ich gleich Sex habe mit jemandem, der auf Analverkehr steht, frage ich: mit oder ohne Schokodip? Soll heißen: Manche mögen es, wenn die Schwanzspitze beim Poposex etwas Kacke ans Tageslicht befördert […]. Für diejenigen, die es lieber sauber haben, habe ich mir […] was bestellt […]. Das Ding sieht aus wie ein Dildo mit Löchern in der Spitze und ist komplett aus […] Stahl. […] Erst schraube ich im Badezimmer […] den Duschkopf ab, wo dann das Ding […] draufpasst. […] Jetzt geht es an die Enddarmreinigung. […] Dann wurschtele ich das Ding mit viel Kraft an meinem Blumenkohl vorbei und schiebe es so weit rein, wie es geht […]. Vom Reinwurschteln werde ich erst mal geil, wenn etwas so rum in meinen Arsch reingeht, ist es normalerweise ja ein Schwanz. […] Jetzte drehe ich das Duschwasser volle Kanne auf […]. Nun stelle ich das Wasser ab und hocke mich wie zum Pinkeln in die Dusche. […] Es fühlt sich an wie Pinkeln aus dem Arsch […] ganz schön viel Kacke, große und kleine Brocken […]. So bin ich perfekt präpariert für sauberen Posex, wie eine Gummipuppe.[61]

> (When it's clear that I'm about to have sex with someone who's into anal intercourse, I ask: with choccie-dip or without? Meaning: some like it when the tip of the prick brings a bit of poo to light during botty-sex […]. For those who prefer it clean, I […] got something by mailorder […]. The thing looks like a dildo with holes at the end and is completely made of […] steel. […] First, in the bathroom […] I screw off the shower-head, and the thing […] fits on. […] Now I start cleaning my rectum. […] Then I twist the thing really hard round past my cauliflower and push it in as far as it will go. […] Twisting and pushing it turns me on to start with, a thing screwing into my arse is usually a prick. […] Now I turn the shower on full blast […]. Now I turn off the water and squat in the shower as through I'm going to pee. […] It feels like peeing out of my arse […] really loads of poo, big and little lumps. […] I'm perfectly ready for clean bum-sex, like a rubber doll.)

This account reads like a mixture of technical do-it-yourself guide for colonic irrigation, masturbation fantasy and phallocentric imagery of violent consumption of the female. With her custom-made 'dildo', Helen is presented as a 'phallic woman', seeming to transgress expected gender-roles by being sexually more active and aggressive than the male. Critics such as Thorsten Thissen have indeed perceived Helen as a confident female who is claiming her body and sexuality as her own: 'die neue sexuell bewusste Frau: Sie erobert Männer, schaut Pornos und revolutioniert das Geschlechterverhältnis' (the new sexually confident woman: she conquers men, watches porn and is revolutionising relations between the sexes).[62] However, the overwhelming effect of this scene, as of many others in the book, is not the transgression of gender roles but the overstepping of boundaries of the disgusting.[63] Here the focus on human excrement – the voluntary close contact with it, its contamination of inappropriate spaces (the shower), and the suggestions of its consumption both sexually and as food ('Schokodip') – deliberately provokes disgust. Helen's subversive power in this context is not so much the fact that she is 'sexually confident' but the fact that her promise of sex act performance is linked with what is perceived as disgusting. The combination of lust and disgust does not neutralise the explicit sexual character of the passage: in fact, pornography and the disgusting are commonly linked, inasmuch as both are perceived to offend prevailing concepts of decency and break taboos. However, here the detailed insights into the 'dirty' preparations for sex undertaken by the female suppose the male expectation of the 'clean' end result.

This can be seen as part of Roche's attempts at a cultural critique, aiming to introduce an alternative perspective on the female body with a protagonist who rebels against the construct of femininity as heavily shaved, deodorised and sanitised. However, this potential subversion of the grammar of female sexuality is not consistently implemented throughout the novel. The final image does not indicate a revolution of gender relations but introduces a common image of submissive ever-readiness for male sexual consumption. Arguably this image of the woman as a sex-doll is undermined by the previous very un-sexy account of how the cleanliness of this 'Gummipuppe' was achieved, but it is nevertheless part of a stereotypical gendered order that is not challenged in *Feuchtgebiete*. In addition, the image of a steel dildo being forced into the woman's anus, albeit here in an act of self-penetration and described in the medium of literature, is regarded by feminist makers of visual-based pornography as part of a male-dominated discourse degrading to women and thus to be avoided.

Unlike the scene of anal rape in Jelinek's *Lust*, *Feuchtgebiete* does not explicitly address power relations that find representation in certain sexual images. Instead the emphasis is on pushing at the boundaries of what is commonly deemed acceptable female sexual behaviour. What Thissen calls the 'new sexually confident woman' can be identified as a highly provocative hypersexual protagonist. Helen expresses her sexuality in excessive bodily actions, as if this is the only way for this otherwise childlike character to engage with the world, and in a reduction to the animalistic she marks her surroundings with the secretions of her body. However, the emphasis on her desires and their fulfilment also bears the risk of reducing her sexuality to the merely physical. This risks conflating Roche's portrayal of the sexually confident and highly active Helen with the male stereotype of the sexually ever-ready female that is the object of most mainstream pornography.

Charlotte Roche has stated that in *Feuchtgebiete* she:

> wanted to write in a creative way about the female body: […] trying to shut out all that worn-out vocabulary we have about our physicality and come up with new words for each body part. […] I wanted to point out how a lot of the emancipatory principles from the '60s and '70s have not yet arrived properly.[64]

This seems to follow attempts undertaken in *Häutungen* (1975) by Verena Stefan who, as part of the feminist movement of the 1970s, tried to reclaim women's bodies and sexuality by renaming and thus redefining

intimate female body parts. Stefan's efforts have been criticised for reinforcing the stereotype of women as 'natural beings' by using lyrical terms derived from nature. However, there is a clear aim and strategy in her attempt to change a dominant discourse. In contrast, Roche's new vocabulary lacks consistency. It is limited to the three words 'Perlenrüssel' (pearl-snout), 'Hahnenkämme' (cockscombs) and 'Vanillekipferl' (vanilla croissant) for clitoris and labia. These do not form a coherent alternative linguistic approach but remain on the level of individual pet names. Furthermore, they are part of a much larger vocabulary to describe sexual acts that is either matter-of-factly technical, or evokes the language of a child ('Poposex', 'Posex'. 'Kacke'), or else uses terms of predominantly male sex-talk. Roche's attempt to 'shut out all that worn-out vocabulary' is ultimately unsuccessful. This is particularly prominent in her repeated use of a term for vulva that has its roots in a highly misogynist context and reduces women to sexual 'pets', in an idiom that mixes coarse sexual connotations with children's language: 'Muschi'. Thus *Feuchtgebiete* fails to achieve Roche's stated intent to steer women's writing beyond a male and towards a female gaze in continuation of the feminist aims of the 1960s and 70s.

Conclusion

The works of Jelinek and Roche can be located within the very diverse field that ranges from anti-porn views to pro-porn attitudes. Relevant for the charting of this territory are not only the texts of *Lust* and *Feuchtgebiete* but also statements by the authors. In Roche's view the representational character of pornography is beyond doubt. She deems the feminist anti-porn discussion old-fashioned and prudish, and has voiced her objection to a feminist anti-porn view as publicised in the German PorNO campaign: 'Bei Pornfilmen geht es […] nur um Sex. Wenn ich eine selbstbewusste Frau bin, die sich im Bett gerne erniedrigen lässt, dann muss sie [Alice Schwarzer] mich nicht davor retten' (porn films are just about sex. If I'm a self-confident woman who likes being degraded in bed, I don't need Alice Schwarzer to save me).[65] Roche associates herself with a 'young' feminism, acknowledging that this position owes a lot to Schwarzer and her contemporaries, but stressing that it has moved on, follows no slogans or codes of behaviour and is particularly open to sexuality. As long as women can freely choose what they like, nothing is off limits for Roche. 'Obenrum [Alice] Schwarzer, untenrum [Beate] Uhse' (top half Schwarzer, bottom half Uhse) is how the author of

Feuchtgebiete (2008) and *Schossgebete* (2011) describes her particular take on feminism in an interview with glossy fashion magazine *Glamour*, mixing the outcomes of the sex wars and the (self-)sexualisation of women in a questionable, indeed contradictory way.[66] Roche's sentiments can be seen as in line with Rückert's and those of PorYES, and raise similar questions about a possible convergence of male and female gazes in a genre that is still largely dominated by a male-centred approach.

Jelinek's contributions to the pornography debate of the 1980s include interviews with Alice Schwarzer, shortly before and after the publication of *Lust*, which were published in editions of *Emma* as part of the PorNO campaign.[67] She also contributed to a 1988 special edition of *konkursbuch*, 'Frauen und Pornografie', containing celebrations of female sexuality and pornography and edited by Claudia Gehrke, who was to become a founding member of the PorYES initiative. [68] In her interview with Schwarzer Jelinek pledges her allegiance to Dworkin and states:

> Sexualität *ist* Gewalt. Aber das wissen nur die Frauen. Das wissen die Männer nicht. […] Und deshalb sind die überspitzten Formulierungen von Pornografie – wie es die Dworkin macht – auch so wahr.
>
> (Sexuality *is* violence. But only women know it. Men don't. […] And that's why the exaggerated formulations about pornography – such as Dworkin's – are so true.)

However, Jelinek's position regarding pornography is far more complex than a simple 'no' to porn. She engages deeply with the genre, experimenting in *Lust* with an attempt 'die Darstellung des Obszönen und des Nackten zurück[zu]erobern' (re-conquer a representation of the obscene and of nudity) for a female pornography. However, Jelinek herself sees this attempt as destined to fail because 'die Darstellung des Obszönen [ist] von Männern so usurpiert, daß Frauen dafür keinen Ort haben und scheitern müssen' (the representation of the obscene has been so usurped by men that women have no place for it and must fail).[69]

When it comes to finding a language for women's desire, both texts ultimately fail: *Lust* because it assumes the impossibility of voicing such desire in a male-dominated world of cultural production, *Feuchtgebiete* because it assumes this voicing to be a possibility but disregards the rhetorical and iconographical codes that oppose these very assumptions.

Notes

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David Robb

Text Crimes against the GDR's Revolutionary Heritage: The Differing Fates of Wolf Biermann and Wenzel and Mensching

The song-writing of Wolf Biermann alongside that of Hans-Eckardt Wenzel and Steffen Mensching in their group Karls Enkel undermined the GDR's assumption that it represented continuity with the revolutionary tradition. But because the state's historical self-image was so inextricably bound up with this notion, there was only limited freedom for artists to tackle the subject head on. Biermann was banned outright for his directness, while Wenzel, Mensching and Karls Enkel played a cat-and-mouse game with the authorities, concealing their criticism of the present day behind ambiguous historical allusions and clownish comedy. Both, for all their differences, serve as enlightening illustrations of political song-writing under the threat of prohibition in a period of ideological struggle.

From the 1960s right up until the Peaceful Revolution of 1989, political song was a popular and important cultural force in the GDR. In the absence of an open media, political singer-songwriters ('Liedermacher') enjoyed elevated status as the bearers of unofficial tidings. Concert halls, student clubs, and informal gatherings were invariably packed. Editions of the records released on the state record label Amiga were snapped up immediately. The attraction for many fans lay in the singers' exploitation of a basic contradiction within GDR cultural policy. On one hand political song was nurtured at an official level as a proudly coveted revolutionary heritage. On the other hand it was constantly viewed with suspicion due to its potential as a means of subversion.

Political singers in the GDR could be prohibited from publishing or performing if their songs were deemed unsuitable. Although there were intermittent political thaws and clampdowns at different periods over the state's 40-year history in which the leniency threshold of the authorities would vary,[1] the singing of texts that were deemed not supportive of the GDR was forbidden. As will be later explored, censors were in operation on several institutional levels – cultural functionaries of the Free German Youth, other agencies involved in the state entertainment industry, managers of performance venues, and of course agents of the Ministry for State Security (Stasi) – all looking for instances of deviation from the

Party line. At the same time, this case study will also reveal instances where more open-minded cultural functionaries would intervene on behalf of critical artists to enable performances to go ahead.

This chapter looks at the cases of Wolf Biermann in the 1960s and Hans-Eckardt Wenzel and Steffen Mensching in their group Karls Enkel[2] in the 1980s. It will particularly focus on how these artists – while differing in approach, degree of celebrity, and the decades in which they performed – both exposed the shortcomings of socialism in the GDR by reinvigorating a relationship to the state's literary and revolutionary heritage ('Erbe') in their work. While Biermann was criminalised outright for his political directness, the lesser known Wenzel and Mensching achieved a more tongue-in-cheek historical ambiguity in their work, which for the most part escaped the wrath of the censors. At the same time, as Stasi files bear testimony, the secret police was well aware of the game that Wenzel and Mensching and their song-theatre ('Liedertheater') group Karls Enkel were playing. While Wenzel and Mensching's own individual poetry collections appeared with the Mitteldeutscher Verlag,[3] albeit only after long delays and protracted discussions with the publishers, the texts of their Liedertheater productions were never published in the GDR; most have remained a well-kept secret amongst the initiated few. The popular *Hammer-Revue* of Karls Enkel, Wacholder and Beckert & Schulz from the year 1982 was only released as a recording in 1994, after the fall of the GDR.

Wolf Biermann is the most famous example of a singer who dared to write critical songs mocking the political practices of the GDR. This earned him a performance and publication ban between 1965 and 1976. As the son of a communist Jew murdered in Auschwitz, Biermann had initially been feted by the GDR establishment. He had chosen GDR citizenship at the age of seventeen of his own free will, coming over from Hamburg in 1953, where he had been brought up by his communist mother. At first he had identified unquestioningly with the GDR state, a stance that was to be increasingly undermined in the years to follow. In the early 1960s his song-writing talent was noticed by Brecht's composer Hanns Eisler, who before his death in 1962 was able to protect the young writer's work from the interference of cultural functionaries.[4] Particularly in the aftermath of the building of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 Biermann's songs became increasingly critical of the state and what he saw as Stalinist political practices. In the eyes of the state Biermann was indeed committing a crime: in the GDR it was expected that all songs contained a basic gesture of faith in the socialist

state. A publication in 1970 (at the height of Biermann's eleven-year ban) by the influential political song collector Inge Lammel of the Workers Song Archive in East Berlin, in 1970, confirmed this expectation:

> Die neuen Lieder werden für die Politik von Partei und Regierung geschaffen. Sie sind nicht mehr Kampfmittel einer unterdrückten Klasse gegen eine Klasse von Ausbeutern, sondern Ausdruck der gemeinsamen Interessen aller Werktätigen.[5]
>
> (The new songs are created for the policies of the Party and the government. They are no longer the means of struggle of an oppressed class against a class of exploiters, but are rather the expression of the common interests of all workers.)

To put the cases of Wolf Biermann and Wenzel and Mensching in context it is useful to have a brief look at the development of political song since the early years of the GDR. The GDR viewed the whole democratic and revolutionary song tradition as its cultural inheritance. The battle songs ('Kampflieder') of Brecht and Eisler and songs from the Spanish Civil War were learned in schools and in the army.[6] In the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s these appeared in song books of the Free German Youth (FDJ) and the Young Pioneers alongside German folk songs and new, so-called construction songs ('Aufbaulieder') written specially for the GDR youth. In general the political song was a serious, sacred tradition, not to be tampered with, and the writing of new songs critical of the GDR was unthinkable.

By the early 1960s, however, a completely new kind of protest song culture was being encountered. The American civil rights song was filtering over the air waves via West Germany through to East Berlin. The building of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 had given the GDR government a sufficient sense of security to relax the severity of censorship in the arts. During this political thaw, which lasted roughly up until the infamous 11th Plenum of the SED, the ruling Socialist Unity Party of the GDR, in December 1965, an independent folk music scene emerged in East Berlin, based on the informal Hootenanny model made famous by American folk singers such as Pete Seeger. The Berlin Hootenannies were guided by the resident banjo-playing Canadian Perry Friedman. In general during the cultural thaw there was easier access to western pop music and jazz. A musically eclectic scene emerged in East Berlin that also included Wolf Biermann, Eva-Maria Hagen, Manfred Krug and Bettina Wegner.[7]

It was during this period that Biermann made his name with his uniquely critical political songs. Two of these songs about the military, one before the building of the Wall and the other after, document his political transformation toward the stance of state critic. The first one, 'Soldaten-Lied' ('Soldier Song') from 1960, was already a controversial soldiers' song by GDR standards in that it was by no means propagandistic in a pro-military sense. The very presentation of the theme of war as a subject for discussion was taboo. As Holger Böning states: 'Zu so heiklen Problemen wie diesem war Agitation erwünscht, nicht aber ernsthafte Diskussion' (Such delicate problems were to be treated with agitation, not with serious debate).[8] In the final verse, however, Biermann concludes that war is justifiable if it is necessary to defend the socialist states: 'Mein Junge, es gibt Herrn, / die rüsten für den Krieg / gegen die Arbeiterstaaten / drum kann ich dir nur raten: / Geh zu unseren Soldaten' (My boy, there are gentlemen, / who are arming themselves for war/ against the workers' states / so I can only advise you / go to our soldiers).[9] In 'Soldat, Soldat' (Soldier, Soldier) from 1963, on the other hand, there is a marked shift. Here the speaker says there can never be any sense to war:

> 'Soldat Soldat, wo geht das hin / Soldat Soldat, wo ist der Sinn / Soldat Soldat, im nächsten Krieg / Soldat Soldat, gibt es kein Sieg'[10]
>
> (Soldier soldier, where is this going / Soldier soldier, where is the sense / Soldier soldier, in the next war / Soldier soldier, there will be no victory)

The song recalls Brecht's 'Legende des toten Soldaten' (Legend of the Dead Soldier) in referring to the facelessness of soldiers in life and in death: 'Soldaten sehn sich alle gleich / lebendig und als Leich' (Soldiers all look the same, / alive or as a corpse). In the same year, 1963, Biermann incurred his first performance ban and was also controversially thrown out of the Party.

The influence of Brecht on Biermann was problematic.[11] On the one hand the GDR authorities saw Brecht, who had died in 1956, as their own revolutionary playwright and poet, and as such as sacred heritage. But there were aspects of Brecht's work which did not sit comfortably with the tenets of Socialist Realism, as defined by Georg Lukacs, the dominant literary ideology of the period. This doctrine forbade formalistic tendencies in art which the SED saw as Western and therefore decadent. Rather it embraced the totality, proportion and objectivity reflected in the aesthetic norms of classicism.[12] Brecht and

Hanns Eisler had both been accused of formalism by the Party in the early 1950s, Brecht for his *Urfaust* production in 1952 and Eisler for his opera libretto *Johann Faustus* in 1953. This factor was significant in the case of Biermann. For it was not merely that he was dealing with taboo textual themes (often depicting the antithesis of the model characters demanded by Socialist Realism), it was also his literary and performance style which came under attack. His vocal deliveries bore the hallmark of the Brechtian defamiliarisation technique and his music had the Eislerian trait of constituting a montage of various styles from highbrow to popular culture.[13] Musically his influences ranged from Eisler and the international protest song to the French chanson and the German street ballad ('Bänkelsang').

But it was the profanity of Biermann's lyrics that could particularly be seen to deviate from the Socialist Realist model. Here, linking up with the plebeian literary tradition of François Villon, Heinrich Heine and the early Brecht, Biermann's political statement is bound up with the image of the sensual or grotesque body. In many songs Biermann identifies strongly with Villon, the anarchic fifteenth-century French vagabond poet. Earlier in the twentieth century Villon had been a role-model for poets of the Weimar Republic such as Brecht and Walter Mehring. His poetry celebrated anarchic freedom, and a hedonistic attitude to life, and this functioned as a central motif of many cabarettists' dramatic monologues ('Rollengedichte'). [14] An aspect of social rebellion is expressed in this ribald approach. Such Villonesque activities as defecation, beatings, cursing and laughter were popular motifs of the carnival of the Middle Ages as defined by Mikhail Bakhtin in *Rabelais and his World*.[15] Such activities had an anti-authoritarian, utopian aspect in their symbolism of a world temporarily turned on its head with the 'suspension of all hierarchical precedence'.[16] Included in this is the motif of the grotesque body, which, according to Bakhtin, symbolizes a world that is not fixed or constant but continually renews itself. For Bakhtin:

> The sexual series functions […] to destroy the established hierarchy of values via the creation of new matrices of words, objects and phenomena […] [T]here is a heroization of all the functions of the life of the body, of eating, drinking, defecation and sexual activity.[17]

Of course, the carnival was a temporary event — the 'official' world with all its rules and taboos reasserted itself after the festivities were over. But there is a moment of rebellion captured in these images and motifs which, as Bakhtin writes, is to be found to varying degrees in the history

of literature and popular forms of theatre and poetry.[18] It is clear that poets such as Heine and Brecht were acquainted with and had respect for this alternative 'low' tradition. Brecht made use of the corporeal motif in *Baal* and in his early poems such as 'Vom François Villon'. Biermann consciously embraced this style. While professing loyalty to the ideals of the GDR state, he adopted an impudent, plebeian tone to address how these ideals were being corrupted.

An example of this can be seen in Biermann's depiction of women in his songs of the early 1960s. This conforms to the aforementioned profane tradition in its accentuation of the sensual, bodily image of women. The symbolism of what Bakhtin terms the self-renewing body inherent in such imagery clashes with the rigidity of GDR state policy and ideology. In 'Lied auf das ehemalige Grenzgänger-Freudenmädchen Garance' (Song for the Former Border-Crossing Prostitute Garance) from 1961 he sings about the hooker who can no longer carry out her occupation because of the building of the Berlin Wall. This, the song implies, is her downfall, not her sexual promiscuity: 'Aber du, Garance, bist die Schönste! / Die Unzucht hat deinen Leib nicht gefressen / Die Unzucht nahm nicht deine Lieblichkeit'[19] (But you, Garance, are the most beautiful. / It wasn't prostitution that devoured your body. / It wasn't prostitution that took away your loveliness). In 'Die alten Weiber von Buckow' (The Old Wives of Buckow), Biermann presents an image of old wives standing in the rain cursing the GDR state because they cannot buy fish, while the young fishmonger is in bed with his girlfriend: 'Das hat die Weiber von Buckow / So bös und nass gemacht'[20] (that made the wives of Buckow / all angry and wet).

In 1963 Biermann wrote 'Ballade vom Mann, der sich eigenhändig beide Füße abhackt' (The Ballad of the Man Who Cuts Off Both His Own Feet) which functioned as a parody of the self-defeating policies of the SED – a man steps in a pile of faeces and finds a solution in chopping off his foot. This provides another example of the plebeian style which was the antithesis of the requirements of Socialist Realism and led to the charges of literary decadence that contributed to Biermann being banned from performing and publishing in 1965:

Es war einmal ein Mann	Now once there was a man
der trat mit seinem Fuß	a man who put his foot
mit seinem nackten Fuß	who put his naked foot
in einen Scheißhaufen.	into a lump of shit

Er ekelte sich sehr	It sickened him so much
vor seinem einen Fuß	to see his shitty foot
er wollt mit diesem Fuß	he vowed this shitty foot
kein Stück mehr weitergehn	would carry him no more.
Und Wasser war nicht da	No water could he find
zu waschen seinen Fuß	to wash his shitty foot
für seinen einen Fuß	not even for his foot
war auch kein Wasser da	some water could he find.
Da nahm der Mann sein Beil	So picking up his axe
und hackte ab den Fuß	and swinging at his foot
den Fuß hackte er ab	he then chopped off his foot
in Eil mit seinem Beil […][21]	in haste and with his axe […][22]

He cuts off the wrong foot and then, in his rage, cuts off the other one too. Biermann, who was expelled from the Socialist Unity Party in 1963, makes the parallel clear: 'Es hackte die Partei / sich ab so manchen Fuß / so manchen guten Fuß / abhackte die Partei' (The Party has chopped off / a good few of its feet / a few of its good feet / the Party has chopped off).[23] But at this early stage in his career, Biermann still holds onto the possibility of reform, singing that unlike this man's, the Party's foot can still grow back on: 'Jedoch im Unterschied / zu jenem obigen Mann / wächst der Partei manchmal / der Fuß schon wieder an' (However, unlike him / the above mentioned man / the Party sometimes grows / its feet back on again).[24]

The imagery recalls the dismemberment of the character Herr Schmitt by two clowns in Brecht's play *Das Badener Lehrstück vom Einverständnis* (The Baden Lesson of Consent) from 1929. This had been intended as an abstract portrayal of the brutality of power relationships in capitalist society — in short: to demonstrate that people do not help one another. The slapstick was an example of Brecht's defamiliarisation effect, using artificial (un-naturalistic) performance techniques to keep the audience's attention focused on the political message. This is evident in 'Ballade vom Mann'. We see it in the song's function as a parable and in its grotesque lyrical imagery, but also on the level of performance: in the singer's exaggerated fricative on every repetition of the word 'foot' ('Fuß') and the jarring elongations of certain vowels, for example, the 'ei' in 'Partei'. These guide the audience towards the parodic intent.[25]

Another example of Biermann's use of the grotesque is in his 'Ballade auf den Dichter François Villon' (Ballad on the Poet François Villon)

from 1965, where profane language and imagery of the body clashes with depictions of GDR officialdom. Biermann alludes to the watchful, intrusive eyes of the GDR secret police (Stasi) as he shelters his grotesquely decaying guest Villon in his flat:

Mein großer Bruder Franz Villon	My big brother Franz Villon
Wohnt bei mir mit auf Zimmer	Lives in my room with me
Wenn Leute bei mir schnüffeln gehn	When people come to sniff me out
Versteckt Villon sich immer	Villon always hides away
Dann drückt er sich in' Kleiderschrank	Then shut in a cupboard all hunched up
Mit einer Flasche Wein	Drinking a flask of wine
Und wartet bis die Luft rein ist	He'll wait until the air is clear
Die Luft ist nie ganz rein	He can wait a long long time
Er stinkt, der Dichter, blumensüß	He stinks, the poet, though he must
Muß er gerochen haben	Have smelled like some sweet bloom
Bevor sie ihn vor Jahr und Tag	Before they chucked him like a dog
Wie'n Hund begraben haben	Into his ancient tomb
Wenn mal ein guter Freund da ist	And should a good friend come around
Vielleicht drei schöne Fraun	Three lovely girls might call
Dann steigt er aus dem Kleiderschrank	He'll jump out of the cupboard
Und trinkt bis Morgengraun	And he'll booze until the dawn
Und singt vielleicht auch mal ein Lied	Perhaps sometimes he'll sing a song
Balladen und Geschichten	And ballads, two or three
Vergißt er seinen Text, soufflier	If he forgets the words I prompt him
Ich ihm aus Brechts Gedichten […]	From Brecht's poetry […][26]

There is grotesque imagery in Biermann's description of Villon's fat wife Margot, who makes him curse, and in the way he ingratiates himself with his superiors: 'Die Eitelkeit der höchsten Herrn / Konnt meilenweit er riechen / Verewigt hat er manchen Arsch / In den er mußte kriechen' (The vanity of the rulers he / Could smell from miles around / He had to crawl right up their arse / In rhyme to set it down).[27] Villon's carnivalism forms a counterpoint to rigid authority. The stinking Frenchman drinks wine and vodka and struggles with the official language of the Party newspaper. When he is shot at while walking along the Berlin Wall, red wine flows from his wounds. He coughs up the lead cartridges, spits and curses. The fact that the police can only find his

skeleton in Biermann's cupboard is significant: the spirit of Villon will always haunt the authorities – he is synonymous with the utopian spirit of the carnival crowd and its subversion of hierarchy.

To further contextualise the subversiveness of Biermann's lyrics – and the extent to which they could be described as 'text crimes' – it is useful to compare his lyrics with the squeaky-clean variety of the state-controlled singing movement ('Singebewegung') which emerged in the GDR during the years of Biermann's performance ban from 1965 to 1976. In the wake of the 11th Plenum in 1965, which heralded a renewed clampdown on the arts, it was decided at the highest of levels that the Hootenanny Club was to be taken over by the Free German Youth (FDJ). In 1967 the group's name was changed to the Oktoberklub. The FDJ had the means to bring the singing movement to the masses, and by 1968 thousands of singing clubs had formed all over the GDR.[28] From 1968 onwards, under the slogan 'DDR-Konkret', the FDJ encouraged young students and workers to write new songs about their everyday lives, aiming to create a strong GDR identity amongst the youth and instil a sense of pride in its achievements. The most famous example is Hartmut König's 'Sag mir wo du stehst!' (Tell Me Where You Stand!), a song that became the unofficial anthem of the GDR singing movement. It has been claimed that this song was originally non-ideological, merely representing the Hootenanny Club's solidarity with the American civil rights movement and based on the US miners' strike song 'Which Side Are You On?'[29] There is, however, no mistaking the SED rhetoric, the slightly threatening tone, and the 'for us or against us' argumentation:

[Chorus]	[Chorus]
Sag mir, wo du stehst,	Tell me where you stand,
sag mir, wo du stehst,	Tell me where you stand,
sag mir, wo du stehst	Tell me where you stand
und welchen Weg du gehst!	And which way you're going!
Zurück oder vorwärts,	Backwards or forwards,
du mußt dich entschließen!	You have to decide!
Wir bringen die Zeit nach vorn Stück um Stück.	We're making history one step at a time.
Du kannst nicht bei uns und bei ihnen genießen,	You can't enjoy our company and theirs too,
denn wenn du im Kreis gehst, dann bleibst du zurück.	For if you go round in circles you stay behind.
[…]	[…]

Wir haben ein Recht darauf, dich zu erkennen,	We have a right to know who you are,
auch nickende Masken nützen uns nicht.	Nodding masks are no use to us either.
Ich will beim richtigen Namen dich nennen.	I want to call you by the right name.
Und darum zeig mir dein wahres Gesicht.[30]	So show me your true face.

As a public declaration of their support for the Warsaw Pact's invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Oktoberklub was coaxed into singing 'Sag mir, wo du stehst' at a concert at the FDJ holiday camp in Lenz (near Malchow) on 26 August 1968. It appears clear, however, that these young singers saw themselves as living on the right side of the ideologically divided world. This belief was reflected in the songs of Reinhold Andert and Bernd Rump. The group Pasaremos sang a pathos-laden song by Rump encouraging loyalty to the state: 'Das ist meine Fahne / Das ist deine Fahne / Freunde macht mit / Wer will sich uns entgegenstellen / Vorwärts im Schritt'[31] (It's my flag / It's your flag / Friends take part / Who would stand against us / Forwards in step). Another example was Andert's utopian 'Lied vom Vaterland' (Song of the Fatherland). Latching onto a tradition of parodying Goethe's 'Kennst Du das Land, wo die Zitronen blühn' (Do you know the land where the lemon trees bloom), Andert proclaims:

> Kennst Du das Land, wo die Fabriken uns gehören, / wo der Prometheus schon um fünf aufsteht. / […] wo sich die Leute alles selber reparieren, weil sie das Werkzeug haben, Wissen und die Macht.[32]
>
> (Do you know the land where the factories belong to us, / where Prometheus gets up at five. / […] where the people repair everything themselves because they have the tools, the knowledge and the power.)

The singing movement was often cajoled into voicing its support for state policy in such ways. This was evident in its response to Wolf Biermann's expatriation from the GDR after his concert in Cologne on 13 November 1976. On the one hand this step was publicly opposed by singer-songwriters including Kurt Demmler, Bettina Wegner and Gerulf Pannach, lyricist of the rock group Renft. On the other hand the members of the group Jahrgang 49 (an offshoot of Oktoberklub) were among those who signed a declaration in support of the measure:

> Wir als Interpreten und Schöpfer politischer Lieder [bekennen uns] zu dem in unserer Republik real existierenden Sozialismus. Wir meinen, Wolf Biermann hat […] unserer Sache geschadet. Deshalb stehen wir zu den Entscheidungen von Partei und Regierung.[33]
>
> (We, as interpretors and creators of political songs, [declare our support] for the real existing socialism of our republic. We believe that Wolf Biermann has […] harmed our cause. Therefore we support the decision of Party and government.)

Despite such unfavourable responses to Biermann within the singing movement, many of its protagonists became politically disillusioned. This coincided with a trend towards a greater subjectivity. The collective 'we' of 'DDR-Konkret' increasingly became 'I', as singing club stalwarts such as Bernd Rump, Reinhold Andert, and Gerd Eggers from Jahrgang 49 began addressing the limitations of the individual within the collective. While still affirming allegiance to the GDR and its socialist aims, these singers were growing increasingly aware of the gulf between ideal and reality. Bernd Rump's 'In meinem Namen' (In My Name) from 1976 tackles the lack of accountability of the press and questions the absence of his own opinion in its publications:

> Die Zeitung bei uns drucken sie täglich in meinem Namen / […] Mein guter Name ist mir teuer, drum will ich wissen, was ich unterschreib'/ […] Denn so wie meine Arbeit zählt, zähle auch meine Stimme'.[34]
>
> (They print newspapers here every day in my name / […] My good name is important to me, so I want to know what it is I'm signing / […] Because just as my work counts, my voice [vote] should count as well.)

Andert, too, showed a critical development. His song 'Der vorletzte Gang des Thomas Münzer' (The Penultimate Walk of Thomas Münzer) of 1980 implies that the revolutionary hero of the Peasant Wars of the early sixteenth century would have been considered an anarchist had he lived in the GDR:

> Was mußtest du auch deiner Zeit vorgreifen / anstatt zu warten auf die rechte Frist / bis deine Fürsten selbst zu Bauern reifen / du wärst auch heute noch ein Anarchist'[35]

(You were so ahead of your time / instead of waiting for the right period / for your princes themselves to mature into peasants / You would still have been an anarchist today too)

Despite its tarnished reputation, the GDR singing movement spawned a wealth of talent, which became clear as these once-teenagers matured and found their critical voices and their own artistic niches. From the late-1970s singers and songwriters such as Barbara Thalheim, Udo Magister, Gerhard Schöne, Werner Karma, Gerhard Gundermann and Hans-Eckardt Wenzel emerged. Some of these were solo performers, others linked to groups with new aesthetic visions that were emerging out of the singing clubs based in universities and schools. The group Schicht (Shift) developed out of the 'Songgruppe' of the Technische Universität Dresden and the 'Singeklub' of the Erweiterte Oberschule Hoyerswerda, from which Gerhard Gundermann's group, Brigade Feuerstein, also emerged. Hans-Eckardt Wenzel's group Karls Enkel was formed at the Humboldt University in Berlin in 1976. These groups all embarked on new theatre-based approaches to political song, a new development known as song-theatre ('Liedertheater'), which was supported and supervised by the Centre for Song of the GDR Academy of Arts. Its leader, Karin Wolf, organized frequent workshops and discussions and documented performances on video.

'Liedertheater' was an expression of attempts to break out of pre-ordained structures and discourses. Karls Enkel's specific intention in the late 1970s was to escape from what Wenzel described as the 'Ghetto der Singbewegung' (ghetto of the singing movement).[36] 'Liedertheater' pioneered a new multi-media approach using text, drama, costumes, masks and electronic music. This enabled a form of indirect criticism of the state. Through the 1980s there emerged numerous amateur and professional 'Liedertheater' groups throughout the GDR, which formed a scene distinct from cabaret. Gundermann sang in a clown's mask to rock music accompaniment in Brigade Feuerstein's marketplace spectaculars in 1980.[37] Karls Enkel began their song-theatre experiment in 1979 with the song programme 'Zieharmonie' (Mouth Harmony).[38] According to Wenzel the advantage of the genre lay in the possibility of freeing oneself from the role of the political singer-songwriter and its personality cult: 'Vom Kostüm und von der Schminke her schaffen wir Abgehobenheit, Spielerei, Spielraum und relativieren damit für die Leute im Zuschauerraum, was oben gesungen wird'[39] (With the costumes and the make-up we create distance, playfulness and space to play, and in this

way we relativize what is being sung, for the people in the audience). With masks and role-play it was possible for a Brechtian dialogic interplay to emerge between person and role. Standpoints expressed did not have to be attributed to the singer or 'personality' concerned. Biermann's music and performances – incorporating irony, mimicry and gestures – had also reflected a dialogic aesthetic. But there was a difference. Biermann's criticism was simply too direct to be tolerated in the GDR; in the eyes of the authorities his personality cult was so firmly associated with opposition that it overshadowed the philosophical ambivalence of his art. Biermann, as a performer and person, marked the clear boundary line between what was acceptable and what not. The question now for the younger singer-songwriters was how far they could push this boundary line out.[40]

Karls Enkel was founded in autumn 1976 amidst the controversy of the Biermann affair. The group's first song programme, 'Komm rücken wir näher zusammen' (Come Let's Get Closer Together) from 1977, was criticized by a Stasi informer for 'political and ideological mistakes' and earned them the nickname 'Biermann's grandchildren'. The texts were ambiguous and could be interpreted as positively or negatively inclined towards the State according to one's particular standpoint. The informer advised that this song programme was not appropriate for future performances.[41] The group was only allowed to continue performing after the intervention by a friend in the district leadership of the FDJ.[42] But after the success of its next programme, 'Vorfahrt' (Right of Way),[43] Karls Enkel was promoted to the highly privileged status of FDJ travel cadre ('Reisekader') and was allowed to perform in West Berlin on 14 and 15 July 1979. After renewed controversy over texts in their next programme, 'Zieharmonie', in the autumn of 1979, contact to the FDJ was finally broken off, which ruled out further travel to the West. The song 'Liebste laß die Lampe an' (My love, leave the light on), for example, addressed the increasing distance between the government and the people:

Genosse, der du über mir stehst,	Comrade, standing above me,
Ich will, was du vorhast, verstehn.	I want to understand your plans.
Weil ich doch nur lieben kann,	For I can only love,
Eben alles geben kann	And can only give my all
In allerbesten Nähen.	When I feel very close to you.
Ich will, was du durchsetzt mit unserer Macht,	For I too want to understand
Ich will, was wir machen wolln,	What it is you implement with our power, [Understand]

eben auch verstehn.	What we are trying to do.

The meaning of these songs did not escape the Stasi. According to the files they kept on Karls Enkel, what annoyed the Stasi most was the group's reluctance to accept guidance and to change their songs after discussions with comrades who – the Stasi claimed – knew more about the issues than the group itself.[44]

Breaking with the supervision and sponsorship of the FDJ left Karls Enkel in a vulnerable situation. Performers needed to be sponsored by an institution (usually the FDJ) in order to gain a permit to perform in public. But there were many inconsistencies and idiosyncrasies in the cultural landscape of the GDR that could not always be explained by official cultural policy. There was, for example, no unified policy on culture. This gave the cultural functionaries, those in the various organizations who had powers of decision in the area of the promotion of arts and culture, a certain amount of freedom to implement their own form of artistic control.[45] The story of the group Karls Enkel illustrates how it was sometimes possible to exploit such inconsistencies. It also shows how there were indeed cultural functionaries who were prepared to intervene on behalf of critical artists or at least to turn a blind eye to their criticism. After Karls Enkel's break with the FDJ, the group began operating as an 'independent theatre group', a status that did not officially exist in the GDR. They had good connections in the cultural establishment, particularly the mass organisation Kulturbund, which sponsored two Karls Enkel's productions, despite it not being in its cultural remit to do so. A further ally was the Berlin Volksbühne. Here, in autumn 1979, the group began rehearsing their first production, based on texts by the revolutionary poet Erich Mühsam (1878–1934), under the title 'Von meiner Hoffnung laß ich nicht – oder der Pilger Mühsam'[46] (I Won't Abandon Hope – or: the Pilgrim Mühsam).

The conflicting reactions of key institutions to this production illustrates the aforementioned lack of unity, which Karls Enkel could exploit. The Mühsam programme was supposed to be the Volksbühne's contribution to the Festival of Political Song in February 1980, but it was vetoed by the FDJ.[47] According to a Stasi file, '[man könnte] bei diesem Programm, wenn man nicht beachtet in welcher Zeit Mühsam die Texte geschrieben hat, zu falscher politischer Aussage kommen' (if one didn't take into account the period when Mühsam wrote these texts, [one could] reach wrong political conclusions).[48] The Volksbühne, on the

other hand, remained loyal to the group and continued to provide a stage for the production to be performed.

The temporal ambiguity noted by the Stasi became a major element of Karls Enkel's artistic strategy.[49] If they had been influenced by the proletarian tradition for their formal techniques (for example, agitprop revue), they found stimulus for content in the history of this same movement. A striking leitmotif throughout their work is their treatment of the revolutionary dead. As Karen Leeder writes, the official honouring of the dead in the GDR was so endemic that Heiner Müller had spoken of 'einer Diktatur der Toten über die Lebenden'[50] (a dictatorship of the dead over the living). Biermann had already addressed this in songs such as 'Herr Brecht' [51] where the vibrancy of the playwright's work is contrasted with the sterile administration of the archive which carries his name. In Biermann's famous song 'Der Hugenottenfriedhof' (The Huguenot Cemetery) from 1969, the line 'Wie nah sind uns manche Tote doch / wie tot sind uns manche, die leben'[52] (how close to us some of the dead are / how dead to us some who are living) portrays the double-edged significance of 'the dead'. On the one hand, the poet feels a sense of responsibility towards them; on the other hand, he is bitter at the administrators of a socialist system in which the living are effectively dead: silenced or exiled to the West.[53]

The image of the dead is prominent in productions of Karls Enkel. To establish theatrical communication with their revolutionary ancestors, the group derived much inspiration from the modernist montage aesthetic. Feeling severed from their own line of heritage, Wenzel, Mensching and their dramaturge Heiner Maaß were interested in Walter Benjamin's opposition to the idea of history as a linear continuum. In 'Über den Begriff der Geschichte' (On the Concept of History), Benjamin states that history can no longer be seen as an empty, homogenous continuity of time: 'Die [neuen] Kalender zählen die Zeit also nicht wie Uhren'[54] (The [new] calendars do not measure time like clocks). Instead, history, particularly in periods of revolution, reacts explosively with the present, creating what he terms a 'Jetztzeit' (time in the now) in which time stands still.[55] Benjamin's writings had influenced the general trend in GDR literature since the 1960s away from Socialist Realism towards a greater degree of artistic experimentation. As Emmerich notes, writers and dramatists no longer accepted the continuity between bourgeois humanism and real existing socialism. Instead they began emphasizing the breaks and discontinuities, the incompatibility of the literary heritage with present reality, the parallels

between old and new barbarism.[56] This was also apparent in the literary appropriation of antiquity and figures such as Philoctetes and Odysseus (Müller), Prometheus (Müller, Braun, Fühmann) and Cassandra (Wolf). For such writers and dramatists, history and mythology were periods of time which projected into the present.[57] This approach also influenced Karls Enkel. Historical flashpoints such as the Parisian proletariat's uprising and defeat in 1848 or the campaign of the International Brigade in Spain would be blended with the present. This creates an impression of timelessness which recalls Benjamin's observation of 'eine geheime Verabredung zwischen den gewesenen Geschlechtern und unserem' (a secret agreement between the generations of the past and our own).[58] Controversially, the utopian spirit of revolutionary forefathers was balanced against the fact of their ultimate failure. This relativised the one-sidedness of the SED's heroic depiction of its revolutionary heritage, and was reminiscent of Benjamin's remark about how political regimes recast themselves in the image of glorious past eras: Robespierre, for example, had viewed the French revolutionary state as the reincarnation of Rome.[59] Benjamin points out the necessity to counteract the danger of the past being moulded to conform to the ruling class's image of the present: 'In jeder Epoche muß versucht werden, die Überlieferung von neuem dem Konformismus abzugewinnen, der im Begriff steht, sie zu überwältigen'[60] (In every epoch, the attempt must be made to deliver tradition anew from the conformism which is on the point of overwhelming it). For Karls Enkel, this danger existed in the GDR's own historical self-image. Using the music, poetry and philosophical writings of such moments in revolutionary history, with Brechtian techniques of montage and disruption, Karls Enkel projected the contradictions of past periods onto the present. From this emerged an innovative temporal perspective enabling dialogue between present and past.[61]

Here the theme of utopia is countered by the recurring motifs of funeral and defeat. An early poem by Steffen Mensching entitled 'Traumhafter Ausflug mit Rosa L.' (Dreamlike Outing with Rosa L.) already anticipates this. As Karen Leeder writes, the subject's erotic but unfulfilled encounter with Rosa Luxemburg serves to depict 'how far the present falls short of revolutionary aspirations of the past'.[62] Idealistic, youthful and vibrant images of the heroine standing barefoot amongst the red poppies in a Polish field clash with the theme of funerals ('Marmor, Schleifen und Lilien'; marble, ribbons and lilies) and official remembrances ('Kränzen und Märschen des Winters'; wreaths and

marches of winter).[63] The funeral motif provides the focal point of Karls Enkel's Erich Mühsam programme in 1979. It begins and ends with the Mühsam's poem 'Ehrung der Toten' [64] (Honouring of the Dead): 'Menschen laßt die Toten ruhn / und erfüllt ihr Hoffen!' (People, leave the dead in peace / and fulfil their hope!). Yearning for utopian change is relativized by the image of death: the cast put on black funeral dress, carry the coffin onto the stage and Mensching, leading the procession, announces: 'Wir möchten jetzt mit den Trauerfeierlichkeiten beginnen'[65] (We would now like to begin with the funeral service). Therein lies an irresolvable contradiction: they celebrate Mühsam's life, but in emphasising his funeral, Karls Enkel are mourning the loss in the socialist present of the utopianism which Mühsam stood for. The contradiction runs throughout. Inherent in the title of the Mühsam poem 'Von meiner Hoffnung laß ich nicht' was Wenzel and Mensching's belief in the possibilities of individual action. This spirit is, however, constantly relativized by the context of performance: GDR reality. In 'Gesang des jungen Anarchisten' (Song of the young anarchist), for example, they sing: 'Von Gesetzen nicht gebunden, / Ohne Herrn und ohne Staat – / frei nur kann die Welt gesunden, / Künftige, durch eure Tat'[66] (Unbound by laws, / Without masters and without state – / the world can only recover freely, / in the future, by your action). Similarly Stefan Körbel's interpretation of 'Der Gefangene' (The Prisoner), emphasising the refrain, 'Sich fügen, heißt lügen' (To be subservient is to lie), mirrors the historical parallel of the dangers of servility.

The funereal motif is never far away. Mühsam's German translation of 'The Internationale' is sung unaccompanied as a lament, Wenzel beating out a slow rhythm on the guitar. The lines are separated by long theatrical pauses, creating an alienation effect. This interpretation relates to Mühsam's captivity in the Oranienburg concentration camp where, according to F.C. Weiskopf, despite severe beatings by the SA guards and already close to death he refused to sing the 'Horst-Wessel Song' and sang 'The Internationale' instead.[67] The defamiliarisation, however, also provokes the audience to view the protesting sentiments of the song in terms of their historical validity:

> Vom Staat und vom Gesetz betrogen, / in Steuerfesseln eingeschnürt, / so wird uns Gleichheit vorgelogen / vom Reichen, der kein Elend spürt[68]
>
> (Deceived by state and laws, / strangled by the bonds of taxes, / we are lied to that we are equal / by the rich who know no misery)

The production climaxes with the juxtaposition of the 'Soldatenlied' (Soldier Song) with the funeral of Mühsam. The song urges soldiers to turn their weapons against the rulers and free the world. But countering this utopianism, Mensching announces the funeral procession in a mirror image of the beginning: 'Die Revolution ist vorüber. Räumen Sie die Straßen auf. Wir wollen mit den Trauerfeierlichkeiten beginnen'[69] (The revolution is over. Clear the streets. We want to start the funeral service). The production ends with an unresolved contradiction: a positive perspective on the future is sustained, yet it is held in check by the all-pervading image of death.[70]

Likewise in the 1983 production, 'Die komische Tragödie des 18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte nach Karl Marx'[71] (The Comical Tragedy of the 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte According to Karl Marx), the revolutionary dead weigh on the minds of the living. Here Karls Enkel identify with the Parisian proletariat of 1848. Echoing a popular theme of Biermann's, they imply that the legacy of these true revolutionaries is being betrayed in the real existing socialism of the GDR. But, as in Marx's *Brumaire*, the burden of history prevents mankind from realizing its aspirations. The focal point is Marx's famous statement: 'Die Menschen machen ihre eigene Geschichte, aber sie machen sie nicht aus freien Stücken, nicht unter selbstgewählten, sondern unter unmittelbar vorgefundenen, gegebenen und überlieferten Umständen'[72] (Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past). With defamiliarising performance techniques, the time levels of 1848 and 1983 are made to converge. During a dramatic musical and lyrical montage of quotations from *Brumaire* the cast exclaim: 'Die Tradition aller toten Geschlechter lastet wie ein Alp auf dem Gehirn der Lebenden' (The tradition of all dead generations weighs heavily like a nightmare on the brains of the living).[73] In their black workers' suits, top hats and skull-cap masks, the cast represent precisely these 'dead generations' impatient for change in a stagnating present.[74] What ensues is an image of the subject waiting in vain for history to happen. Leeder writes about the preoccupation with the concept of 'waiting' amongst GDR authors such as Heiner Müller in the 1980s, whereby the anticipation and enthusiasm of the construction years had been replaced by 'a passive and alienated "waiting".'[75] This emerges as a major theme of 'Die komische Tragödie'. In the opening scene the cast, representing the Parisian proletariat, sit on ground littered with the debris of the failed uprising. They sing a Wenzel

and Mensching text, 'Komm unter die großen Brücken der Seine' (Come Under the Great Bridges of the Seine) which conveys how the historical struggle has brought the workers no further: 'Es gibt nichts Neues unter dem Mond / […] Die Stadt spie uns aus / Wir frieren und warten noch immer' (There's nothing new under the moon / […] The city spat us out / We're freezing and waiting still as ever).[76] And in their melancholy adaptation of Strauss and von Gilm's 'Stell auf den Tisch die duftenden Reseden' (Put the Fragrant Mignonettes on the Table), the new Wenzel and Mensching text brings the events of 1848 into the now: 'Alles umsonst […] / Was bleibt sind Tote, Daten, ein paar Lieder, / Ein schöner Traum, ein nicht erfüllter Zweck' (All in vain […] What remains are dead people, dates, a few songs, / A beautiful dream, an unfulfilled aim).[77] In a leap forward to 1883, Mensching recites a poetic adaptation of a telegram Engels sent announcing the death of Marx. Against the background of melancholy music, political resolve to continue the fight is juxtaposed with a sense of disillusion: 'Nun – wir / Müssen's durchfressen. Wozu / anders sind wir da. Unsere Courage verlieren / Wir darum noch nicht. Dein Engels' (Now – we / have to labour on through this. For what / other purpose are we here. We won't lose / our courage on account of it. Yours Engels).[78] With resigned irony the group sing, again to a funeral march accompaniment, an adaptation of Marx's prediction for future proletarian revolutions: 'Sie werden sich nicht kostümieren / Und nicht ersticken in Phrasen, / Sie werden sich selbst kritisieren / […] Sie werden sich korrigieren' (They won't get dressed up / and won't suffocate in slogans / They will criticise themselves / […] They will correct themselves).[79] But the tragedy of history flips over into comical farce as the cast present an updated adaptation of Marx's lines from *Brumaire*: 'Hegel bemerkt irgendwo, daß alle großen weltgeschichtlichen Tatsachen und Personen sich sozusagen zweimal ereignen. Er hat vergessen, hinzuzufügen: das eine Mal als Tragödie, das andere Mal als Farce' (Hegel remarks somewhere that all great world-historic facts and personages appear, so to speak, twice. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce).[80] In a cheeky allusion to the recurring farce of history in the GDR, they sing to an appropriately light-hearted tango accompaniment: 'Das ist ein altes Stück mein Kind / Der Stoff ist bekannt aber neu sind die Stars/ Das eine Mal als Tragödie, das and're Mal als Farce' (That's an old play my child / The material is well known but the stars are new / The first time as tragedy, the second time as farce).[81]

A production that set up Marx quotations to imply that the GDR's historical self-image was a farce could easily have been banned outright.[82] It had been commissioned by the Kulturbund for the celebration of the centenary of Karl Marx's death in 1983. A Kulturbund report from 29 March 1983 makes clear that Karls Enkel was not operating without external pressure. It stipulates that after every concert there should be a discussion with members of the young intelligentsia about the current significance of Marxist theory for the continuing class struggle.[83] Furthermore the content of the production was to be supervised during rehearsal by the Central Commission for Literature, an SED-related body concerned with the upholding of Party ideology in GDR writing. Despite this monitoring the group did not tone down its criticism in the programme. The dress rehearsal at the Kulturbund conference 'Karl Marx and the Arts' on 12 March 1983 in Gera provoked an embarrassed response from the Kulturbund members, as Wenzel remembers:

> Der Kulturbund als Institution war zu feige auszusteigen und zu feige, sich zu bekennen. Die regionalen Veranstalter [wollten das Programm haben,] haben sich aber nicht getraut, offiziell gegen die ganze Organisation vorzugehen.[84]
>
> (The Kulturbund as an institution was too cowardly to withdraw support and too cowardly to put its weight behind the production. The regional promoters [of the Kulturbund wanted to put it on] but didn't have the courage to go against the whole organisation.)

The programme was not allowed to be performed during the official Marx centenary celebrations. Thereafter, however, Karls Enkel toured the production without interference from censors. Yet within the group, tension had been caused by the involvement of the Kulturbund as sponsor. Heiner Maaß, who had directed the production, had complained to the group that this was politically and artistically restricting, although he was delighted in the end with the artistic success of the project.[85]

The secret to the survival of 'Die komische Tragödie des 18. Brumaire' lay in the use of a text by Marx to show the inadequacies of socialism in the GDR, but without questioning Marx's ideology itself. This approach confirms David Bathrick's assessment of GDR literature in general: such challenges to the hegemony of the official discourse – despite being basically socialist in intention – were able to create a linguistic sub-public that endangered the dominant discourse.[86] The

Stasi's reports on audiences' reactions to Karls Enkel performances show that it was well aware of this danger.[87] However, it was limited to relatively narrow intellectual circles and therefore posed little threat. In essence 'Die komische Tragödie' was an example of the contradictory relationship of GDR dissidents to the ruling powers. As Bathrick observes, it was precisely their inability and reluctance to question the system as a whole that enabled them to do what they did. If they had taken their criticism further they would have been silenced.[88]

Such ambiguity among the GDR writers and intellectuals, according to Bathrick, reshaped the binary for-or-against mentality of the official discourse. He poses the question: 'Sind diese Autoren und ihre Texte letzten Endes innerhalb oder außerhalb des diskursiven Systems zu verorten? Auf der einen oder der anderen Seite der Macht?' (Can these authors and their texts ultimately be placed inside or outside of the discursive system? On the one or the other side of power?)[89] This question, which is relevant to many of the GDR political singer-songwriters as well as authors and playwrights, has been much debated since 1989. Heiner Müller's remark 'Ich war immer auf beiden Seiten' (I was always on both sides)[90] is indicative of the attitude of many and is echoed in this assessment by Wenzel: 'Es ist ja so, daß heute die Geschichte so betrachtet wird, als ob es eine klare Trennung in Dissidenten und Doktrinäre gegeben hätte. Und so war es nicht. Der Riß ging durch die Leute durch' (The way history is viewed today is as if there was a clear divide between the dissidents and the doctrinaire types and it wasn't like that. Everyone was divided).[91]

The song-writing of Biermann and of Wenzel, Mensching and their group Karls Enkel undermined the authorities' assumption that the GDR represented continuity with the revolutionary socialist tradition. But because the state's historical self-image was so inextricably bound up with this notion, there was only limited freedom for artists to tackle the subject head on. Biermann was banned and ended up in the West. His exile was a formative experience for Wenzel and Mensching and they reacted to it by playing a more tactical game, resorting to metaphor and ambiguity, couching their criticism within ironical historical allusions, and thereby managing for the most part to evade prohibition. Both cases serve as enlightening illustrations of political song-writing in the censorious climate of the GDR.

Notes

1 See Axel Goodbody, Dennis Tate, Ian Wallace, 'The Failed Socialist Experiment: Culture in the GDR', in Rob Burns, ed*., German Cultural Studies. An Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 147-208 (here: pp. 159-64, 167-72, and 179-86).

2 Karls Enkel (Karl's Grandchildren) were formed in autumn 1976 at the Humboldt University in Berlin. The name was intentionally ambiguous, alluding to both Karl Marx and Karl Valentin.

3 Hans-Eckhard Wenzel, *Das Lied vom wilden Mohn. Gedichte*, Halle and Leipzig: Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1984; Wenzel, *Antrag auf Verlängerung des Monats August. Gedichte*, Halle and Leipzig: Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1986; Steffen Mensching, *Erinnerung eines Milchglasscheibe. Gedichte*, Halle and Leipzig: Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1984; Mensching, *Tuchfühlung. Gedichte*, Halle and Leipzig: Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1987.

4 James K. Millar, 'Interview with Wolf Biermann', Communications, International Brecht Society, 18, 2 (1989), 21-35.

5 Inge Lammel, *Das Arbeiterlied*, Leipzig: Reclam, 1970, p. 82. Quoted in Lutz Kirchenwitz, *Folk, Chanson und Liedermacher*, Berlin: Dietz, 1991, p. 86. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations into English are by David Robb.

6 For a summary of the beginnings of the Singbewegung see Lutz Kirchenwitz, *Folk, Chanson und Liedermacher in der DDR*, Berlin: Dietz, 1993, 16-33.

7 Ibid., pp. 17-8.

8 Holger Böning, *Der Traum von einer Sache. Aufstieg und Fall der Utopien im politischen Lied der Bundesrepublik und der DDR*, Bremen: Edition Lumière, 2004, p. 194.

9 Wolf Biermann, 'Soldaten-Lied', in *Alle Lieder*, Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1991, pp. 36-7. Unless otherwise stated, all references to Biermann are to this volume.

10 'Soldat, Soldat', *Alle Lieder*, p. 103. The subject of military songs in the GDR is discussed at length by Peter Fauser in 'Friedensthematik und soldatische Prägung', in Eckhard John, ed., *Die Entdeckung des sozialkritischen Liedes,* Volksliedstudien, vol. 7, Münster, New York, Munich and Berlin: Waxmann, 2006, pp. 97-120.

11 A version of this section on Biermann was published in David Robb, 'The Legacy of Brecht in GDR Political Song', in Laura Bradley and Karen Leeder, eds, *Brecht and the GDR*, in *Edinburgh German Yearbook*, vol. 5, Rochester/NY: Camden House, 2011, pp. 183-200 (here: pp. 186-9).

12 See Emmerich, pp. 118-24.

13 See David Robb, 'Mühsam, Brecht, Eisler and the Twentieth Century Revolutionary Heritage', in David Robb, ed., *Protest Song in East and West Germany since the 1960s*, Rochester/ NY: Camden House, 2007, pp. 49-57.

14 See Robb, 'Narrative Role-Play as Communicative Strategy in German Protest Song', in Robb, ed., P*rotest Song*, pp. 83-4.

15 See Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Hélène Iswolsky, Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1984, pp. 263-9.

16 Ibid., p. 10.

17 Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981, p. 192.

18 Ibid., p. 273.

19 'Lied auf das ehemalige Grenzgänger-Freudenmädchen Garance', in *Alle Lieder*, pp. 57f.

20 *Alle Lieder*, p. 68.

21 *Alle Lieder*, pp. 98-9.

22 'The Ballad of the Man', in Wolf Biermann, *Poems and Ballads*, translated by Steve Gooch, London: Pluto, 1977, pp. 74-7.

23 *Alle Lieder*, p. 99; *Poems and Ballads*, p. 77 (giving 'party' with lower case p).

24 Ibid.

25 Biermann, 'Ballade vom Mann', on the live LP *Es geht sein' sozialistischen Gang*, CBS, 1977.

26 Biermann, *Poems and Ballads*, p. 85.

27 *Alle Lieder*, p. 121.

28 Kirchenwitz, *Folk, Chanson und Liedermacher*, p. 42.

29 Kirchenwitz interviewed in Axel Grote and Christian Steinke's television documentary, *Sag mir wo du stehst: Die Geschichte vom Oktoberklub*, ORB, 1993.

30 Oktoberklub, *Unterm Arm die Gitarre*, VEB Deutsche Schallplatten, 1968.

31 DDR-Singegruppen, *Junge Leute, Junge Lieder*, VEB Deutsche Schallplatten, 1969.

32 Oktoberklub, *Das Beste* (CD), Edition Barbarossa, 1995. The parody which Andert most likely had in mind was Erich Kästner's cabaret war satire of 1928 'Kennst du das Land, wo die Kanonen blühn', on CD *Die kleine Freiheit. Erich Kästner als Kabarettautor in Originalaufnahmen*, Edition Berliner Musenkinder, 1999.

33 Declaration of 'Jahrgang 49' in *Neues Deutschland*, 22 November 1976. Quoted in Kirchenwitz, *Folk, Chanson und Liedermacher*, p. 119.

34 Bernd Rump, 'In meinem Namen', in Fred Krüger, ed., *DDR – konkret. Lieder der Singebewegung*, vol. 1, 1976, pp. 78-9. Quoted in Böning, *Der Traum von einer Sache*, p. 226. The word 'Stimme' is used ambiguously in the last line, meaning both 'voice' and 'vote'.

35 Quoted in Petra Schwarz and Wilfried Bergholz, *Liederleute*, Berlin: Lied der Zeit Verlag, 1989, p. 22.

36 In the radio programme *Sag mir wo du stehst*, Rockradio B, 20 October 1992.

37 *Gundi Gundermann*, documentary film by Richard Engel. This was drastically censored and was only shown once in the GDR.

38 In the German this is a play on the word 'Zieharmonika' which means 'mouth organ' or 'harmonica'.

39 Karin Hirdina, 'Präzision ohne Pingelichkeit. Wenzel und Mensching im Gespräch mit Karin Hirdina', *Temperamente*, 4 (1984), p. 38.

40 The ambivalent aspect of carnival laughter interested Wenzel and Mensching. They had come across the writings of Mikhail Bakhtin while studying Kulturwissenschaft under Wolfgang Heise at the Humboldt University

in Berlin in the late 1970s. Their embracing of the ambiguous aesthetic of the Fool, particularly in their 'Da Da eR' cabaret productions as a duo from 1982 to 1990, arguably gave them a 'Narrenfreiheit' (fool's licence) which helped them to avoid prohibition. Carnivalesque laughter, according to Bakhtin, eludes censorship more easily than satire, in that it does not raise itself above the object of derision: 'it is directed at all and everyone […] it asserts and denies, buries and revives' (*Rabelais*, p. 12). Bakhtin's account of Rabelais' avoidance of the stake, set against the execution of the more overtly critical Dolet, is reminiscent of the contrasting fates of Wenzel and Mensching and Wolf Biermann, whose political humour was too direct for the GDR authorities: 'We must admit that Rabelais' prank in the style of Master Villon was fully successful. In spite of the frankness of his writings he […] suffered no serious persecution. […] Rabelais' friend Etienne Dolet perished at the stake because of his statements, which although less damning had been seriously made' (*Rabelais*, p. 269). For an account of Wenzel and Mensching's comedy in relation to carnival laughter see David Robb, 'A Carnivalesque Clowns Act Spanning the GDR and United Germany', *German Studies Review*, 1, 2000, 53-68.

41 BStU MfS X5/2522/78, report from 9 May 1977, p. 103. This and subsequent similar abbreviations refer to files of the Ministerium für Staatssicherheit. See also David Robb, 'Zwischen Zensur und Förderung: Das Liedertheater Karls Enkel in der DDR', in Beate Müller, ed., *Zensur im modernen deutschen Zeitraum*, Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2003, pp. 215-33.

42 Personal interview with Karls Enkel member Stefan Körbel, 29 September 1993.

43 'Vorfahrt' means 'right of way' in the traffic sense, but here is a play on words with 'Vorfahren' (forefathers), which was the subject of the song production.

44 BStU MfS XV/2522/78, report from 2 March 1980, p. 170.

45 See David Robb, *Zwei Clowns im Lande des verlorenen Lachens. Das Liedertheater Wenzel & Mensching*, Berlin: Ch. Links, 1998, pp. 156-65.

46 Karls Enkel: 'Von meiner Hoffnung laß ich nicht – Der Pilger Mühsam', unpublished manuscript and video, Berlin: Lied-Zentrum der Akademie der Künste der DDR, 1980.

47 BStU MfS XV/2522/78, report from 4 February 1980, p. 207.

48 Ibid.

49 See David Robb, 'Reviving the Dead: Montage and Temporal Dislocation in Karls Enkel's Liedertheater', in William Niven and James Jordan, eds, *Politics and Culture in Twentieth-Century Germany*, Rochester/NY: Camden House, 2003, pp. 143-62.

50 Heiner Müller, 'Das Böse ist die Zukunft', in Müller, *Jenseits der Nation*, Berlin: Rotbuch, 1991, p. 75. Quoted in Karen Leeder, *Breaking Boundaries. A New Generation of Poets in the GDR*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, p. 122.

51 Biermann, 'Herr Brecht', in *Alle Lieder*, p. 49.

52 Wolf Biermann, 'Der Hugenottenfriedhof', on the CD *Warte nicht auf bess're Zeiten*, Altona: Zweitausendeins, 1996.

53 See Peter Wapnewski, 'Wolf Biermann ein deutscher Liedermacher', in Heinz Ludwig Arnold, ed., *Wolf Biermann*, Munich: Edition Text und Kritik, 1980, pp. 93-4.

54 Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. I.2, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1974, pp. 701-2.

55 See also Stanley Mitchell, 'Introduction', in Walter Benjamin, *Understanding Brecht*, translated by Anna Bostock, London: NLB, 1973 (here: pp. xvii-xviii).

56 Emmerich, *Kleine Literaturgeschichte der DDR*, p. 335.

57 Ibid., p. 357.

58 Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. I.2, pp. 693-4.

59 Ibid., p. 701.

60 Ibid., p. 695.

61 This mirrors the 'productive dialogue' which, for Leeder, epitomises Wenzel and Mensching's poetry: 'one which works on all levels: within the self, with a "Du", with utopian aspirations for the future, and with history'. See Leeder, *Breaking Boundaries*, p. 88.

62 Ibid., p. 127.

63 Steffen Mensching, *Erinnerung an eine Milchglasscheibe*, Halle and Leipzig: Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1984, pp. 14-15.

64 Karls Enkel, 'Von meiner Hoffung lass' ich nicht', n.p.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

67 F[ranz] C[arl] Weiskopf, quoted in the concert programme for 'Von meiner Hoffnung laß ich nicht'.

68 'Von meiner Hoffnung'.

69 Ibid.

70 See an account of Wenzel and Mensching's respective tributes to Mühsam in their own poems in Leeder, *Breaking Boundaries*, pp. 87-88.

71 Karls Enkel, 'Die komische Tragödie des 18. Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte. Nach Karl Marx', unpaginated, unpublished manuscript and video, Berlin: Lied-Zentrum der Akademie der Künste der DDR, 1983.

72 Karl Marx, *Der achtzehnte Brumaire*, Berlin: Henschel, 1974, p. 15.

73 'Die komische Tragödie', citing Marx, *Der achtzehnte Brumaire*, p. 15.

74 See Leeder's analysis of the Wenzel poem 'Amtliches Schuldbekenntnis' in *Breaking Boundaries* p. 117.

75 Ibid., p. 53.

76 'Die komische Tragödie'.

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid. See also Mensching, 'London, fünfzehnter März dreiundachtzig', in *Erinnerung an eine Milchglasscheibe*, p. 24.

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid., citing Marx, p. 15.

81 'Die komische Tragödie'.

82 See Robb, 'Political Song in the GDR. The Cat-and-Mouse Game with Censorship and Institutions', in Robb, ed., *Protest Song*, pp. 244-9.

83 Sekretariatssitzung of the Kulturbund, 29 March 1983. Beschluß Nr. III/44-50 Bundesarchiv Berlin, SAPMO-BArch DY27/2109, pp. 4-5 (here: p. 4).

84 Personal interview with Wenzel, 9 March 1994. Nothing about this conflict appeared in the Kulturbund report (see previous note).

85 See Robb, *Zwei Clowns*, pp. 88-90.

86 David Bathrick, 'Die Intellektuellen und die Macht. Die Repräsentanz des Schriftstellers in der DDR', in Sven Hanuschek, Therese Hörnigk and Christine Malende, eds, *Schriftsteller als Intellektuelle: Politik und Literatur im Kalten Krieg*, Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2000, p. 246.

87 See, for example: 'Das Programm [Komm rücken wir näher zusammen] wurde von einigen, wenigen, begeistert aufgenommen' (The programme [Come Let's Get Closer Together] was enthusiastically received by a few), BStU MfS XV/2522/78, p. 105; and: 'Solche Textzeilen [in der Hammer-Rehwü] wie "Wir wissen nur aus den Zeitungen, wie gut es uns geht" begrüßte das Publikum mit großem Beifall' (Such lines [in the Hammer-Revue] as 'We only know from the papers how well we are doing' were received by the audience with great applause), BVfS Cottbus AKG178, BStU, p. 13.

88 Bathrick, 'Die Intellektuellen und die Macht', p. 246.

89 Ibid., p. 248.

90 Heiner Müller, 'Jetzt ist da eine Einheitssoße. Der Dramatiker Heiner Müller über die Intellektuellen und den Untergang der DDR', in *Der Spiegel*, 30 July 1990. Quoted in Bathrick, 'Die Intellektuellen und die Macht', p. 240.

91 Hans-Eckardt Wenzel in interview with Jens Rosbach, Deutschland-Radio, 15 April 1998.

Stuart Parkes

Martin Walser's *Tod eines Kritikers*: A 'Crime' of Anti-Semitism?

Even before the publication of *Tod eines Kritikers*, Martin Walser found himself accused by the critic Frank Schirrmacher of having written an anti-Semitic attack on Marcel Reich-Ranicki. When the text became available, others followed suit and Walser's whole oeuvre was examined for the same 'crime'. Walser had many defenders and, on the basis of the opposing comments, it is impossible to reach a conclusion. An examination of the text is made difficult by the narrative structure. Although Schirrmacher's accusation appears dubious, the satirical attack on Reich-Ranicki and critics in general in the television age does not constitute one of Walser's best novels.

It is normally axiomatic that awareness that a crime has been committed rests on the existence of evidence of that fact. If one takes the example of what is generally seen as the most heinous of crimes, namely murder, it is usually the discovery of a body that will provide such evidence. If this principle is applied to a 'text crime', then one might assume that the very least that could be expected would be the existence of a text. This was hardly the case, not even for his journalist colleagues, not to mention the general public, when the head of the Feuilleton section of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Frank Schirrmacher, accused Walser of such a crime in the 29 May 2002 edition of his paper.[1] Walser had personally handed over to the newspaper an uncorrected copy of his *Tod eines Kritikers* manuscript in the hope and probably the expectation that, in keeping with a tradition going back a quarter of a century, it would serialise the work prior to or simultaneously with its publication in book form. The result of Schirrmacher's intervention was that the manuscript was quickly made available to other critics and that publication as a book for the general public occurred well before the planned August date.

When the novel became available, readers were presented with the story of how a writer, Hans Lach, following a condemnation of his latest work in a television show devoted to literature, threatens the show's all-powerful presenter, the star critic André Ehrl-König, at the party following its transmission, whereupon the critic disappears. It is assumed, on the basis of the threats he has uttered, that Lach, who is quickly taken into custody, has murdered him, with all traces of the deed

and the body having been covered by freshly fallen snow. In the event, the critic has run off for a few days with a young writer and duly reappears. What had provoked the wrath of Schirrmacher, and subsequently others, was the perceived closeness of the negatively portrayed critic to the doyen of German literary criticism, Marcel Reich-Ranicki. That Ehrl-König appeared to share the same Jewish background as the real-life model was enough for Schirrmacher to make the accusation that Walser's novel was anti-Semitic, or at least contained anti-Semitic elements.

To state his viewpoint, Schirrmacher used the form of the open letter, a genre that is always likely to titillate the reader, even those of self-proclaimed quality newspapers, since it panders to the human trait of inquisitiveness by appearing to give insight into private matters. Personal correspondence is traditionally based on the assumption of privacy; when letters were no longer opened and read by state officials, the privacy thus guaranteed was seen as a sign of increasing freedom in the country concerned. Even today's computer generated letters sent to thousands of recipients seek to create the illusion of private personal communication by using the name of each recipient at their head to imply that the proposition is directed solely at the individual named. In the case of Schirrmacher's letter, the sense of being a party to something personal is increased by the use of formulations that suggest, if not a friendship (the formal form of address is used), then at least something more than a distant relationship, since the supposed recipient is 'Lieber Herr Walser', a term repeated throughout the text, and the final greeting is the relatively informal 'Mit bestem Gruß'.

The textual crime of anti-Semitism of which Schirrmacher accused Walser was one that for obvious historical reasons is always taken particularly seriously in Germany. After having outlined the plot, he tells Walser that it is not acceptable for him to hide behind concepts such as fiction and literary perspective. Nor does it matter whether the book is good or bad. One might have thought that this was a major issue for a literary critic such as Schirrmacher. What counts apparently is that the book stems from hatred and that it is marked by anti-Semitic clichés. The logic of this is that, regardless of context, any expression in literature of anti-Semitism or any other distasteful ideology by any figure is unacceptable, again not the stance one might expect from a leading literary critic. There is also the question of whether good writing can stem from hatred – the example of Jonathan Swift may be pertinent in this context. Despite his assertions, Schirrmacher does at times use the

terminology of literary criticism, for instance when he accuses Walser of having created 'eine Art mechanisches Theater' (a kind of mechanical theatre) which makes it possible for him to savour the murder without committing it.

Two days after Schirrmacher's open letter, Walser found defenders in a rival quality newspaper, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, with Lothar Müller stating categorically that *Tod eines Kritikers* is not anti-Semitic.[2] At the same time, he does not consider it to be a great novel, a judgement shared by Thomas Steinfeld, who takes the opportunity to launch an attack on the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*: that newspaper had for years been praising Walser for his attacks on 'political correctness', but was now demanding it. Steinfeld also criticises the ethics of the paper's treatment of Walser's manuscript. Instead of maintaining the confidentiality implicit in the way Walser had personally handed it over, it had chosen to announce its rejection of it 'mit höchstem moralischen Pathos' (with the highest moral pathos) at a time when nobody else was in a position to say otherwise. For Steinfeld this amounts to a 'Versuch eines politischen Rufmordes' (an attempt at political character assassination).[3] Regardless of the merits of the arguments, this conflict between leading journalists of rival newspapers has to be seen in a wider context. At the personal level, it can be pointed out that Steinfeld had himself worked for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. More importantly, Schirrmacher launched his attack at a time when the printed press was losing readership on an unprecedented scale. Specifically, the Frankfurt-based newspaper had failed to establish itself in Berlin and thus assume a more national profile. In other words, the attack on Walser raises the suspicion that the paper was seeking to draw attention to itself in order to counter falling circulation.

Alongside these contrasting responses, others began to take sides. The other major Frankfurt newspaper, the generally left-leaning *Frankfurter Rundschau*, also condemned the novel, with Marius Meller speaking of 'ein geschmackloses und ein gefährliches Buch' (a tasteless and a dangerous book), thus providing a rare example of agreement between the two Frankfurt dailies.[4] By contrast, another left of centre newspaper, *die tageszeitung*, did not condemn the novel for any anti-Semitic content, although the reviewer Dirk Knapphals found it heavy because it lacked the lightening element of irony.[5] When it came to names, Walser was defended by Günter Grass[6] and the leading critic of an older generation, Joachim Kaiser.[7] In the slightly longer term, two of Walser's longstanding academic supporters, the Heidelberg professors

Dieter Borchmeyer[8] and Helmuth Kiesel, edited a book containing fifteen essays defending *Tod eines Krirkers*,[9] including two from outside Germany, one written by a victim of Nazi racial policy, the British academic Hans Reiss.[10] On the other side, at least by implication, was Jürgen Habermas. He took issue with those who claimed that Walser was performing a useful social service by questioning taboos. Writing, interestingly enough, in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, he speaks of sensitivity towards those who had previously suffered racial persecution as 'für die Wiederherstellung unserer Selbstachtung und eines zivilisierten Zusammenlebens unabdingbar' (essential for the restoration of our self-respect and civilised co-existence).[11] What is rare in all these early comments is to find fulsome praise of *Tod eines Kritikers* as literature. One example, however, is provided by Arno Widmann on the internet site *perlentaucher*. He speaks of its being one of Walser's best works and predicts that the coming summer season will provide nothing of the same level of wit.[12]

The above should have made clear that the initial debate did anything but create consensus in German literary circles. The troubled waters were stirred even more by the comments of the two major figures involved. As early as 30 May Reich-Ranicki was reported as saying that the novel was monstrous, a clear anti-Semitic outburst and, at the aesthetic level, that Walser had never written as badly.[13] A good month later, when being awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Munich, the critic used the occasion to return to the attack. He maintained the charge of anti-Semitism, before, in what can only be seen as a plea for sympathy, referring to his age, 82 at the time, and suggesting that, although Walser knows that he will not be active much longer, he is 'auf grausame Weise ungeduldig' (in a cruel way impatient).[14] Ironically, this topos of victimhood and what amounts to a kind of martyrdom is replicated in Walser's own comments in a series of interviews. In one with the Swiss magazine *Weltwoche*, for example, he presented himself as the victim of attacks by Reich-Ranicki over a period of thirty years, saying that he was forced to respond,[15] and adding with a kind of truculent defiance that he was glad to have written the book. Adopting a somewhat contrasting tone in an interview with the *tageszeitung* he said that he could only write out of love, although he accepted that between author and critic it is 'eine sehr vielstimmige, vielfältige, vielfarbige Liebe' (a multi-voiced, multi-faceted and multi-coloured love).[16] A year later he defended his portrayal of Reich-Ranicki by saying that his fictional figure was 'viel größer, komischer und liebenswürdiger' (much greater, funnier

and more lovable) than the model.[17] It is fair to conclude that neither of the two main protagonists' contributions added greatly to the debate. To paraphrase Clement Attlee, a period of silence on both their parts would have been welcome.

One other of Walser's early detractors deserves special mention. During his time as a student in Regensburg in the immediate post-war period, Walser made the acquaintance of an Austrian-born Auschwitz survivor, Ruth Klüger, with whom he remained in contact over the decades after she had left Germany for an academic career in the United States. In the English version of her memoirs she describes him as embodying typical German attitudes to the country and its past. According to Klüger he is the spokesman of a 'broad middle section' of Germans, who are not out and out xenophobes and anti-Semites, but at the same time are unwilling to shrug off the desire for some kind of patriotism.[18] The friendship continued until the appearance of *Tod eines Kritikers*, when Klüger, like Schirrmacher, used the genre of the open letter to launch a stinging attack on the novel. In this case the reader's feeling of being allowed into personal matters is increased by the use of the familiar 'du' form and by reference to a friendship extending to Walser's family. Her main criticism of the novel is that Walser chose to make the object of his satirical attack on a literary critic a Jew. The fact that Germany's most prominent literary critic is Jewish is an irrelevant coincidence, since 'der Zufall hat zwar einen Platz in der Wirklichkeit, aber nicht in der Literatur' (chance has, it is true, a place in reality, but not in literature).[19] Otherwise, she adds, literature would be superfluous. The result of Walser's conscious choice is that, as a Jew, she feels 'betroffen, gekränkt, beleidigt' (concerned, hurt, insulted) by the novel. Yet it can be argued that Walser had no choice but to include the Jewish issue, given the closeness of his fictional critic to Reich-Ranicki.

Klüger's view of literature as choice is too wide a subject for this essay. What can be said is that there are explanations, if not necessarily excuses, for Walser clearly basing his satirical portrayal of a critic on a real person. As Peter Michalzik points out in an early reaction to the novel, Walser has been writing romans à clef since the 1980s, beginning with *Brief an Lord Liszt* (*Letter to Lord Liszt*), which thematises the end of his own friendship with Uwe Johnson.[20] There are two other more important factors to consider. The first is the importance of German-Jewish relations in Walser's writing, particularly in the decade before the novel under consideration here. Of particular significance is the novel *ohne einander* (without one another) of 1993. In the first part of this work

a magazine journalist, Ellen Kern-Krenn, is more or less forced into writing a positive article about the film *Hitlerjunge Salomon* (a.k.a. *Europa Europa*). This is to 'balance' a negative article about *Bugsy Malone*, which otherwise might arouse 'den übelsten aller Verdächte' (the worst of all suspicions) against the proprietor, namely that of anti-Semitism.[21] Ellen only overcomes her distaste for her assignment and the subsequent writer's block with the aid of an odious colleague, who finally forces her into sex. This part of the novel can be read as an attack on the inability of German society, or specifically the media, to develop a balanced attitude to any issues relating to Jews. All that counts is avoiding the accusation of anti-Semitism. Fear of this accusation appears to lead to a false philo-Semitism, as suggested by the quotation of Karl Kraus's claim that philo-Semites are anti-Semites who have not yet realised that fact.[22]

Although this stance prefigures *Tod eines Kritikers*, it did not create any stir. Much more controversial was the autobiographical *Ein springender Brunnen* (A Gushing Fountain) of 1997, but this time for what it omitted. Walser was criticised by one of the critics on 'Das Literarische Quartett', the television literature programme presented by Reich-Ranicki, for not mentioning Auschwitz in his account of the early life of Johann (Walser's middle name) until 1945. He sought to answer these criticisms a year later in his speech on the award of the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade. He also talked generally about what he saw as the misuse of the German past in contemporary debate. On the first issue he stressed the aesthetic question of perspective; the novel had been written from the perspective of the protagonist at the time, who had not known about Auschwitz. He also advanced the dictum that perspective was the 'Urgesetz des Erzählens' (fundamental law of narrative).[23] At the political level, he spoke of instrumentalisation of the Nazi past for current purposes and, most controversially, admitted that, because of this misuse of the past, he was beginning to look away when film of Auschwitz was shown. The debate these remarks caused spawned a volume collecting many of the contributions to what came to be known as the Walser-Bubis debate. Ignatz Bubis, the head of the Jewish community in Germany at the time, had reacted angrily to the speech. Ironically, the volume was edited by Schirrmacher, who had delivered the laudation at the prize-giving ceremony.[24]

The question why Walser based his portrayal on a real person goes back much further than the decade preceding *Tod eines Kritikers*. It is the history of Walser's relationship with Reich-Ranicki, specifically his reactions to criticism of his work. Possibly unwisely, Walser has never

been able to let criticism pass over him, and this has inevitably led to verbal exchanges with critics. One of his early pieces, however, is not directly specifically at any one critic. Alongside the hope expressed in the title, 'Tagtraum, dass der Kritiker ein Schriftsteller sei' (Daydream that the Critic might be a Writer), he castigates critics for their impersonal language and the power they choose to exercise.[25] This essay provoked a response from Reich-Ranicki, who did not dispute much of Walser's analysis but said that the critic had to work in the manner described and accept the power he exercised.[26] In the case of Walser's 1974 novel *Jenseits der Liebe* (*Beyond all Love*), he used this power to castigate the work as 'ein belangloser, ein schlechter, ein miserabler Roman' (an insignificant, a bad, a wretched novel), of which it was not worth reading a single page.[27] It may be surmised that Reich-Ranicki, as a refugee from communism, was taking his best opportunity to damn a writer who had seemed close to leftist ideology in the early years of the decade: his review suggested that left-wing politics was a refuge for authors having difficulties with their writing. Walser felt obliged to reply in an essay entitled 'Über Päpste' (On Popes), although once again no single adversary is named. Here he spoke of the unique power exercised by critics, adding the aphorism 'Der Kritiker ist unkritisierbar' (The critic is beyond criticism).[28] Two decades later the tone became much more aggressive and personal, with Walser comparing Reich-Ranicki to a cat, which does not let its prey die but keeps it alive to have a victim for the next time. This comment provoked what might be called verbal head-shaking; the critic said he could not understand such a view.[29] It should be pointed out that Reich-Ranicki did at least once accord Walser fulsome praise, for the novella *Ein fliehendes Pferd* (*Runaway Horse*).[30] Nevertheless this does not alter the substance of the difference of outlook between the two men. Walser has never accepted the authority of the critic, as Reich-Ranicki perceives it. Indeed, in *Tod eines Kritikers*, there is the comment that the critic's praise is just as illegitimate as his condemnation, both being described as 'Anmassung' (presumption).[31]

Walser's difficult relations with critics in general and Reich-Ranicki in particular are not only reflected in non-fictional writing. In a satirical piece about the theatre from 1968 entitled 'Wir werden schon noch handeln' (We'll get round to the action soon), there is a critic called 'Bindestrich' (Hyphen), who demands a traditional form of theatre.[32] Even if Reich-Ranicki is not particularly known as a theatre critic, the name Walser gives to his critic clearly indicates whom he has in mind. Ehrl-König's immediate predecessor appears to be the critic Willi André

König in *ohne einander*. He works for the magazine, in the offices of which the first part of the novel is set. It is said of him that he is a 'ein begnadeter Selbstinszenierer, also prominent' (a brilliant self-publicist, hence a celebrity).[33] Moreover, he thinks German literature is boring. Whether or not he felt himself to have been attacked, Reich-Ranicki criticised the novel on television in terms which reflect his attitude to the genre of the novel, saying: 'Walser ist kein Erzähler, ich glaube es nicht. Er kann Romane ums Verrecken nicht schreiben' (Walser is not a storyteller, I don't believe he is. He cannot write novels to save his life).[34] It would be hard to be more explicit.

In any consideration of Walser's relationship with Reich-Ranicki, it is also worth pointing out that he is far from being the only person to have referred to the critic in his literary work. One such writer is Maxim Biller, who, despite the difference in age (Biller was born in 1960), has much in common with Reich-Ranicki. In addition to the shared Jewish background, as a native of Prague, he also came to the Federal Republic as a refugee from communism, albeit as a boy and as part of a family group. Biller's story 'Der perfekte Roman' (The perfect novel) centres on a writer named Josef Gehermann, who bears resemblance to Reich-Ranicki in terms of prominence and moral authority, and shares in part a similar biography. Like Reich-Ranicki, he, too, escaped death at the hands of the Nazis because he found shelter in a Gentile family. Initially, he is much disliked by the narrator, also a Jew, but finally a reconciliation takes place in Israel.[35] In the 2009 'self-portrait' *Der gebrauchte Jude* (The necessary [or: second-hand] Jew), there is direct reference to the role Reich-Ranicki has played in Biller's life. In her review, Viola Roggenkamp says the descriptions of meetings with the critic are among the most impressive parts of the autobiography. He is 'die vom Autor gesuchte Vaterfigur' (the father figure sought by the author), even though his criticism of Biller has often been harsh.[36]

Whereas Biller's references to Reich-Ranicki contain positive and negative elements, this is not the case with Peter Handke. As early in his career as 1968 he launched a particularly scathing attack on the critic's methods. He begins by saying that it is difficult not to write a satire about the work of the critic, although, unlike Walser, he has resisted the temptation and possibly saved himself from criticism on that score. Most of the essay is textual criticism with Handke accusing Reich-Ranicki of only using mechanical vocabulary that reflects the prejudices 'des ordentlichen Durchschnittslesers' (of the respectable average reader).[37] Only towards the end does the criticism become more personal, with

Reich-Ranicki being described as 'der unwichtigste, am wenigsten anregende, dabei am meisten selbstgerechte deutsche Literaturkritiker seit langem' (the most unimportant, least stimulating and yet most self-righteous German literary critic for a long time).[38] It should be pointed out in fairness to Reich-Ranicki that he included this attack as a counterbalance in his collection of negative reviews, *Lauter Verrisse* (Just brickbats). [39] Handke's 1968 condemnation makes no reference to personal background, which was not the case in 1980 when, in his autobiographical *Die Lehre der Sainte Victoire* (The lesson of Mont Sainte Victoire), Handke gave Reich-Ranicki the persona of a dog, whom the protagonist regards as his enemy. He considers this enemy and 'wie er in seiner von dem Ghetto vielleicht noch verstärkten Mordlust jedes Rassenmerkmal verlor und nur noch im Volk der Henker das Prachtexemplar war' (how he has lost any racial characteristic in his lust for murder which had perhaps been even more intensified by the ghetto and how he was now the prime specimen among none but the people of the executioners).[40] Both he and the dog wish to murder the other.

This is a very direct reference to Reich-Ranicki's background, like the reference Walser made in a 1998 interview when he assumed the status of a victim by suggesting that in the relationship between himself and the critic, he was the Jew: undoubtedly a dubious claim, given his pre-eminence as a writer, and moreover expressed in a tasteless manner, the only saving grace being that at least he was seeing Jews in general as victims rather than perpetrators.[41] That Handke's horrific murder fantasy was not widely criticised at the time does not excuse Walser, if he, as Schirrmacher claims, indulges in a similar fantasy in his 2002 novel. However, the differing reactions have to do with changed attitudes, which are worth pursuing.

The years following German unification were marked by the questioning of the two groups most associated with the intellectual climate of the pre-unification Federal Republic: the writers associated with Gruppe 47, and the generation of the student movement. In both cases, the charge of anti-Semitism was levelled, on occasion on flimsy evidence, for example in the case of Günter Grass.[42] As for the debate surrounding Walser's novel, it was unfortunate that it should more or less coincide with another controversy surrounding the FDP politician and chair of the German-Arab Society, Jürgen Möllemann. He had accused both the Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon and, at the local level, the lawyer and talk show host Michel Friedman, who was vice-president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, of fomenting anti-

Semitism by their conduct. This monstrous comment did turn victims into perpetrators and rightly caused a stir that put anti-Semitism at the centre of public discussion. But for the atmosphere this created at that particular moment, Peter Michalzik suggests, Walser's novel would have escaped censure.[43] Instead, all his work was closely examined for anti-Semitism, specifically in the subsequently published doctoral dissertation of Mathias N. Lorenz.[44] As for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the suspicion that it had deliberately created a sensation for the purpose of trying to sell more copies was reinforced by the way it had rehabilitated Walser by 2006, with his novel *Angstblüte* (Blossom of Fear) receiving a very favourable review from Felicitas von Lovenberg.[45] Moreover in the following year the same journalist published a fulsome tribute to mark Walser's eightieth birthday.[46] By then Günter Grass was in the paper's firing line over his youthful Waffen SS membership.

At the beginning of a trial, at least in Britain, the judge sometimes instructs the jury to forget what they may have read in the newspapers and heard from other sources and to begin with an open mind. Given the plethora of voices expressing differing views, this would now seem the best way of proceeding when it comes to looking at the text itself of *Tod eines Kritikers*. It does take up some of the themes already referred to, chiefly in an attack on the power of the critic, particularly in the television age. The key episode in the novel is undoubtedly the panning of Hans Lach's novel in the television show about literature entitled 'Sprechstunde', in his description of which Walser is clearly satirising 'Das Literarische Quartett'. Walser's show begins with the critic André Ehrl-König taking his seat enthroned above four plinths in the form of books, the titles of which are masterpieces of German literature, including Goethe's *Faust*. The critic's superior position arguably reflects Walser's claim made in 1998 that Reich-Ranicki wished to replace literature by criticism, a remark the critic himself, no doubt mistakenly, took to be a joke.[47] It may also reflect the accolade first given to Reich-Ranicki by *Der Spiegel* in 1993: 'Der Herr der Bücher' (The lord of the books).[48] This sobriquet has since established itself, for instance in the title of a television programme marking his eighty-fifth birthday. The fictional critic's name can be related to this Tolkienesque topos; as Goethe's 'Erlkönig' ballad ends with the death of the child in its father's arms, the critic Ehrl-König's embrace of books may end in their death, particularly if a specific work is panned.

This destructive act is an essential part of the show. In each programme one book is chosen for praise, another for condemnation.

This reflects the either/or motif found in the novel, where Ehrl-König supposedly introduced this kind of approach, which simply categorises a book as good or bad, into criticism (*TK*, p. 40). This can certainly be linked with Reich-Ranicki and his reactions to Walser. After his exaggerated condemnation of *Jenseits der Liebe*, his praise of *Ein fliehendes Pferd*, referred to above, arguably went too far in the other direction. In the case of the programme described in *Tod eines Kritikers*, the book chosen for praise is by Philip Roth, which can be explained by Reich-Ranicki having compared Walser's 2001 novel *Der Lebenslauf der Liebe* (The c.v. of love) unfavourably with the work of the American author.[49] It is also no coincidence that the book to be criticised is by a German author. In the show Ehrl-König stresses what a burden it is to have to devote his life to contemporary German literature. This comment, which reflects a debate at the turn of the millennium about the ponderous nature of German literature, cannot be linked solely with Reich-Ranicki. However, his comment about Hans Lach, that he lacks the ability to narrate, can, given his criticism of Walser in relation to *ohne einander* mentioned earlier, be related directly to him (*TK*, p. 41). What is more, this is a criticism he has constantly levelled at others. His review of Handke's *Wunschloses Unglück* (*A Sorrow Beyond Dreams*), for example, concludes with a plea, made, it would seem, more in sorrow than in anger, that this talented writer should narrate the story without inhibition: 'Wenn er nur seine ästhetischen Gewissensbisse und seine vielen theoretischen Hemmungen überwinden wollte und unverkrampft und natürlich erzählen könnte' (If he were only willing to overcome his aesthetic pangs of conscience and his many theoretical inhibitions and could narrate in a relaxed, natural manner).[50] As such comments imply, Reich-Ranicki's preference is for work in the tradition of the classic nineteenth-century novel. It is also no coincidence that Ehrl-König laments that Lach's novel lacks any erotic content (*TK*, p. 38). One famous event in the history of the 'Literarisches Quartett' was a spat between Reich-Ranicki and one of the regular critics on the programme, Sigrid Löffler, whom he accused of having no appreciation of erotic literature. This was to be Löffler's last appearance.

Walser also makes much of the slight mispronunciations in Ehrl-König's speech. In that Reich-Ranicki's pronunciation is not quite that of the native speaker, the connection is obvious. What is incorrect is Schirrmacher's claim that Walser's critic is like a Yiddish speaker. In fact, the novel speaks of Ehrl-König having been trained to make mispronunciations, as these easily imitated linguistic idiosyncrasies add to

his popularity (*TK*, p. 110). The depiction of the fictional 'Sprechstunde', then, clearly links Walser's fictional critic with Reich-Ranicki. Elsewhere in the novel, too, the connection appears clear. It is said of Ehrl-König, for instance, in a Biblical manner somewhat reminiscent of the first chapter of St John's gospel, that 'Er war die Macht, und die Macht war er' (he was the power, and the power was he) (*TK*, p. 75). At the same point, he is also compared with the light: the light of the Enlightenment. This seems to reflect Reich-Ranicki's stated preference for 'der Aufklärung verbundene [Literatur]' (literature connected to the Enlightenment), [51] and others' view of him in the tradition of the Enlightenment, for example the critic Ulrich Greiner in an encomium for his sixty-fifth birthday.[52] As for Walser, his belief that what is often called the Enlightenment Project has been realised is clear from his 1990s radio debates with Günter Grass, who has consistently proclaimed Enlightenment ideals. [53] Equally significant is the reference to Ehrl-König's list of great writers, which clearly suggests Reich-Ranicki's 'canon' (*TK*, p. 61). Since 2002 he has published five collections of texts presented as the canon of German literature in the areas of essay, novel, short prose, poetry and drama.

In other respects, however, Ehrl-König is not based on Reich-Ranicki. That he wears a trademark yellow pullover would seem, for example, to evoke the former foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Moreover, Walser's attack on the practices of critics in the television age goes beyond one particular individual and his critical methods. Towards the end of the novel the now liberated Lach evokes a horror vision from 2084, a year obviously not chosen by chance. Not only has literature been replaced by criticism, something which can be seen as stemming from shows like 'Sprechstunde' or 'Das Literarische Quartett', but also procreation through sex by a 'Substanz-Bank' which collects sperm and egg cells (*TK*, p. 204).

Before considering the figure of Ehrl-König any further, it is important to bear in mind the structure of the novel. Its initial narrator Michael Landolf is in Amsterdam when he discovers, firstly from the Dutch press and then in more detail from, ironically enough, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, that Lach has been arrested on suspicion of murder. He at once returns to Munich and seeks to find out from others and from Lach himself what has happened. Since Lach remains largely silent, it is only from other members of literary society that he gains information about the events leading to the disappearance and presumed

murder of Ehrl-König. Inevitably, the people Landolf talks to express their opinion about the critic.

This narrative structure has a number of consequences. Firstly, Ehrl-König never appears in the foreground of the novel. Secondly, almost all that is disclosed about him comes from the perspective of others, most of whom have an axe to grind. This is compounded by the apparent reluctance of the man himself to talk about his background, something that differentiates him from Reich-Ranicki. Reliable information is therefore scarce. Even the description of the television show, of which Landolf has acquired recordings and where a certain degree of objectivity might be possible, is filtered in part through the perceptions of one of Landolf's interlocutors, Professor Silberfuchs, rather than based solely on the evidence of the cassette. Almost the only references to Ehrl-König that can be regarded as objective fact are the news that he has returned from his sojourn with his young lover and, at the end of the novel, that he has been knighted by the British crown (*TK*, p. 216). Here one might speculate that Walser was thinking of the honours bestowed on the sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf, who spent much of his academic career at British universities. It is certainly hard to believe that the British crown might honour a German writer, let alone a critic.

The belief that Walser had certain individuals in mind when creating Landolf's interlocutors also formed part of the early reception of *Tod eines Kritikers*. The publisher Pilgrim was taken to be based on the head of the Suhrkamp publishing house, Walser's publisher at the time, Siegfried Unseld. Logically enough, on the surface, Pilgrim's wife Julia Pelz was regarded as being based on Unseld's, the writer Ulla Berkewicz. Given her Jewish background, this again potentially raised the issue of anti-Semitism. Walser's Pelz takes an interest in esoterics and worships the god Saturn. In this case, Walser denied that she was based on any individual and implied that the titles he had imagined for her three volumes of poetry and the wallpaper he had imagined for her room were enough to provoke envy.[54]

What is beyond dispute is that the narrative situation gives Walser another string to his bow. His intention is not only to question the world of literary criticism but also to satirise the literary circles he himself has moved and no doubt continues to move in. This again has a long tradition in his writing, going back at least to *Das Einhorn* (*The Unicorn*) of 1966. In this novel, the writer Karsch is immediately recognisable as being based on Uwe Johnson, because he shares his name with one of Johnson's characters and because of his GDR background, whilst the

entrepreneur Blomich with his tortoise-like looks and problems with young women would appear, somewhat cruelly, to be based on Max Frisch. In *Tod eines Kritikers*, one of Landolf's major sources is the above-mentioned Silberfuchs, a member of the Munich intellectual set and thus well acquainted with Ehrl-König. Nevertheless, the two men spent three years at odds after the critic took offence over a chance remark which offended his dignity. Silberfuchs only regained favour when he offered Ehrl-König's wife, a cigarillo smoker, a wonderful brand from Jamaica. Another source for Landolf is Rainer Heiner Henkel, who is accompanied everywhere by his sister Ilse-Frauke von Ziethen: the couple have been regarded as based on the media-friendly academic and critic Walter Jens and his wife Inge. Henkel is the person who launched Ehrl-König, but now they are at daggers drawn. When the two meet with Landolf, Henkel claims to have taught Ehrl-König most of the techniques he uses on his television show. He, together with his sister, also supplies often misleading gossip, for example the claim that Ehrl-König likes to sleep with young women in the early months of pregnancy (*TK*, p. 115). It also appears, this time the source is Silberfuchs, that Henkel has spread all kinds of contradictory rumours about Ehrl-König. For example his place of birth is claimed by four cities, but he himself keeps silent about it. However, some of these many rumours are said to contain more than a grain of truth (*TK*, p. 101).

Clearly, it is difficult within the novel for Landolf to discover what is fact and what is legend about the person of Ehrl-König. It goes without saying that it is equally difficult for the reader to determine Walser's attitudes, particularly when it comes to the vexed question of anti-Semitism. Whether Ehrl-König is really Jewish is one of the questions that is never fully resolved. There are in fact very few references to his background, although the first, right at the beginning of the book, clearly introduces the issue. Landolf reads in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* report that, at the post-show party, Lach had threatened Ehrl-König with a variation of the mendacious claim at the outbreak of war with Poland in 1939 that Germany was retaliating to a Polish attack, shouting: 'Ab heute Nacht Null Uhr wird zurückgeschlagen' (From tonight at 2400 hours we fight back) (*TK*, p. 10). This had provoked horror among those who heard it because it was generally known that the critic had Jewish forbears, some of whom had been victims of the Holocaust. Later it is not clear whether Lach did say this; at least Silberfuchs does not remember hearing it (*TK*, p. 48). Nevertheless, Schirrmacher objects strongly to this part of the novel, pointing out that Reich-Ranicki was the

only Holocaust survivor in his family. The issue is therefore how far Walser should have respected the biography of the person on whom his fictional character is based but with whom he is not entirely identical.

A second, most important reference relates to the public reaction when Lach suddenly confesses to murdering Ehrl-König. The press initially praises the fearless critic, who was without equal in the history of literature. Then attention turns to the Jewish question with all doubts about his background being swept aside. Only one journalist goes against this development, a certain Wolfgang Leder who suggests that those who regard the murder of a Jew as something morally worse than any other murder were themselves anti-Semitic. He bases this on a slight variation of Karl Kraus's claim, referred to above in connection with *ohne einander*, that philo-Semites were really anti-Semites, although this time the source is not quoted. Leder speaks of philo-Semites as being 'Antisemiten, die die Juden liebten' (anti-Semites who loved the Jews) (*TK*, p. 144). When others reject this because of the German context, he points out that this would be the case if the murder had had racial motives and if it had been certain that Ehrl-König was a Jew. Given the near repetition of Kraus's aphorism, one can assume that Leder's comments reflect Walser's own view. Again this is not accepted by Schirrmacher, who speaks of the murder of a Jew, seeing no difference between such an event and the suspected murder of an alleged Jew. Ironically, the vociferous reaction in the novel to Ehrl-König's death prefigures what happened in reality when it was published. How far Walser expected such a reaction is impossible to say, although it is unlikely that he anticipated the extent of the uproar.

To come to conclusions about Walser's portrayal of Ehrl-König, it is clearly necessary to go beyond the few direct references to his background and look at what else is revealed about him. Reference has already been made to his sexual habits, a topic that takes up a considerable amount of space. It is said, for instance, that he has ejaculation problems so that he is unable to satisfy his partners (*TK*, p. 173). Much is also made of his physical features. A writer, Bernt Streiff, describes him as a Michelin man, although, according to Landolf, this description would apply to Streiff himself. Lach is fascinated by his mouth, which in his view is made to pass judgements, something he apparently admires (*TK*, p. 147). At all events this must be viewed as a subjective judgement. Arguably more reliable are comments made about Ehrl-König's hair. Although he is now bald, he is said to have had long

hair, which he tied behind his neck, until the age of sixty, something which certainly does not apply to Reich-Ranicki (*TK*, p. 107).

Walser's characterisation of Ehrl-König goes beyond references to mere physical features. By implication he is compared with Zeus through a reference to his thunderbolts (*TK*, p. 52) and the way he bends his head like a bull (*TK*, p. 49). On one occasion he was supposedly compared with Christ, a remark he chose to take seriously (*TK*, p. 40). Other comparisons, in relation to his sexual appetite, are with Charlie Chaplin, John F. Kennedy and Franz Josef Strauß (*TK*, p. 112), something which, in one interview, Walser regards as flattering.[55] Ehrl-König's charisma is also such that Lach's wife, despite all the criticisms he has had to endure over the years, never misses an episode. The communication between them is then said to be more intense even than when they are having sexual intercourse (*TK*, p. 53). Lach, too, has craved the critic's attention, hoping that one day one of his works would be chosen to be reviewed favourably.

It is fair to say that Walser has made Ehrl-König a larger than life figure in the tradition of the super-capitalist Krott in his early play *Überlebensgroß Herr Krott* (Larger than life Mr Krott). A text written by Streiff and included in the novel, as are many other examples of the characters' writing, seems to be of particular significance. It is a premature obituary of Ehrl-König, comparing him with a Disney figure and a super-clown (Großkasper) (*TK*, p. 88). This echoes lines Walser wrote for Reich-Ranicki's sixty-fifth birthday, beginning 'Clowns sind wir / der Zirkus heißt Kultur' (We are clowns / the circus's name is culture) in a reference to their related roles in German literary life.[56] The same idea of Reich-Ranicki as a clown is found in the *Der Spiegel* article about the 'lord of the books' referred to earlier: writer and critic Reinhard Baumgart refers to him as a 'Mischung aus Staatsanwalt und Clown' (mixture between a state prosecutor and a clown).[57]

Whether such portrayals, fictional or otherwise, amount to a eulogy or condemnation is difficult to decide. In the case of *Tod eines Kritikers*, the portrayal of the critic is clearly made up of host of characteristics, many of which but not all are decidedly negative. Not all of them relate to Reich-Ranicki, although he is clearly the model for the fictional Ehrl-König. Moreover, given the unreliability, as outlined above, of much that is said, it is impossible to conclude that Walser has indulged in an anti-Semitic rant. His aim is rather to show how German society is not at ease with itself in any question relating to Jews. The element of unreliability is increased towards the end of the novel when, after the return unharmed

of the critic, it is revealed that the narrator Landolf is in fact none other than Lach himself. The many unreliable witnesses are complemented by an unreliable narrator. This adds to the sense of farce created by names such as Hans Lach and the title of his panned book, *Mädchen ohne Zehennägel* (Girls without toe nails), not to mention the clown-like elements in the portrayal of Ehrl-König.

None of this excludes the possibility that a 'text crime' has been committed, though perhaps a different one from that of which Walser was accused by Schirrmacher. It would be possible to speak of an aesthetic crime using as evidence, for example, the contrived trick by which Landolf becomes Lach. Once Ehrl-König returns, in fact, the novel runs out of steam. Little is added in relation to the main theme of the novel by the account in its final part of Lach taking off to the Canaries with Julia Pelz. The figure of Mani-Mani, a totally unsuccessful writer outside the mainstream who commits suicide, is based on the dated idea of the writer isolated in a garret, a topos present in Walser's very first novel *Ehen in Philippsburg*. In short, *Tod eines Kritikers* does not rank amongst Walser's greatest works. It seems to reflect an obsession with criticism or one critic in particular of the kind that spawns youthful satire inspired by a teacher or lecturer of strong character.

Nevertheless, in this particular case the aesthetic weaknesses of the work in question may not be the major issue. However overstated the criticism of Walser was, he does appear to have taken it to heart in that he has since modified certain positions. Writing about the letters written to a victim of Nazi racial persecution, he suggested that the book in question should be used in schools, thus according a place to public memory in relation to the Nazi past.[58] As for the much criticised Holocaust Memorial, on its opening, he had nothing but praise, describing its creator Peter Eisenman as a genius.[59] At the same time, the issue of anti-Semitism continues to haunt German society. In April 2012 Günter Grass published his poem 'Was gesagt werden muss' (What needs to be said), attacking Israel's alleged plan to strike at Iran before that country could produce nuclear weapons, and German complicity with that plan. Once again a great controversy arose, with Grass being accused of anti-Semitism.[60] To discuss this fully would require another essay. Suffice it to say that the allegation of anti-Semitism and that of 'text crime' continue to be closely connected in Germany and are likely to remain so.

Notes

1 Frank Schirrmacher, 'Lieber Martin Walser, Ihr Buch werden wir nicht drucken', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 29 May 2002.

2 Lothar Müller, 'Der Feind in meinem Buch', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 31 May 2002.

3 Thomas Steinfeld, 'Die Rache ist mein, spricht der Autor', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 31 May 2002.

4 Marius Meller, 'Tod eines Autors', *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 31 May 2002.

5 Dirk Knapphals, 'Das große Abräumwerk', *die tageszeitung*, 1 June 2002.

6 Grass defended his colleague during the ARD television programme 'Boulevard Bio' of 4 June 2002.

7 Joachim Kaiser, 'Walsers Skandalon', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 5 June 2002.

8 Borchmeyer had already leapt to Walser's defence over earlier controversies in book form: Dieter Borchmeyer *Martin Walser und die Öffentlichkeit,* Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2001.

9 Dieter Borchmeyer and Helmuth Kiesel, eds, *Der Ernstfall. Martin Walsers "Tod eines Kritikers"*, Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 2003. Kiesel edited the 1997 collection of the author's works.

10 Reiss's essay: '„demonstrieren was Gerüchte sind...". Überlegungen eines Emigranten zu Martin Walsers Tod eines Kritikers', in Borchmeyer and Kiesel, pp. 261-74.

11 Jürgen Habermas, 'Tabuschranken', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 7 June, 2002.

12 Arno Widmann, 'Vom Nachttisch geräumt' Vögel, die zuhören', www.perlentaucher.de/artikel/418html (accessed 15 June 2002).

13 Reich-Ranicki's damning comments are reported in Joachim Güntner, 'Unter Anklage. Antisemitismus-Vorwürfe gegen Martin Walser', *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 30 May 2002.

14 Marcel Reich-Ranicki, 'Was ich empfinde', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 159, 12 July 2002.

15 Martin Walser, 'Der Pegel schwoll und schwoll', *Die Weltwoche*, 5 June 2002.

16 Martin Walser, 'Ich bin kein Möllemann', *die tageszeitung*, 30 May 2002.

17 Christina Prüver, 'Interview mit Martin Walser am 15.07.2003, Nussdorf/Bodensee', in: Matthias N. Lorenz, *'Auschwitz drängt uns auf einen Fleck'. Judendarstellung und Auschwitzdiskurs bei Martin Walser*, Stuttgart, Weimar: J.B. Metzler, 2005, pp. 495-503 (here p. 497).

18 Ruth Kluger (sic), *Landscapes of Memory*, London: Bloomsbury, 2004, p. 207.

19 Ruth Klüger, '"Siehe doch Deutschland". Martin Walsers "Tod eines Kritikers"', *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 27 June 2002.

20 Peter Michalzik, 'Dampf aus einem alten Kessel', *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 31 May 2002.

21 Martin Walser, *Ohne einander*, Frankfurt/Main. : Suhrkamp, 1993, p. 12. In the film, Malone claims to be Jewish. A real Jewish gangster of the era, Benjamin Siegel (1906-1947), had the same sobriquet.

22 Ibid., p. 59.

23 Martin Walser, 'Erfahrungen beim Verfassen einer Sonntagsrede', in: Frank Schirrmacher ed., *Die Walser-Bubis-Debatte*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1999, pp. 7-17 (here p. 12).

24 Ibid.

25 Martin Walser, 'Tagtraum, dass der Kritiker ein Schriftsteller sei', in: Peter Hamm, ed., *Kritik, für wen, von wem, wie* Munich: Hanser, 1968, pp. 11-14.

26 Marcel Reich-Ranicki, 'Ein bisschen Amtsarzt, ein bisschen Moses', *Die Zeit*, 29 January 1965.

27 Marcel Reich-Ranicki, 'Sein Tiefpunkt', in: Reich-Ranicki, *Entgegnung: zur deutschen Literatur der siebziger Jahre*, Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1981, pp. 145-89 (here p. 175).

28 Martin Walser, 'Über Päpste', in: Walser, *Wer ist ein Schriftsteller?*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1979, pp. 47-54 (here p. 48).

29 See Marcel Reich-Ranicki, *Martin Walser: Aufsätze*, Zürich: Ammann Verlag, 1994, p. 147.

30 Marcel Reich-Ranicki, 'Sein Glanzstück', in: Reich-Ranicki, *Entgegnung*, pp. 179-82.

31 Martin Walser, *Tod eines Kritikers* Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2002, p. 51 (further references to this text under *TK* + page number).

32 Martin Walser, 'Wir werden schon noch handeln. Dialoge über das Theater', *Akzente*, 15:6 (1968), 511-44.

33 Martin Walser, *Ohne einander*, p. 15.

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35 Maxim Biller, 'Der perfekte Roman', in: *Der perfekte Roman*, Munich: DTV, 2003.

36 Viola Roggenkamp, 'Wir sind eine kleine Familie, vergiss das nicht', *FrankfurterAllgemeine Zeitung*, 28 November 2009.

37 Peter Handke, 'Marcel Reich-Ranicki und die Natürlichkeit', in: Handke, *Ich bin ein Bewohner des Elfenbeinturms*, Frankfurt/Main.: Suhrkamp, 1972, pp. 203-7 (here p. 206).

38 Ibid.

39 Marcel Reich-Ranicki, *Lauter Verrisse*, Munich: Piper 1970.

40 Peter Handke, *Die Lehre der Sainte Victoire*, Frankfurt/Main.: Suhrkamp, 1980, p. 58.

41 Martin Walser, 'Gespräch mit Willi Winkler', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 19/20 September 1998.

42 For a defence of Grass see the essay by Julian Preece: 'Bemerkungen zum Jüdischen im Werk und Denken von Günter Grass. Eine Antwort auf Gilad Margalit', in: Norbert Honsza and Irena Swiatlowska, eds, *Günter Grass. Bürger und Schriftsteller*, Wroclaw/Dresden: Neisse, 2008, pp. 153-70.

43 Ruth Klüger, '"Siehe doch Deutschland". Martin Walsers "Tod eines Kritikers"', *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 27 June 2002.

44 Martin Walser, 'Ich bin kein Möllemann', *die tageszeitung*, 30 May 2002.

45 Felicitas von Lovenberg, 'Fegefeuer der Leidenschaften', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 22 July, 2006.

46 Felicitas von Lovenberg, 'Der Schwimmer vom Bodensee', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 24 March 2007.

47 See Gustav Seibt, 'In Erlkönigs Armen sterben', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 31 May 2002.

48 The front cover of the *Der Spiegel* edition in question (no. 40, 4 October 1993) is entitled 'Der Verreisser' and shows Reich-Ranicki as a dog tearing up a book. The title story, 'Der Herr der Bücher', is on pp. 269-279.

49 Martin Walser, 'Gespräch mit Willi Winkler', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 19/20 September 1998.

50 Marcel Reich-Ranicki, 'Die Angst des Dichters beim Erzählen', in: Reich-Ranicki, *Entgegnung* (see note 26), pp. 389-96 (here p. 396).

51 Reich-Ranicki, quoted in 'Der Herr der Bücher', p. 275.

52 Ulrich Greiner, 'Marcel Reich-Ranicki. Zum 65. Geburtstag', *Die Zeit* 31 May 1985.

53 These debates held in 1994 and 1998 were published as cassettes under the titles: Günter Grass, Martin Walser, *Ein Gespräch über Deutschland* and *Zweites Gespräch über Deutschland* in 1995 and 1999 by Edition Isele, Eggingen.

54 Christina Prüver, 'Interview', p. 497.

55 Ibid.

56 Quoted in Jörg Magenau, *Martin Walser. Eine Biographie*, Reinbek: Rowohlt, 2005, p. 356.

57 'Der Herr der Bücher', p. 275.

58 Martin Walser, 'Ums Leben schreiben', in: Walser, *Die Verwaltung des Nichts* Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2004, pp.231-243. The volume in question is Martin Doerry, *"Mein verwundetes Herz". Das Leben der Lilli Jahn 1900-1944* Stuttgart, Munich: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt 2002.

59 See, for example, the article by Claudia Keller, 'Eisenman ist ein Genie', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 10 May 2006.

60 An example of such a criticism is Henryk M. Broder's article 'Günter Grass – Nicht ganz dicht, aber ein Dichter', *Die Welt*, 4 April 2012, at: www.welt.de/kultur/literarischewelt/article106152894/G (accessed 22 October 2012). This article quotes substantially from the poem itself.

Karoline von Oppen

Justice for Peter Handke?

This chapter re-examines the controversy surrounding the travelogue written by the Austrian writer Peter Handke about his journey through Serbia, published initially in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in January 1996. It argues that the text has been consistently misread by critics who judged Handke to be defending the massacre of Bosnian Muslims. This reading argues that it is important to recontextualise Handke's text as a contribution to a very specific debate taking place in Germany in the mid-1990s.

In early 2006 the decision to award the Heinrich Heine Prize to Peter Handke caused a political outcry. Politicians had not forgiven the Austrian for demanding justice for Serbia after the Bosnian War, and called for the jury to withhold the prize. It was, they claimed, unacceptable to give the prize to a writer who had supported a dictator, Slobodan Milosevic, and his violent regime. The Heine Prize scandal promised to become another German literary debate until Handke intervened and rejected the prize. Clearly, critics had not forgotten Handke's original publication, 'Gerechtigkeit für Serbien: Eine winterliche Reise zu den Flüssen Donau, Save, Morawa und Drina',[1] while the writer had not helped his own cause by giving an ambiguous speech at Milosevic's funeral.[2] Yet the anger on both sides is difficult to understand so many years after the Bosnian War. It is thus perhaps fruitful to return to the text that first voiced Handke's obdurate and polemical defence of Serbia. This reading will look at Handke's text within the context of debates of 1995, and pinpoint the main arguments originally made by the Austrian traveller. Today, he stands accused of being an apologist for a fascist regime, but what Handke may have intended was a critique of Germany and Austria's amnesia vis-à-vis events in Yugoslavia during the Second World War. His text is undoubtedly deliberately ambiguous in places, but I argue that his key point is not that the past suffering of the Serbs needs to be remembered by the victims, but that it should not be forgotten by its perpetrators.

Recent scholarly studies have been kinder to Handke, accepting that his critique of the media coverage of the Bosnian War was correct, if overstated or deliberately formulated in a provocative fashion. In 1996 critics had rather viciously dismissed Handke's account, making it most

clear that he for one was not considered a reliable witness of this war. Some even accused him of defending war criminals. His account was dismissed as Serb propaganda, and its author condemned as an apologist of the genocide against Bosnian Muslims. Tempers were running high in early 1996 when the travelogue was published. The Bosnian War had just ended with the signing of the bitterly contested Dayton Agreement. Germans had spent 1995, a year of significant anniversaries, renegotiating their own policies on military intervention. It is probably significant that Handke's travelogue was one of the first literary responses to the war in Bosnia, which had received extensive journalistic coverage in the German press. Indeed, Christoph Deupmann has described the reception as a 'Stellvertreterdebatte' (proxy debate), replacing a debate on the war itself.[3] This, according to Deupmann, turned what should have been a political debate into a literary one. This chapter re-examines the facts and the arguments for and against Handke, seeking to explain Handke's text and the controversy it caused.

From the outset Handke seemed to be deliberately provocative. Clearly, the title 'Gerechtigkeit für Serbien' irritated critics, suggesting as it did that Serbia had somehow been unfairly treated.[4] Calling for 'Justice for Serbia' so publicly in a broadsheet newspaper seemed to evoke the public intervention by Emile Zola in the Dreyfus Affair, a reference that Handke rejected, but in doing so brought the comparison to mind: 'Wohlgemerkt: hier geht es ganz und gar nicht um ein "Ich klage an". Es drängt mich nur nach Gerechtigkeit' (GS 124) (Note that this is absolutely not a case of "J'accuse." I feel compelled only to justice [JR 76]). In any case, the title implied that the public sphere was anti-Serb, and that only Handke was prepared to stand up for justice. This would rightly annoy war reporters who had risked their lives for many years reporting from the battlefields of Bosnia. Moreover, Handke attacks the coverage of the Bosnian war, accusing reporters of being blindly anti-Serb. He names individuals and publications, citing pedantically from articles that he considers to have crossed the line. Notably, he also names those he considers to have represented the war fairly, and here does not distinguish between fact and fiction, citing Emir Kustrica's feature film *Underground* as well as the writing of Patrick Besson.[5] This too would have irritated journalists whose focus on objectivity and facts shapes their professional identity. Here, the provocation of naming a feature film as a source on the war overshadowed the point Handke was making: he reserves praise for those who regard the Nazi occupation of Yugoslavia as vital to understanding the contemporary conflict.[6] As this

chapter will show, memories of the Second World War are fundamental for Handke, and vital in deciphering the text and his itinerary.

The composition of the text itself is peculiar, consisting of a prologue and epilogue which reflect on the context of the Bosnian War, and a central travelogue giving a poetic account of a journey through Serbia. This genre shift irritated both literary critics and reporters, who forgot that travel writing is often characterised by precisely 'its intermediary status between subjective inquiry and objective documentation.'[7] As all literary critics should have known, it is the nature of the travelogue to veer between truth and lies, autobiography and ethnography. It seems pointless to accuse Handke of this crime when the tension is inherent to every travelogue, even one published over eight full newspaper pages over two weekends in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Had the travelogue appeared in a literary journal it might have caused no scandal, but its very prominent and influential place of publication forced critics to react. Its coming after five years of fact-driven war reporting from the region also contributed to the negative response. Even the layout of the story in the paper, illustrated with stills from the film *Underground*, teasingly questioned the boundaries between fact and fiction.

The Handke debate has been discussed at length in various publications, and has recently even been the subject of a study devoted entirely to the reception of the Serbia travelogue.[8] Consequently, it is only necessary to illuminate some key position-takings here to understand the accusations directed against the writer. Quite simply, Handke had supported the wrong side, travelling to Serbia not Bosnia, and refusing to condemn the Serbs as a perpetrator nation. This, his critics concluded, was a sign of moral failure.[9] The more literary-minded did of course note that Handke had written a literary text, which could not be measured by the norms of conventional war reporting. These critics claimed that he had betrayed literature by straying into the terrain of the conventional political polemic.

The first reviews stemmed mostly from war reporters and writers who had written about the war themselves, and had been directly or indirectly criticised by Handke. Inevitably, they responded to his attacks on their authority by contrasting Handke's poetic methods with their own journalistic and therefore supposedly objective writing. In tones evoking a courtroom prosecutor, Detlef Kleinert, correspondent for the public service broadcaster ARD, opened proceedings on behalf of foreign reporters:

> Wir, die Auslandsreporterhorde […], wir haben es uns nicht so einfach gemacht, mit wohlfeilen Vorurteilen den komplizierten Konflikt abzufeiern, wir konnten und durften weder poetisch noch nebulös sein. Aber dafür stimmten bei uns – fast immer – die Fakten.[10]
>
> (We, the horde of foreign correspondents […], we didn't make it easy for ourselves by dismissing this complex conflict with cheap prejudices. We were neither able nor permitted to be poetic and vague. But we were almost always right about the facts.)

In another early review, the writer Peter Schneider, who had been personally named and shamed by Handke, also noted the absence of facts in Handke's text: 'In weiten Stellen dieses Textes liest man nichts als Meinung' (For long stretches of this text we read nothing but opinion).[11] These first reviews are interesting because they were written by individuals familiar with the region, and their accusations tended to be quite specific. For instance, Schneider, often one of Handke's sharpest critics, was actually sympathetic to some of Handke's arguments. He disagreed with Handke's critique of reporting, rejecting the notion that there had been an anti-Serb bias in the press, but agreed that Serbs had been unfairly treated in Croatia. Moreover, he recognised that this was unacceptable precisely because of the persecution of Serbs by Croats during the Second World War. Thus, war reporters mostly took differentiated positions, in part willing to accept Handke's contribution to a debate, even if they rejected his claim that they had been anti-Serb.

The hybrid composition of the text, that is to say, part essay, part travelogue, incensed critics. As they saw it the prologue challenged certain facts in the media but its claims were not then substantiated by the impressionistic travelogue. That is to say that Handke had not backed up his arguments with hard facts, had blurred the boundaries between literature and journalism, had implied rather than provided proof, and had attacked journalists without sufficient evidence, merely suggesting that literature was somehow more truthful. In other words, depending on their perspective, Handke had either committed a 'crime against literature' or a 'crime against journalism'. Criticism of war reporting was entirely appropriate, they argued somewhat disingenuously, but he could not hide behind poetic means to do so. By writing a literary travelogue, so the argument went, Handke neatly avoided the need for evidence or rational argument. No one asked why Handke, that most literary of writers, would betray literature to make such a simple political point. A few argued rather unconvincingly that his great attach-

ment to the region stemmed from his Slovenian mother. Whatever the reason, no one really asked what else Handke might have intended with his carefully constructed text.

Scholarly analyses of Handke's text have been more nuanced, although many are equally sharp in their conclusions. Amongst literary scholars there is general agreement that Handke mystifies the simplicity of life in Serbia, ignoring the war that had brought about this isolation of the country. For instance, Jay Julian Rosellini describes Handke's 'Sehnsucht nach dem Leben in einer früheren, einfacheren Zeit' (longing for an earlier, simpler time) as an example of 'Restaurationstourismus' (restoration tourism).[12] Richard Herzinger claims that Handke effectively exploits the war 'um seinen Ressentiments gegen die nivellierte und geistlose liberalistische Massengesellschaft einmal mehr freien Lauf lassen zu können' (to let out his resentment once more at the sameness and soullessness of our liberal mass society).[13] Jörg Lau snidely refers to Handke's poetics of presence, implying that the poet romanticises the hardships of the country: 'Handke kann keinen serbischen Kartoffelsack ansehen, ohne vor lauter Rührung über dessen Realpräsenz in die Knie zu brechen' (Handke cannot look at a Serbian potato sack without falling to his knees overcome by the realness of its presence).[14] These scholars therefore tend not to accuse him of being an apologist for Serb crimes or a lover of Serbs, but situate his writing within a long tradition of right-wing intellectuals. They often cite Botho Strauß as a fellow traveller, who had also intervened in a political debate in a misguided fashion.[15]

Where some early reviewers like Peter Schneider had praised the travelogue itself but dismissed the prologue and epilogue as Serb propaganda, later reviewers rightly tended to explore the possible significance of the break between genres in the text. While some like Rosellini see this break as its weakness, others focus on the tension between the journalistic and literary styles as a deliberate attempt to juxtapose two styles of writing. Matthias Schöning argues that the text is not offering a competing narrative of war, but acts as a competing medium, and he interprets this negatively as evidence of Handke's attempts to privilege literature over journalism. [16] In his analysis Christopher Parry usefully hints at the complexity of the narrator, when he points out that the text is in fact 'double encoded', and cannot be taken at face value. As Parry notes, '[i]f the simplified vision of Yugoslavia Handke presents seems rather obviously constructed, it nevertheless draws attention to the fact that any image, whether created by politicians, journalists, artists or writers is of necessity an

interpretation and a construct.'[17] These later reviewers tended to be less incensed by Handke's provocative stance towards Serbia, which in turn helped them to ask other questions about the text. Handke is undoubtedly exploiting the travel genre in order to question the relationship between fact and fiction in reporting, but I will argue that his main concern has to do with a debate on Germany and Austria's relationship to Yugoslavia, and more generally on what has become known as German normalisation. Moreover, I also argue that the intensity of the Handke debate resulted from the timing of the publication and had less to do with the text itself.

This short summary of the positions adopted against Handke does not do justice to the ferocity of the debate. Handke touched a nerve, because he deliberately challenged two events which were particularly resonant in the German public sphere. Firstly, his publication appeared precisely as Germans were expressing their disquiet about the internationally negotiated Dayton Agreement, which ended the war in Bosnia in December 1995. Arthur Heinrich has analysed what he perceives as the very problematic reception of the agreement in Germany.[18] While most international commentators accepted it as a compromise to end the killing, Heinrich shows that in Germany there was unanimous rejection. German reporters in particular bayed for revenge against Serbia, and were unwilling to follow their European or North American counterparts in accepting the agreement, unjust though it might have seemed, as the only possible path to peace. The exceptional nature of the response led Heinrich to conclude that there was evidence of an intellectual challenge to Germany's 'Westbindung' (integration with the West).[19] In other words, Germany was returning to older patterns of exceptionalism as far as this region of south-eastern Europe was concerned. With hindsight this has turned out to be an exaggeration, but Handke's demand for justice for Serbia was incendiary at the time. One can argue that the rejection of his travelogue in Germany mirrors the rejection of a peace settlement with Serbia.

Critics were perhaps rightly angered by Handke's comments on Srebrenica. This is the town where one in three of the male Muslim population was killed in July 1995, leaving 7,475 dead.[20] A child's sandal floating past him on the river as he ponders the massacre is a deliberately evocative choice that aims to jolt the reader into focusing on the hackneyed use of images of horror (GS 121). This comment led even supporters of Handke to distance themselves from his text. Schöning for instance argues that Handke's scepticism towards media images was

mostly justified, but that this challenge to recognised atrocities such as Srebrenica was not.[21] Here again, one might argue that while Handke's comment was badly timed appearing less than six months after the killing, it was also misunderstood. Firstly, Handke did not question that the massacre had taken place but rather the reasons for it: '*Warum* solch ein Tausendfachschlachten? Was war der *Beweg*grund? *Wozu*?' (GS 121) (*Why* such a thousandfold slaughter? What was the *motivation*? *For what purpose*? [JR 74]). What he questions is the way in which the massacre has been accepted as evidence of absolute evil, rather than being seen as a strategy of war or a local land grab. The point is that this was a direct challenge to the German political establishment.

Like the Dayton Agreement, the response to Srebrenica had a very specific German variant, for it became the turning point after which German political parties agreed to support military action. The killing in Srebrenica was thus doubly loaded in Germany, not only as a massacre but also as the moment at which the Greens in particular abandoned their pacifist programme. Joschka Fischer used the killing in Srebrenica to question his party's commitment to pacifism, asking whether the principle 'Nie wieder Auschwitz' could coexist with the pacifist principle of 'Nie wieder Krieg' (never again war). In other words, the motives for Srebrenica were rarely questioned in the German press because of the massacre's association with Auschwitz as an example of sheer evil. Handke's question therefore posed a clear challenge to the Left and their uneasy consensus based around the comparison between Srebrenica and Auschwitz. According to Andrei Markovits and Simon Reich, the debates that ensued on the Left in this period articulated 'the clashes and conflicts of history, collective memory, guilt, responsibility, the exigencies of power, [and] the relationship to other countries' in ways never seen before in Germany.[22] The entire Handke controversy must be seen as part of this broader struggle over German 'normalisation' fought primarily among members of Handke's own '68er' generation.

Handke makes clear that his own bucolic description of Serbia was never intended as a revision of the negative stories circulating in the media. He was unhappy with the coverage of the war but his question 'Wer wird diese Geschichte einmal anders schreiben, und sei es auch bloß in den Nuancen […]' (GS 50) (Who will someday write this history differently, even if only in the nuances [JR 26]) suggests that this is not the task he has set himself. As he writes in the epilogue: 'Meine Arbeit ist eine andere. Die bösen Fakten festhalten, schon recht. Für einen Frieden jedoch braucht es noch anderes, was nicht weniger ist als die Fakten.'

(GS 133) (My work is of a different sort. To record the evil facts, that's all well and good. But for a peace, something else is needed, something no less important than the facts [JR 82]). This has been cited as evidence of Handke's arrogance, as if facts were precisely what was needed. Yet travel writers make for poor witnesses. Moreover, to accuse Handke of the crime of not travelling to Bosnia is to miss the point of his travelogue, and in particular, the significance of his itinerary.

Itineraries were crucial in this complex war, but no one asked how and why Handke chose his own particular route. Indeed, hardly anyone has ever challenged the widespread view that journeys to Sarajevo were evidence of a selfless defence of multiculturalism.[23] Handke attacks intellectuals and writers for their warmongering stance and their one-sided condemnation of Serbia, but it is only in the itinerary itself that his own intentions are made clear. He does not seek to idealise bucolic life in Serbia, closed off from the world through sanctions, but to engage in his own memory work. Travel writing need not be primarily a topographical project,[24] and Handke's journey is also a temporal one. He links travel to memory work in several ways. He does not retell the story of the Nazi occupation: his memory work is never made explicit. His antifascist itinerary places him – an Austrian and the son of a German – in towns that were once scarred by Nazi killings, but his own act of remembering is not shared with the readers. In order to follow his itinerary a reader needs to know the sites of atrocities in Serbia as well as the locals do: this is a point Handke does make explicitly. His itinerary acknowledges the past without chronicling it, and suggests the hope of a common future.

The introduction and epilogue – but not the travelogue – refer overtly to the Nazi past, framing the account. The epigram cites Miloš Crnjanski's *Tagebuch über Čarnojević* (1921):

> Was macht es uns aus, drei Millionen Menschen zu töten. Der Himmel ist überall der gleiche, und blau, so blau. Der Tod ist noch einmal gekommen, aber nach ihm wird die Freiheit kommen. Wir werden frei und komisch sein. (n.p.)
>
> (What difference does it make to us to kill three million people. The sky is the same everywhere and blue, so blue. Death has returned, but peace will follow. We will be free and odd.)

Crnjanski was actually writing about the First World War but the citation also evokes the killings of the Second. Handke's narrator claims that his

journey is motivated by wars: 'Es war vor allem der Kriege wegen, daß ich nach Serbien wollte' (GS 12) (It was above all because of the wars that I wanted to go to Serbia [JR 2]). The plural is left deliberately ambiguous in the German (and was overlooked by the book's English translator). Before leaving, Handke watches Kustrica's *Underground,* which he describes as depicting 'diese[r] andere[n] jugoslawische[n] Geschichte' (GS 24) (this other Yugoslavian history [JR 9]). *Underground* explores memory and the role of the past in the present, with numerous references to the Nazi invasion of Yugoslavia. The film clearly links the past, particularly the Yugoslav partisan legacy of the Second World War, with the present war. Handke also cites Besson as an analyst of the reporting on Yugoslavia who remembers 'die Leidens- und Widerstands-geschichte Jugoslawiens im Zweiten Weltkrieg […] zu der wir von den Betroffenen jetzt endliches Vergessen, bis in die Kinder und Kindeskinder, verlangen' (GS 43-4) (Yugoslavia's history of suffering and resistance during the Second World War […] that we now require those affected, and their children and children's children, finally to forget [JR 22]). Handke's critique of reporting is linked to his insistence on the significance of the Nazi past. He refers for example to the support given by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* to the suggestion that Serbs living within the borders of Croatia should accept second-class status. While many have criticised the anti-Serb views of the German press, Handke links this to the historical obligations of the past. German support for Croat policy towards Serbs is thus doubly problematic 'in Erinnerung an die nicht zu vergessenden Verfolgungen durch das hitlerisch-kroatische Ustascha-regime' (GS 34) (in memory of the persecutions, which should never be forgotten, at the hands of the Hitlerian-Croatian Ustacha regime [16]). His critique of the press is embedded within his insistence on the significance of the Nazi occupation of Yugoslavia.

The two middle sections of the travelogue recount the journey through Serbia taken by Handke, his partner named only as S., and two Serb friends living abroad. They spend half their journey in Belgrade, and then travel to the Serbian-Bosnian border at Bajina Bašta, finally crossing the mountains to return via Novi Sad and enter Hungary. In the epilogue, Handke reminds his readers of the specific responsibility of former fascist countries Germany and Austria to the memories of Serbs, whose country was brutally occupied by the Nazis. Handke ends his travelogue with the suicide note of a former partisan in Serbia who could not bear to see Yugoslavia torn apart.[25] The historical context of the Second World War thus frames and shapes Handke's account and

itinerary, and is vital to deciphering the text. He does not disguise his sympathies for a country suffering under sanctions, and refuses to contribute to what he perceives as the demonisation of an entire nation.

Handke's itinerary is ostensibly determined by his two Serbian friends, who visit their own family and friends while accompanying the writer and his companion S. Their journey takes them through a number of towns that are notorious for atrocities during the Nazi occupation. Handke makes no mention of this, but anyone familiar with the region will recognise his antifascist itinerary. The journey begins in Belgrade, a city bombed by the Nazis in 1941. From there Handke undertakes a trip to a town in the suburbs of Belgrade, the childhood home of one of his travelling companions: Zemun, where the German concentration camp Sajmiste housed both Jews and political prisoners. 6,280 Jews were killed in a gas van that drove from the camp through the streets of Belgrade. Altogether some 47,000 people died there.[26] A subsequent day trip takes Handke through two other notorious sites of killing:

> Kragujevac, Kraljevo – ziemlich große mittelserbische Städte, nach denen es südwestwarts in ein anderes Serbien ging, gebirgig, schluchtenreich, fast menschenleer. (GS 77)
>
> (Kragujevac, Kraljevo – quite large mid-Serbian cities, after which we turned southwest into another Serbia, mountainous, full of canyons, nearly deserted. [JR 44])

Both these towns are infamous for wanton revenge killings by the Nazis. In October 1941, a German garrison in Kraljevo was attacked by partisans, and the Nazis killed 1,736 men and 19 women in revenge. Following an attack in Kragujevac, all communists and Jewish males in the town were arrested, and 2,324 males, including boys as young as 14, were killed to avenge ten German deaths. Anyone familiar with the history of the Nazi occupation of Yugoslavia knows these names as the locations of the most cruel atrocities to take place on Serbian soil.

One might argue that Handke is rather perniciously suggesting that past suffering absolves the present-day Serb state from international condemnation. Yet his position is more nuanced than this. He seems to be accusing Germans and Austrians of forgetting this period in their own history even as they accuse the Serbs of perpetrating another Holocaust, and he is concerned with the impact of these accusations on the conflict. In other words, it is not the past that provokes him but the very contemporary debate about that past. Sitting on the banks of the

Drina, he reflects on the killing in Srebrenica thirty kilometres downstream, but also in Višegrad fifty kilometres away, and about the writer Ivo Andrić who was based there during the German occupation. On the riverbank – and later, back in Paris – he thinks about the hatred shown towards the Serbs, particularly by Germans and Austrians. He wonders whether such 'mechanisches Worteschleudern zwischen den Völkern' (GS 127) (mechanical word-slinging between peoples [JR 78]) is in fact passed on from generation to generation. Rejecting the accusation of paranoia levelled at Serbs, he asks instead:

> Und wie stand es dagegen mit dem Bewußtsein des deutschen (und österreichischen) Volkes von dem, was es im Zweiten Weltkrieg auf dem Balkan noch und noch angerichtet hat und anrichten hat lassen? (GS 128)
>
> (And, in contrast, how conscious was the German (and Austrian) people of what it did and caused to be done repeatedly in the Balkans during the Second World War? [JR 78])

Handke is insistent that this memory remains vivid 'quer durch die Generationen' (GS 129) (down through the generations [79]) amongst Yugoslav people, but that it has become mere historical knowledge of facts for Germans and Austrians:

> War solch ein deutsch-österreichisches bloßes Bescheidwissen, aber Nichts-und-aber-nichts-gegenwärtig-Haben denn nicht eine noch ganz andere Geistes- oder Seelenkrankheit als die sogenannte Paranoia? Ein sehr eigener Wahn? (GS 129)
>
> (Wasn't this German-Austrian 'knowing what happened' but 'having nothing whatsoever present to mind' a spiritual or psychological illness very different from so-called paranoia? A complex peculiar to itself? [JR 79])

One can argue that Handke's journey is an attempt to make this knowledge 'gegenwärtig' (present) by physically visiting the places, rather than 'bloßes Bescheidwissen' (merely knowing about it). His hope for the future is that Germans will succeed in breaking out of this past. Their way of responding to 'die Nacht des Jahrhunderts' (the century's night) only helps to darken it, he says, hoping that they may 'aufbrechen aus dieser Nacht' (GS 132) (set off out of this night [JR 81]). Here 'aufbrechen' links the idea of travel to his project of remembering.

Finally, he calls for his generation to grow up, not like the generation of their fathers but '[f]est und doch offen, oder durchlässig' (GS 131) (firm and yet open, or permeable [JR 80]).

> Und mit dieser Weise Erwachsenseins, dachte ich, Sohn eines Deutschen, ausscheren aus dieser Jahrhundertgeschichte, aus dieser Unheilkette, ausscheren zu einer anderen Geschichte. (GS 131)
>
> (And with this kind of maturity, I thought – as the son of a German – pull out of this century's history, out of this chain of disasters, pull out into another history. [JR 80])

In the context of debates taking place at the time on the need for Germany to assume its responsibilities and become 'normal', particularly vis-à-vis the past, this is clearly an ambiguous statement. Handke is employing very similar terms to those used in the debate on German normalisation, linked to the notion of the maturity of the Federal Republic. However, Handke's project of 'normalisation' differs from that of his peers, in that he calls for a politics of memory which assumes responsibility for the past and for the conflict which he links to this past. One can naturally debate Handke's position on this question. Many have for instance argued that antifascist arguments were exploited by Serbs to rally the population behind them. Yet, the question remains why critics refused to acknowledge Handke's position as a contribution to a debate ongoing in Germany at that point. In this context, Handke's text makes a great deal more sense.

Contrary to the claims of the critics cited above, I would like finally to argue that this travelogue is in fact very carefully and ethically written. As one might expect of Handke, he is concerned with the question of representation. Like all travellers to Yugoslavia he was confronted with a narrative about the region firmly established by the media, and his travelogue is thus also about the possibilities and pitfalls of challenging such a dominant story about the war. Throughout the entire account, Handke differentiates between those questions which are 'zur Sache selbst' (GS 47) (about the thing itself [JR 24]), and those which address the way in which an event has been represented or interpreted. He is quite specific that he only challenges the 'facts' on three occasions, namely in relation to the massacre of the Sarajevo market, the extent of the shelling of Dubrovnik, and the existence of a Serb plan to establish a Greater Serbia (GS 47-8, JR 24-5). The middle section, or travelogue, is divided into two parts, ostensibly in order to separate two different

itineraries, but the style of narration also differs between the two. The first section of the journey was cited the most during the debate. Reviewers were irritated by Handke's slow and pedantic descriptions of the countryside and of the peaceful atmosphere in a country still under sanctions. His visit to a Belgrade market where he delights in the sight of 'andersgelbe[n] Nudelnester[n]' (GS 71) (the oddly yellow noodle nests [JR 40]) was frequently ridiculed. The second stage of his journey seems intended to mock the writings of concerned Europeans, who took to the road in solidarity with Bosnia, but found excitement in the battlefields. It is characterised by a sense of adventure, which Handke appears to link to the itinerary of travelling to the Bosnian border (GS 87). The narrator even points to the change in style by situating this journey within the genre of adventure stories, 'ein Zurück kam nicht mehr in Frage (war nicht auch das ein Ausdruck aus Abenteuergeschichten?)' (GS 91-2) (no more question of turning back (wasn't that too an expression from adventure stories?) [JR 54]). Stereotypical images of the barbaric Balkans dominate this stretch of the road, and he uses the term itself for the first time (GS 92). Driving through the snow, Handke and his companions find everyone they ask for directions is 'sprachlos betrunken' (GS 89) (drunk out of their minds [JR 52]). A dramatic journey over mountains in a snow storm evokes the quintessential adventure story. At their destination in Bajina Bašta, on the river Drina across from Bosnia, the narrative voice changes, becoming factual and disturbingly distant from what is recounted. For instance, the narrator lists the food served, the décor in a flat visited, and finally the observations of their host Olga in a stark manner: 'Immer wieder sollen scharenweise Kadaver die Drina abwärts getrieben haben' (GS 94) (Corpses in great numbers had supposedly floated repeatedly down the Drina [JR 56]). The next morning, his friend Zlatko talks to 'ein paar jungen Milizsoldaten, welche, ihre Maschinenpistolen in Reichweite, neben uns beim Frühstück saßen' (GS 97) (a couple of young militia soldiers who sat next to us at breakfast, their machine guns within reach [JR 57]). Children and border guards 'fehlten mehrere Zähne' (GS 99) (were missing several teeth [JR 59]). The combination of boyish adventure, the cold reporting of death and the sardonic humour of the war zone suggest that Handke is mocking the voice of the battle-hardened war reporter. The section stands in stark contrast to the sensitive and self-critical narrator of the first half of the account. Departure follows rapidly after, towards the Hungarian border, and the sight of 'wie eh und je die durch das Land irrenden oder schon tot und steinhart auf die Fahrbahn

gestreckten Hunde […] und die noch und noch Rabenhorden' (GS 107-8) (dogs straying as always through the countryside, or already dead and stretched stone cold on the street [JR 64]). The fact that critics read these flagrantly clichéd sections as a description of Handke's actual experiences in Serbia confirms his point that they themselves had a very clichéd image of this Balkan country.

Other aspects of Handke's journey are often overlooked. The fact that critics mostly ignored the very precise chronology of his journey suggests a degree of ignorance of events in Bosnia. Handke dates his journey carefully, arriving early November 1995, a fact he states explicitly by mentioning the shooting of Yitzhak Rabin, which took place on 4 November 1995 (GS 66). In other words, at this stage the warring parties in Bosnia had officially laid down their arms and were negotiating for a settlement. To underline the significance of this date, Handke describes watching Milosevic leave to fly to Dayton on the day of his own arrival, namely 1 November (GS 67). Indeed, one might argue that Milosevic's departure from Serbia symbolically makes Handke's trip possible. The Dayton negotiations took three weeks and were concluded on 21 November, and the treaty was finally signed in the Elysée Palace on 14 December. Writing up the travelogue retrospectively in his house in Versailles, Handke claims to see the delegates flying overhead to sign in Paris (GS 127). He dates his travelogue with the writing period of 27 November to 19 December 1995. It was published in early 1996 and must therefore be seen as a deliberate intervention in the debates on the *post-war* settlement. His care in timing suggests that he avoided visiting Serbia during the war itself, and published the text only once the agreement had been signed. That is to say that he did not travel during the fighting itself, which might have been seen to be siding with a warring party, and did not publish until the peace accord had been signed. He was therefore perhaps seeking neither to be seen to be taking sides during the fighting nor to influence the settlement negotiations.

Handke's media critique has been extensively discussed elsewhere, so I include here only a few examples overlooked by other analyses.[27] At one point for instance, he describes how a newspaper photo of a woman behind barbed wire is in fact staged to evoke pity (GS 41-2). This is a standard criticism of journalism, which might be considered misplaced in the immediate aftermath of the war. Yet, the point is that in the mid-1990s readers would have been likely to remember the famous picture from Bosnia of *men* standing behind barbed wire.[28] The change is deliberate and forces the reader to think again, but also of course avoids

involving the author in a very specific debate about the existence or not of prisoner camps in Bosnia. A further fine example of the way in which Handke actually undermines his own media critique relates to the southern European drink Slivovic. In his introduction he notes sarcastically that Serbs are always described by foreign reporters as drinking Slivovic (GS 46), yet time and time again he himself is offered the drink, and thus has to find different words or use an ellipsis ('[…]') to describe it (e.g. GS 77). The irony of this is not lost on the reader, who is nonetheless forced to confront her own easy acceptance of stereotypical images of the Balkans.

Handke is very concerned with reflecting upon his own, often problematic, preconceptions and assumptions. Like a scholar he lists the texts that influenced him on his journey (GS 21-2, 43). Throughout his journey, he is pedantic in locating himself in relation to places but also to people. He also makes clear that his account is written retrospectively, and that he took no notes at all during his travels. Perhaps as a little dig at reporters with their notebooks he adds that the only words he wrote down during his journey were "'Jebi ga!", *Fick ihn'* (GS 134). With this he reminds his readers that his text is a reconstruction. His intention is also to warn the reader that they are at the mercy of the writer, and will only experience events through his memory work. And, as Handke himself makes clear, there is no doubt that the writer is an unreliable witness.

My reading of Handke's travelogue suggests that it is no simple demand for justice for Serbia, but a complex text which perhaps tries to do too much. Handke playfully exploits the genre and its awkward position between literature and journalism. The timing and place of publication were deliberately challenging. The text appeared as Germans debated whether Serbia had been adequately punished, and did so in a very public manner on the pages of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Moreover, Handke insisted on remembering the German occupation of Yugoslavia precisely at a time when the German past had become the justification for German military intervention in the region. He followed an antifascist itinerary and ended his contribution with the suicide letter of a former partisan. Handke's cause might have been better served by a less dramatic intervention, but as he later stated: 'Ja, vielleicht hätte ich nur über die leeren Straßen, die Kälte, die Drina erzählen sollen. Aber dann hätte das Buch wahrscheinlich überhaupt niemand gelesen.'[29] (Perhaps I should just have written about the empty streets, the cold, the Drina. But then probably no one would have read the book.)

Postscript

Ironically, it seems that Handke may actually have committed one crime by going to Serbia. On 30 May 1992 the United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution implementing a trade embargo on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), which included the suspension of cultural exchanges and visits of persons or groups officially representing their country. The embargo was not lifted until after the signing of the Dayton Agreement in December 1995. There is little doubt that Handke was aware of the fact that an official visit would be in breach of this embargo. This may perhaps explain his refusal to travel in an official capacity. He repeatedly describes his attempts to avoid being 'dort jemand Öffentlicher, und wenn auch nur Halböffentlicher' (GS 14) (a public person there, or even a semipublic one [JR 3]). This potential crime passed unnoticed.

Notes

1 The text first appeared in the weekend edition of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* on 5-6 and 13-14 January 1996. All quotations in the text are however taken from the book publication, *Eine winterliche Reise zu den Flüssen Donau, Save, Morawa und Drina oder Gerechtigkeit für Serbien*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1996. All references appear in the text as (GS). The translation by Scott Abbott is entitled *A Journey to the Rivers: Justice for Serbia*, New York: Viking, 1997. All translations in the chapter are taken from this version, occasionally modified (JR).

2 Anon., 'Peter Handke "schaut und fühlt" bei Milosevic-Beerdigung', *Der Spiegel* , 18 March 2006.

3 Christoph Deupmann, 'Die Unmöglichkeit des Dritten: Peter Handke, die Jugoslawienkriege und die Rolle der deutschsprachigen Schriftsteller', *Zeithistorische Forschungen / Studies in Contemporary History, Online-Ausgabe*, 5 (2008), 4.

4 As Handke notes in the book publication, the order of the title was chosen by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.

5 No specific title is given but it is most likely Patrick Besson, *Coup de Gueule: Contre les Calomniateurs de la Serbie*, Paris: Editions Ramsay, 1995.

6 Handke is not alone in claiming that old rivalries still shaped this contemporary war. British Balkan specialist Micha Glenny for instance is quite

clear that contemporary battles were often determined by old partisan maps. Micha Glenny, *The Fall of Yugoslavia*, 3rd edition, London: Penguin, 1996.

7 Patrick Holland and Graham Huggan, *Tourists with Typewriters: Critical Reflections on Contemporary Travel Writing,* Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1998, p. 11.

8 Kurt Gritsch, *Peter Handke und 'Gerechtigkeit für Serbien'. Eine Rezeptionsgeschichte*, Innsbruck: StudienVerlag, 2009.

9 The newspaper debate has been examined extensively, most recently by Kurt Gritsch (*Peter Handke*, 2009). He argues that moral claims dominated and effectively silenced critics and describes the consensus amongst critics as a form of 'totalitäre[r] Populismus' (13-14). He regards Handke's media critique as 'nicht unbegründet' (175), but argues that whatever challenge the text posed was overlooked by critics who saw Handke as siding with perpetrators against the memory of victims.

10 Detlef Kleinert, 'Billig und infam', *Das Sonntagsblatt*, 19 January 1996. The term 'Auslandsreporterhorde' is taken from Handke's text itself.

11 Peter Schneider, 'Der Ritt über den Balkan. Peter Schneider gegen die Parteinahme Peter Handkes für die Serben', *Der Spiegel*, 15 January 1996.

12 Jay Julian Rosellini, '"Balkanische Bockgesänge"? Neuartige Meldungen von Botho Strauß und Peter Handke', *Text & Kontext,* 1 (1998), 112-32.

13 Richard Herzinger, 'Flucht aus der Politik: Deutsche Intellektuelle nach Srebrenica'. *Merkur,* 5 (1996), 375-88 (here: 379).

14 Jörg Lau, 'Eine Kolumne. Letzte Welten, umgrenztes Ich', *Merkur: Deutsche Zeitschrift für europäisches Denken*, 566 (1996), 427-33 (here: 427).

15 Michael Braun, '"Anschwellender Bocksgesang und die Folgen: Bemerkungen zur Botho-Strauß-Debatte', in: Gerd Langguth, ed., *Die Intellektuellen und die nationale Frage*, Frankfurt/Main and New York: Campus, 1997, pp. 264-79; Robert Weninger, *Streitbare Literaten. Kontroverse und Eklats in der deutschen Literature von Adorno bis Walser*, Munich: Beck, 2004, pp. 165-85.

16 Matthias Schöning, 'Verbohrte Denkanstöße? Peter Handkes Jugoslawien-engagement und die Ethik der Intervention. Ein Ordnungsversuch', in: Davor Beganovic and Peter Braun, eds., *Krieg sichten. Zur medialen Darstellung der Kriege in Jugoslawien*, Munich: W. Fink, 2007, pp. 307-30.

17 Christoph Parry, *Peter Handke's Landscapes of Discourse: An Exploration of Narrative and Cultural Space*, Riverside, CA: Ariadne, 2003, p. 216.

18 Arthur Heinrich, 'Danke Amerika! Dayton und die Deutschen', *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik,* 1 (1996), 35-44.

19 Heinrich, 'Danke', p. 44.

20 Helge Brunsborg, Torkhild Hovde Lyngstad and Henrik Urdal, 'Accounting for Genocide: How Many Were Killed in Srebrenica?', *European Journal of Population*, 19 (2003), 229-48.

21 Schöning, 'Verbohrte Denkanstöße', p. 320.

22 Andrei S. Markovits and Simon Reich, *The German Predicament: Memory and Power in the New Europe*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997, p. 145.

23 The notable exception is Michael Ignatieff: 'Virtue by Proxy', in: Alex Danchev and Thomas Halverston, eds, *International Perspectives on the Yugoslav Conflict,* New York: St Martin's Press, 1996, pp. ix-xix.

24 See Kathryn N. Jones, *Journeys of Remembrance: Memories of the Second World War in French and German Literature, 1960-1980*, London: Legenda, 2007.

25 The significance of memories of the Second World War in the conflict has been discussed by Ilana R. Bet-El, 'Unimagined Communities: The Power of Memory and the Conflict in Former Yugoslavia', in: Jan-Werner Müller, ed, *Memory and Power in Post-War Europe*: *Studies in the Presence of the Past*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002, pp. 206-22.

26 For further details see the Shoah resource centre Yad Vashem: www.yadvashem.org.

27 Thomas Deichmann, ed., *Noch einmal für Jugoslawien: Peter Handke*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1999. The volume contains essays and interviews from both critics and supporters of Handke's text.

28 From a videotape shot on 5 August 1992 by a British team led by Penny Marshall (ITN) and Ed Vulliamy (*The Guardian*). The veracity of the image was contested, although unsuccessfully. It remains subject to dispute.

29 Anon., "'Instrumentalisiert wurde ich ja wohl eher in den West-Medien'", *Der Standard*, 9 June 2006.

Katharina Hall

Text Crimes in the Shadow of the Holocaust: The Case of Bernhard Schlink's *Der Vorleser/The Reader*

This chapter focuses on the reception of Bernhard Schlink's controversial novel *Der Vorleser/The Reader* (1995). Beginning with a diachronic overview, the chapter illuminates different waves of responses to the text over time. The piece goes on to examine the dominant issues critics have raised, alongside the dialogues that have taken place between reviewers and/or academics over the past seventeen years. The chapter identifies key trends, arguments and critical contributions within *Der Vorleser/The Reader*'s reception, examining in particular the two key 'text crimes' of which the novel stands accused – 'crimes against the history and memory of the Holocaust' and 'crimes against literature'.

Following the 1995 publication of his novel *Der Vorleser/The Reader*, and particularly the publication in 1997 of the English translation, Bernhard Schlink, a law professor, constitutional judge and author of a modestly successful crime series, became an international literary celebrity.[1] A best-seller both at home and abroad, the commercial success of *Der Vorleser/The Reader* as an example of post-war German literature has been matched only by Günter Grass's *The Tin Drum* (*Die Blechtrommel*, 1959) and Patrick Süßkind's *Perfume* (*Das Parfum*, 1984).[2] By 2002, *Der Vorleser/The Reader* had sold over 500,000 copies in Germany, 750,000 in the USA, 200,000 in Britain, and 100,000 in France, and it had been translated into a total of 25 languages.[3] Sales in the United States were significantly boosted by the selection of *Der Vorleser/The Reader* for the Oprah Book Club in February of 1999 and Schlink's appearance to discuss the novel on 'Oprah', whose average viewing figures were 7.4 million per show.[4] *Der Vorleser/The Reader* subsequently became the first German novel to reach the top of the *New York Times* Best Seller List, remaining there for 15 weeks.[5] 2008 saw the release of the Miramax film adaptation of the novel, scripted by David Hare and directed by Stephen Daldry, and starring Kate Winslet and Ralph Fiennes. The film received five 2009 Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture, and Winslet won the Oscar for Best Actress. Sales of the novel, now reprinted as a movie tie-in, with pictures of the stars on the cover, received another boost: total sales in the UK exceeded 700,000 copies,[6]

and by March 2010 it was back at second place on the *New York Times* Trade Paperback Best Seller List, remaining in the top 20 for 23 weeks.[7]

In common with Grass and Süßkind's best sellers, which also enjoyed substantial international sales and film treatments, *Der Vorleser/The Reader* has been the subject of significant critical controversy. In the case of *The Tin Drum* and *Perfume*, the amoral, murderous figures of Oskar Matzerath and Jean-Baptiste Grenouille have both generated heated critical discussion, while in the case of *Der Vorleser/The Reader*, the depiction of Hanna Schmitz, a former SS concentration camp guard convicted of war crimes, has been a key focus of debate. As with *The Tin Drum* over 40 years earlier, the novel's consideration of 'ordinary' German involvement in National Socialism and questions of guilt has resulted in a particularly passionate and polarised body of critical responses, and this polarisation of opinion has extended to wider issues such as the literary quality of the text. The contrast between Rainer Moritz's declaration in the Swiss magazine *Die Weltwoche* – 'Was für ein Glück, dass dieses Buch geschrieben wurde!' (How fortunate that this book was written!)[8] – and Frederic Raphael's statement in a letter to the *Times Literary Supplement* that '[i]f literature means anything, *The Reader* has no place in it', typifies the diametrically opposed critical opinions regarding the novel.[9]

The primary focus of this chapter is the reception of the novel in the German- and English-speaking worlds. Beginning with a diachronic overview of the critical reactions to *Der Vorleser/The Reader*, it seeks to illuminate the different waves of responses to the text over time and to weigh the ratio of positive to negative assessments. Following a brief consideration of the novel's thematisation of crime and criminality, the chapter examines the dominant issues critics have raised when evaluating the text, and the critical dialogues that have taken place between reviewers and academics over the past seventeen years. Given the enormous body of critical responses to the text – which in itself is an indicator of the novel's continued ability to generate debate – this chapter will not attempt to evaluate everything written on *Der Vorleser/The Reader*. Rather, the aim is to identify key trends, arguments and critical contributions within the reception of the novel. In particular, the chapter will examine the two key 'text crimes' of which the novel stands accused – 'crimes against the history and memory of the Holocaust' and 'crimes against literature' – which also resurface in the critical responses to the film adaptation of 2008.

A Diachronic Overview of Critical Responses to *Der Vorleser/The Reader*

Distinct waves of critical responses to *Der Vorleser/The Reader* can be identified in the seventeen years since its appearance. The first wave between 1995 and 1999 is largely made up of positive newspaper reviews in Germany, the UK and the US. The German publication of the novel in 1995 engendered a series of enthusiastic reviews which praised its original contribution to German literature about the Nazi and post-war eras, and its depiction of the relationship between the 'first generation', who had lived through National Socialism, and the 'second generation', born around the end of the Second World War, who later became identified with the student '68er' generation.[10] In particular, literary critic Tilman Krause championed the novel in the broadsheet *Die Welt*, with articles such as 'Bernhard Schlinks Roman über 68er und die deutsche Schuld' (Bernhard Schlink's novel about the 68ers and German guilt).[11] This reception was mirrored in the positive assessments of the English translation in 1997 by respected critics and authors such as George Steiner, A. S. Byatt and Neal Ascherson. Steiner's review for *The Observer* was particularly influential: his assertion that the novel was both 'profoundly moving' and 'rapidly becoming a touchstone of moral literacy' carried particular weight due to his status as a Holocaust survivor and venerated Oxbridge don, and was later cited by David Hare as fuelling his interest in the text as a film project. [12] Steiner's characterisation of the novel as a 'masterly work' is frequently cited by other reviewers, functioning as a guarantor of their own positive judgement of the text (15). This affirmative international response had the effect of reigniting interest in the novel in Germany. Schlink received the first 'Welt-Literaturpreis' in 1999, which was heralded in the paper's Feuilleton pages with the headline 'Das Buch, auf das wir lange gewartet haben' (The book we've been waiting for so long).[13]

In this early phase, the novel was largely viewed as an unproblematic literary and critical success. The exceptions to this rule were lengthier review articles by two American-Jewish writers and essayists, Eva Hoffmann in *The New Republic* (1998) and Cynthia Ozick in *Commentary Magazine* (1999). These pieces signalled the beginning of a second wave of responses to the novel: a critical backlash that challenged the view of the novel as a 'moral touchstone'.[14] In 2000 and 2001, four academic articles were published in the UK and US, which, together with Hoffmann and Ozick's pieces, became the most influential critiques of

the novel, collectively identifying and scrutinizing its key 'text crimes'. They were Jewish historian Omer Bartov's 'Germany as Victim' in *New German Critique* (2000), writer and reviewer Ian Sansom's 'Doubts about *The Reader*' in *Salmagundi* (2000), American academic William Collins Donahue's 'Illusions of Subtlety: Bernhard Schlink's *The Reader* and the Moral Limits of Holocaust Fiction' in *German Life and Letters* (2001), and British academics Sally Johnson and Frank Finlay's '(Il)literacy and (Im)morality in Bernhard Schlink's *The Reader*', in *Written Language and Literacy* (2001).[15] As will be shown later, these pieces attacked the depiction of the Nazi perpetrator in the novel, and its treatment of illiteracy and morality, thereby laying the foundation for other negative readings of the novel that followed. 2002 saw further attacks in the letters pages of the *Times Literary Supplement*, triggered by Kathleen Bogan's (in Frederic Raphael's words) 'glib' review of Schlink's short story collection *Liebesfluchten* (Flights of Love).[16] In their letters, Frederic Raphael, Gabriel Josipovici and Jeremy Adler were united in delivering a scathing assessment of the novel, focusing on Hanna's depiction and the text's literary shortcomings.[17] The letters were reported in Germany, and Adler subsequently published an article entitled 'Die Kunst, Mitleid mit den Mördern zu erzwingen' (The art of generating sympathy for the murderers) in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, prompting further discussion of the novel there, with Willi Winkler of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* supporting Adler, and Volker Hage of *Der Spiegel* defending the text.[18]

From 2002 onwards, a third wave of more positive journal articles appeared in the UK and the US. Examples include Beate Dreike's 'Was wäre denn Gerechtigkeit? Zur Rechtsskepsis in Bernhard Schlinks *Der Vorleser*' (What would be justice? On the sceptical view of the law in Schlink's *The Reader*) in *German Life and Letters* (2002) and Bill Niven's 'Bernhard Schlink's *Der Vorleser* and the Problem of Shame' in *The Modern Language Review* (2003), which sought to illuminate the text through the adoption of new approaches.[19] In addition, a group of articles appeared whose predominant argument was that those critics who had attacked the novel had misinterpreted it. These included Daniel Reynold's 2003 article 'Portrait of Misreading: Bernhard Schlink's *Der Vorleser*' in the journal *Seminar* and Jeffrey Roth's 'Reading and Misreading *The Reader*' in a 2004 special issue of *Law and Literature* largely dedicated to a positive reassessment of the novel.[20] However, there were also exceptions to this positive trend: Collins Donahue's 'The Popular Culture Alibi: Bernhard Schlink's Detective Novels and the Culture of Politically Correct Holocaust Literature' in *The German Quarterly* (2004)

and my own essay 'The Author, the Novel, the Reader and the Perils of *Neue Lesbarkeit*: A Comparative Analysis of Bernhard Schlink's *Selbs Justiz* and *Der Vorleser*' in *German Life and Letters* (2006) placed the novel in the context of Schlink's earlier crime fiction and maintained a more critical view.[21] When the film adaptation was released in 2008, there was a similarly polarised response, which replicated that seen in literary and academic circles, and featured some of the same players from earlier debates, such as Frederic Raphael.[22] To date no journal articles have examined the film; Collins Donahue is the first critic to have produced a monograph on Schlink's oeuvre and its film adaptations: his *Holocaust as Fiction: Bernhard Schlink's 'Nazi' Novels and their Films* was published in 2010.[23]

A number of features can be observed within this diachronic schema. Firstly, a pendulum swing motion is evident within the responses to *Der Vorleser/The Reader*. A largely positive critical reception extends to the turn of the millennium, followed by a period of negative assessments. From 2002 there is a third wave of more positive journal articles, whose primary contention is that the novel has been misunderstood. When the film is released, the process begins again, in a truncated form, generating another polarised set of critical responses. Secondly, while British and American reviewers seem equally divided between positive and negative views of the novel, Jewish critics appear to be more negative, while German critics are more likely to applaud, be neutral about or defend the novel, with a few notable exceptions such as Winkler in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Thirdly, the initial, positive reviews of the novel tend to be quite generalised, focusing on the plot and grand statements about the emotional and moral power of the novel. The ensuing negative assessments are mostly delivered in the form of longer academic journal articles, which dig down into the detail of the text and its operations to provide more reasoned critiques. Lastly, Raphael and Adler's interventions are noteworthy on two levels: both are Jewish (Adler is the son of Holocaust survivor H.G. Adler), thereby forming a critical counterweight to Steiner's highly influential positive review, and both are imbued with a sense of critical urgency. There is a palpable anxiety that the text is dangerous, as it is capable of duping even those who normally have good judgement, and that its influence (for example as a set school text) will distort readers' understanding of the Holocaust and the role perpetrators played in it. Few texts, in the space of two brief reviews, can have called forth so many accusations of 'tendentious moralising (…) dishonest imagining (…) implausible, trite eroticism (…) spurious

altruism and canting condescension' (Raphael), as well as the judgement that it is 'a potent form of *Kulturpornographie* (cultural pornography)', whose 'revisionism twists the meaning of everything it touches' (Adler).

Der Vorleser/The Reader: Crime, Criminality and Text Crimes

Given the novel's plot-heavy nature, and the frequency with which critics refer to aspects of the storyline in their elucidation of a particular 'text crime', a summary is provided here for ease of reference. Its inclusion also serves to illustrate the way in which *Der Vorleser/The Reader* foregrounds the themes of crime and criminality in the historical context of the Holocaust and the post-war engagement with its legacy.

Part One, 1958: When fifteen-year-old Michael Berg is taken ill on his way home from school he is helped by a stranger, thirty-six-year-old Hanna Schmitz. After he recovers, Michael returns to thank her, and they begin an affair characterised by a particular routine: Michael reads to Hanna, they then bathe and make love. Six months later, the affair ends with Hanna's sudden disappearance.

Part Two, 1966: When Michael next sees Hanna, he is a law student of twenty-two and she is a forty-three-year-old defendant on trial with five other former SS guards of an Auschwitz satellite-camp. The defendants are accused of two specific crimes: involvement in selections (deciding which prisoners should be returned from the satellite camp to Auschwitz) and responsibility for the deaths of several hundred female prisoners at the end of the war. While guarding the prisoners in transit, the defendants had locked them in a church for the night, but failed to release them when a bombing raid ignited the church; as a result, all but two of the prisoners died. The guard who authored the report of the event is regarded by the court as being more culpable than the others. When the other defendants accuse Hanna of being the report's author, she refuses to deny that this is the case, even though, as Michael suddenly realises, she is illiterate and therefore cannot have written it. He reasons that Hanna's illiteracy and her determination to keep it secret also explain her entry to the SS (she was avoiding exposure after a work promotion) and why she chose prisoners to read to her in the camp. After much deliberation, he decides not to tell the judge what he knows. Hanna is subsequently given a life sentence, while the other defendants receive shorter prison terms.

Part Three, 1974-84: Michael's adult life is heavily overshadowed by his former relationship with Hanna: his marriage fails after five years and he struggles to find meaning in his work. He begins to record his favourite books for Hanna and a limited communication resumes between them. When the prison governor writes to tell him that Hanna is shortly to be released, he visits her for the first, and last, time. The morning of her release, Hanna commits suicide, leaving money and a tea caddy for the last Jewish survivor of the fire. Michael takes these to the survivor in the States, but she rejects the money, choosing only to keep the caddy. Michael is left to write down and consider the implications of the entire *Geschichte* (story/history).[24]

Schlink was a Professor für Öffentliches Recht, Sozialrecht und Rechtsphilosophie (Public Law, Social Legislation and Philosophy of Law) at various universities between 1982 and 2009, and also served as a constitutional judge in North Rhine Westphalia from 1986 to 2006. Unsurprisingly, given his profession, he has shown a consistent interest in the themes of crime, criminal responsibility and justice during his writing career, most obviously evidenced by his early attraction to the crime novel (his detective Gerhard Selb, a former Nazi prosecutor now working as a P.I., appears in a trilogy of 'Krimis' written between 1987 and 2001).[25] Schlink's continued interest in criminality and the crimes of Germany's Nazi past is forcefully demonstrated in *Der Vorleser/The Reader*. One of the novel's two main characters is a former SS camp guard: the crime of the Holocaust is thus central to the novel. The novel's middle section takes the form of a courtroom drama set during one of the famous West German war crimes trials of the 1960s (the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials): the judicial processes used to bring Nazi perpetrators to justice are thus also explored at length. Lastly, Michael feels himself to be 'schuldig, weil ich eine Verbrecherin geliebt hatte' (129) (guilty, because I had loved a perpetrator). A 'crime of the heart' is thus used to highlight the conflicted relations between the first (wartime) and second (post-war) generations after the war. As we will see in the following section, the 'text crimes' identified by critics of the novel are often linked to the treatment of 'crime' and 'criminality' within the text, and overlap with one another in a number of ways.

The most consistent charge levelled at *Der Vorleser/The Reader* is that Hanna, a former SS camp guard, is figured as a victim in the narrative and that this is unacceptable because of the historical and moral distortions it engenders. Firstly, critics have pointed to Hanna's depiction

as a 'victim of post-war justice' in the narrative, which is secured via her undeniable status as a victim of a miscarriage of justice in Part 2.[26] The trial, it is argued, positions Hanna as the victim of the other defendants' lies, of the shame that she feels for her illiteracy, and of the 1960s West German courts, which are depicted as being more interested in carrying out acts of justice to fulfil social desires for closure to the past than in seeing proper justice served.[27] This is viewed as morally problematic because Hanna shifts from the position of perpetrator to victim and becomes the centre of reader sympathies as a result.[28]

Critics have also found Hanna's depiction as a victim of her illiteracy to be untenable on a number of levels. Firstly, the narrative's suggestion that Hanna joined the SS to avoid revealing her illiteracy when offered a promotion at Siemens presents her as a victim of her shame and by extension mitigates her guilt.[29] Critics typically cite Michael's conclusions about Hanna's guilt as part of this argument: 'Sie hatte sich nicht für das Verbrechen entschieden. Sie hatte sich gegen die Beförderung bei Siemens entschieden und war in die Tätigkeit als Aufseherin hineingeraten' (128) (She had not decided in favour of committing crimes. She had decided against the promotion at Siemens and had ended up in the job of camp guard); she is therefore 'schuldig, aber nicht so schuldig (…), wie es den Anschein hatte' (132) (guilty, but not as guilty […] as it appeared). The frequent references to this portion of the text led to a side-debate on the figure of Michael. Critics such as Niven and Roth have argued that Michael's views as a 'biased narrator' should not be confused with those the author, and that they are open to critique. However, Donahue and Hall argue via analysis of reviews and Amazon reader responses that readers identify strongly with Michael and, by extension, accept his moral assessment of Hanna.[30] The idea that readers should relate more critically to Michael is thus not sufficiently communicated by the narrative to the readers themselves; rather, '[Michael] Berg becomes such an object of sympathetic identification that [readers] are ill placed to observe or critique the not insignificant errors of his own thought' (Donahue 2001, 61).[31]

A number of critics argue that the depiction of Hanna's illiteracy is flawed on a practical level. Frederic Raphael calls on the authority of the eminent Holocaust historian Michael Burleigh to confirm that every SS recruit had to fill out a lengthy application form (2009, 5), while Johnson and Finlay argue that Hanna would have been unable to perform her duties within the highly bureaucratised camps, such as reading out prisoners' names at daily roll-calls (206). In addition, Johnson and Finlay

argue that the depiction of Hanna's illiteracy fails on a moral level, due to the conflation of illiteracy and immorality in her character, which is problematic in that it suggests a lack of moral agency on the part of those who cannot read (210). As Ozick had already pointed out in 1999, the text's association of illiteracy and immorality is ironic, given that Germany had the highest standard of literacy in Europe before the Second World War and many Holocaust perpetrators were highly educated (26). For her, the novel's emphasis on illiteracy is 'the product of a desire to divert from the culpability of a normally educated population in a nation famed for *Kultur*' (27). Niven, on the other hand, sees the preoccupation with the theme of illiteracy as being misjudged: he argues that 'Schlink's concern is not with illiteracy itself', and that the notion of shame 'is the key to Hanna' and understanding her function in the novel (382; 383).

Ozick makes another interesting and boldly contentious assertion: that 'the rights of history' should take precedence over 'the rights of the imagination' when authors write fiction on the Holocaust (27). She criticises *Der Vorleser/The Reader* because the 'rights of the imagination' overshadow historical reality within the text. Schlink's depiction of the illiterate SS camp guard is unrepresentative: Hanna is an atypical perpetrator, and her exculpation on the grounds of her illiteracy results in a distortion of the memory and the history of the Holocaust. Thus, 'anomaly sweeps away memory; anomaly displaces history' (27). Two additional 'text crimes' therefore emerge from the critiques of the novel's treatment of illiteracy: that it is historically implausible or even inaccurate, and that its historically unrepresentative depiction of the perpetrator skews the truth of the history it attempts to depict. To put this point a slightly different way: in the case of *Der Vorleser/The Reader*, and by extension all texts concerning the Holocaust, suspension of disbelief is not permissible or acceptable. However, it could equally be argued that such a demand constitutes an assault on authorial and audience freedoms.

Schlink has tried to circumvent such criticism by asserting that Hanna's illiteracy should be viewed symbolically, representing those who had 'forgotten their moral alphabet during the war'.[32] However, at the same time, as Johnson and Finlay assert, Hanna's actual 'illiteracy, and her desire to conceal it, provide the rationale for the novel's entire plot' (197). There thus appears to be an irreconcilable tension between the symbolic message of the narrative (that illiteracy equals immorality and reading equals moral enlightenment) and the function of illiteracy during

the trial (where it acts as a explanatory and mitigating factor in Hanna's guilt). Hanna's suicide, after she learns to read and immerses herself in literature on the Holocaust, has been criticised, in an echo of Ozick, for being an unrepresentative, idealised image of post-war perpetrator behaviour that clashes with available evidence of perpetrator responses to their guilt[33] and reinforces Hanna's status as 'tragic victim' (Hall 464). Here again, the symbolic, moral trajectory of Hanna's story is at odds with historical reality, and this clearly grates with critics.

Bartov extends his criticism of Hanna's depiction as victim to Michael's positioning as 'the victim's victim' through the shame and emotional suffering that he endures for loving a perpetrator (30). In a linked argument, Ernestine Schlant objects to the 'fantasy of reverse restitution' enacted at the end of the novel when Michael visits the last Jewish survivor of the fire and she condemns Hanna's exploitation of him as a fifteen-year-old.[34] Thus the 'victimisation of the successor generation by the perpetrators is validated by a Holocaust victim' (216). Bartov goes one step further in asserting that Michael '*becomes* the Jewish victim' through his role as 'the reader', which echoes the function of the Jewish prisoners Hanna selected to read to her in the camps (34). Alternatively, viewing Hanna and Michael as victims and representatives of first- and second-generation Germans figures 'Germany as victim' (Bartov 34). In the process, the Jewish victims of the Holocaust, as represented by the survivors of the fire, are marginalised. Sansom argues forcefully that the novel is 'less interested in [Hanna's] victims than in her' (12); he cites the fact that the survivors are referred to impersonally as 'the mother' and 'the daughter', noting caustically that 'Schlink does not provide his minor characters with names' (9).

Donahue and Bartov both accuse *Der Vorleser*/*The Reader* of moral obfuscation. Donahue argues that the novel is 'remarkably shy about historical, ethical and legal detail', and contrasts it unfavourably with Peter Weiss's play *Die Ermittlung* (The Investigation), which was largely based on transcripts of the Auschwitz trials (Donahue 2001, 67). Schlink is charged with using the notion of 'Betäubung' [numbness, anaesthetisation] (a deadening of feeling when confronted with the horrors of the camps) to sidestep proper descriptions of their operations, and by extension of Hanna's role in them (Donahue 2001, 68). The numbed narrator Michael comes to embody an 'unreflective moral ambiguity', which is embraced by reviewers such as Tilman Krause, 'who opines that "one will never understand everything, therefore one ought, in order to be fair, to withhold condemnation"' (Krause paraphrased in

Donahue 2001, 80).[35] Bartov concurs with Donahue, arguing that the focus on emotional numbness in the novel is 'a means to avoid responsibility and reject all ethical categories' (34). Both view the question Hanna poses to the judge – 'Was hätten Sie denn gemacht?' (123) (What would you have done?) – as an effective means of deflecting attention from the question of Hanna's guilt. Bartov argues that it universalises guilt for the Holocaust (31), because there is no way that the judge (or indeed the reader) can prove they would have acted differently, while Donahue views it as another rationale for moral paralysis: the judge's inability to provide an adequate answer implies that he and the West German judicial system are not qualified to pass moral judgement upon Hanna as a perpetrator. The centrality accorded this question in the narrative obscures the more relevant and important question that Hanna should be answering, namely 'what did you actually do?' (Donahue 2001, 81).

Collectively, the 'text crimes' outlined so far can be placed in the category of 'crimes against the history and memory of the Holocaust'. A linked, but slightly different set of criticisms falls under the category of 'crimes against literature'. Just as there is polarisation in relation to the subject matter and ethics of *Der Vorleser/The Reader*, so there is polarisation on the question of its aesthetic merits. The dynamics of this sub-debate correlate almost exactly with the positive and negative sides of the content-centred debate: those 'for' the novel view it as a literary masterpiece, while those 'against' consider it to be dross. Christoph Stölzl, delivering the laudatio at the award ceremony for the *Welt-Literaturpreis*, compares the novel to the writings of Gottfried Keller and Thomas Mann. In marked contrast, Raphael accuses Schlink of 'bad writing' (17), while Ozick views the book as 'Nazi porn' (26), a reference to the love affair between Hanna and Michael, described in sensuous detail in the first section of the novel, and faithfully reproduced by the film adaptation. Adler goes a step further in describing the novel as 'cultural pornography', because it 'pretends to offer new moral insights' but does not (17). A similar accusation is made by *Guardian* writer Tanya Gold in relation to the film adaptation, which she sees as forming part of a cultural trend for 'Nazi porn'.[36] Such claims intersect with the accusations of other critics that the novel has a tasteful and sophisticated veneer, but is ultimately shallow. Raphael refers to it as 'trash dressed as art' (17), while Hall suggests it is a 'faux serious novel' – a term defined by Adams as being 'packaged as something you'd be quite proud to get out on a train but which reads like a slightly superior Mills and Boon'

(467).[37] Hall further argues that Schlink uses the popular codes of the romantic novel to aggressively manipulate readers' sympathies in relation to Hanna and Michael as 'tragic lovers' (465). The 'crime' here is not the use of popular conventions per se, but the way in which Schlink 'sells out', by meeting consumer demands for easily digestible texts, and compromising the treatment of Germany's past in the process.

In conclusion: since its publication seventeen years ago, *Der Vorleser/The Reader* has generated a high number of extremely polarised critical responses. The 'text crimes' of which *Der Vorleser/The Reader* stands accused relate mainly to its presentation of the history and memory of the Holocaust: its depiction of Hanna, the former Nazi perpetrator, as victim; its depiction of Michael, and by extension, post-war Germany, as victim; its historical inaccuracies; its moral obfuscations; its manipulation of reader sympathies; its lack of focus on Jewish victims of the Holocaust. In addition, the literary quality of the novel has been repeatedly questioned, and it is predominantly the case that these two 'text crimes' – against the history and memory of the Holocaust on the one hand, and against literature on the other – are closely linked in negative assessments of the text. It is also evident that the majority of these negative assessments originate from Anglo-American reviewers, writers, and academics, who in many but by no means all cases are also Jewish. The same level of criticism is not apparent in the German reception of the novel.

It sometimes remains difficult to separate out reasoned and emotional responses in the debates for and against *Der Vorleser/The Reader*. This controversial text has generated exceptionally heated responses over an unusually long period of time. The literary debate also appears to be non-resolvable. The positions of critics on either side appear to be completely entrenched. Furthermore, reaching consensus on the text does not appear to be viewed as achievable or even desirable by participants of the debate. As Frederic Raphael puts it: '[b]etween those who applaud him and the rest of us there is a serious and important rift. We should not agree to differ, as Schlink seems to think all disputants should. It in no way follows, logically or morally, that since we are all entitled to our opinions, none is better than another' (17). Thus the ideal of the Hegelian dialectic – in which the tensions between thesis and antithesis are resolved in a final stage of synthesis – is unlikely to be enacted in relation to debates about *Der Vorleser/The Reader*. The perceived 'text crimes' of both the novel and its film adaptation continue to be too great for critical compromise to be reached.

For those critical of the novel (including the author of this chapter), *Der Vorleser/The Reader* may be felt to have earned its place in German literary history precisely because of the 'text crimes' it commits. In particular, the novel's positioning of Hanna, Michael, and Germany as 'victim', and the willingness of many German critics and readers to accept these depictions as unproblematic, is significant in highlighting a widespread and continued reluctance within Germany to engage meaningfully with the legacy of National Socialism, the Holocaust and post-war German guilt. The desire to figure Germans as victims of the Second World War has been visible in Germany throughout the post-war era, most notably in the 1950s, 1980s and at the turn of the millennium,[38] but in Schlink's novel, has found an exceptionally powerful and disturbing vehicle for its rewriting of National Socialism and the Holocaust.

Notes

1 Bernhard Schlink, *Der Vorleser*, Zurich: Diogenes, 1995; *The Reader*, trans. by Carol Brown Janeway, London: Duckworth, 1997.

2 Günter Grass, *Die Blechtrommel*, Munich: dtv, 1993 [1959]; Patrick Süßkind, *Das Parfum: Die Geschichte eines Mörders*, Zurich: Diogenes, 1994.

3 Figures obtained via email from Duckworth Publishers (22 November 2010).

4 Aswini Anburajan, 'Breaking down Oprah's Numbers', at: http://firstread.msnbc.msn.com/archive/2007/12/07/502240.aspx (accessed 21 April 2012).

5 Dinitia Smith, 'Seeking Guilt, Finding Fame; German's Novel of Nazi Era Becomes a U.S. Best Seller', *New York Times*, 30 March 1999; David Kirkpatrick, 'Oprah will Curtail "Book Club" Picks and Authors Weep', *New York Times*, 6 April 2002.

6 Figures obtained via email from Orion Books (27 November 2010).

7 Data (21 December 2008 to 24 May 2009) gathered from *New York Times*, at: www.nytimes.com (accessed 18 March 2010). The novel reached its top placing of #2 on 13 March 2009.

8 All translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

9 Rainer Moritz, 'Die Liebe zur Aufseherin: Bernhard Schlinks Roman *Der Vorleser* – ganz einfach ein Glücksfall', *Die Weltwoche*, 23 November 1995; Frederic Raphael, letter, *Times Literary Supplement*, no. 5162, 8 March 2002, p. 17.

10 Volker Hage, 'Der Schatten der Tat', *Der Spiegel*, 47 (1995), 258-63; Dagmar Ploetz, 'Vom Verlust der Unschuld: *Der Vorleser* – ein deutscher Roman', *Freitag*, 17 November 1995; Michael Stölleis, 'Die Schaffnerin', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 9 September 1995.

11 Tilman Krause, 'Keine Elternaustreibung. Ein Höhepunkt im deutschen Bücherherbst: Bernhard Schlinks Roman über 68er und die deutsche Schuld', *Der Tagesspiegel,* 3 September 1995, and 'Die Freiheit des Arrivierten. Bernhard Schlink, Schriftsteller und Juraprofessor', *Der Tagesspiegel*, 28 April 1996.

12 George Steiner, 'He Was Only a Boy but He Was Good in Bed', *The Observer*, 2 November 1997; David Hare, 'On the Journey From Novel to Film of Bernhard Schlink's *The Reader*', *The Guardian*, 13 December.

13 Ulrich Baron, 'Das Buch, auf das wir lange gewartet haben. Abkehr vom Lagerdenken: Die Verleihung des Welt-Literaturpreises an Bernhard Schlink', *Die Welt*, 10 November 1999. See also Tilman Krause, 'Welt-Literaturpreis für Schlink. Liebe zu guten Geschichten: Ein Porträt des Berliner Schriftstellers', *Die Welt*, 16 October 1999.

14 Cynthia Ozick 'The Rights of History and the Rights of the Imagination', *Commentary Magazine*, March 1999, 22-7.

15 Ian Sansom, 'Doubts about *The Reader*', *Salmagundi*, 123:4 (2000), 3-16; Omer Bartov, 'Germany as Victim', *New German Critique*, 80 (2000), 29-40; William Collins Donahue, 'Illusions of Subtlety: Bernhard Schlink's *Der Vorleser* and the Moral Limits of Holocaust Fiction', *German Life and Letters*, 54:1 (2001), 60-81; Sally Johnson and Frank Finlay, '(Il)literacy and (Im)morality in Bernhard Schlink's *The Reader*', *Written Language and Literacy*, 4:2 (2001), 195-214.

16 Kathleen Bogan, 'Pressures of Peace', *Times Literary Supplement,* no. 5159, 15 February 2002, p. 23.

17 Gabriel Josipovici, letter, *Times Literary Supplement,* no. 5163, 15 March 2002, p. 17; Jeremy Adler, letter, *Times Literary Supplement*, no. 5164, 22 March 2002, p. 17.

18 Jeremy Adler, 'Die Kunst, Mitleid mit den Mördern zu erzwingen', *Süddeutsche Zeitung,* 20 April 2002; Willi Winkler, 'Vorlesen, Duschen,

Durcharbeiten', *Süddeutsche Zeitung,* 30 March 2002; Volker Hage, 'Autoren unter Generalverdacht', *Der Spiegel*, 9 April 2002, at: www.spiegel.de/kultur/literatur/0,1518,190969,00.html (accessed 21 April 2012).

19 Beate M. Dreike, 'Was wäre denn Gerechtigkeit? Zur Rechtsskepsis in Bernhard Schlinks *Der Vorleser*', *German Life and Letters*, 55:1 (2002), 117-29; Bill Niven, 'Bernhard Schlink's *Der Vorleser* and the Problem of Shame', *Modern Language Review*, 98:2 (2003), 381-96.

20 Daniel Reynolds, 'Portrait of Misreading: Bernhard Schlink's *Der Vorleser*', *Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies*, 39:3 (2003), 238-56; Jeffrey Roth, 'Reading and Misreading *The Reader*', *Law and Literature*, 16:10 (2004), 163-77. See also Richard H. Weisberg, 'A Sympathy That Does Not Condone', *Law and Literature* 16:2 (2004), 229-35.

21 William Collins Donahue, 'The Popular Culture Alibi: Bernhard Schlink's Detective Novels and the Culture of Politically Correct Holocaust Literature', *The German Quarterly*, 77:4 (2004), 462-81; Katharina Hall, 'The Author, the Novel, the Reader and the Perils of *Neue Lesbarkeit*: A Comparative Analysis of Bernhard Schlink's *Selbs Justiz* and *Der Vorleser*', *German Life and Letters*, 59:3 (2006), 72-88.

22 Frederic Raphael, 'Bad Beyond Imagination', *Standpoint Magazine*, March 2009, www.standpointmag.co.uk (accessed 18 March 2010). Contrast Rex Reed's 'Oskar, Oskar! *The Reader*'s Winslet Left Me Gasping', *The New York Observer*, 8 December 2008, at: www.observer.com/2008/12/oscar-oscar-the-readers-winslet-left-me-gasping/ (accessed 22 April 2012). Reed views the film as 'a miracle of delicacy, psychological insight and surprising hopefulness as one generation seeks retribution for the sins of their fathers'.

23 William Collins Donahue, *Holocaust as Fiction: Bernhard Schlink's 'Nazi' Novels and their Films*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

24 Adapted from the publisher's summary, at: www.orionbooks.co.uk/reading-room/reading-guides/the-reader (accessed 21 April 2012).

25 Bernhard Schlink, *Selb-Trilogie: Selbs Justiz, Selbs Betrug, Selbs Mord*, Zürich: Diogenes, 2010. The first, *Selbs Justiz*, was co-authored with Walter Popp.

26 Bartov, 'Germany as Victim', p. 30; see also Sansom, 'Doubts', p. 9.

27 Donahue, 'Illusions of Subtlety', 2001, p. 72; Johnson and Finlay, '(Il)literacy and (Im)morality', p. 200; Hall, 'The Author, the Novel, the Reader', p. 460.

28 Donahue, 'Illusions of Subtlety', 2001, p. 61; Hall, 'The Author, the Novel, the Reader', p. 460.

29 Ozick, 'The Rights of History', p. 27, Bartov, 'Germany as Victim', p. 3.

30 Donahue, 'Illusions of Subtlety', 2001, p. 75; Hall, 'The Author, the Novel, the Reader', p. 465.

31 More recently, Kim L. Worthington examines the figure of Michael as a narrator heavily involved in the process of exculpation and as a case study in the limits of forgiveness, in 'Suturing the Wound: Derrida's "On Forgiveness" and Schlink's *The Reader*', *Comparative Literature*, 63:2 (2011), 203-24.

32 Josephine Hart, 'The Reader, the Writer: Interview with Bernhard Schlink', *The Telegraph Magazine*, 25 September 1999, 60-4 (here: 64).

33 See for example Gitta Sereny's account of her conversations with Franz Stangl, former commander of Treblinka. Gitta Sereny, 'Colloquy with a Conscience', in: Gitta Sereny, *The German Trauma: Experiences and Reflections 1938-2000*, London, Penguin, 2000, pp.87-134.

34 Ernestine Schlant, *The Language of Silence: West German Literature and the Holocaust*, NY and London: Routledge, 1999, p. 216.

35 In his essay 'Illusions of Subtlety', Donahue argues that reviewers and readers confuse 'moral sophistication' with 'indecision or undecidability' (2001, 60). The latter dominates the narrative in the form of the strings of pseudo-philosophical questions that Michael asks himself, which hang in the air but are rarely answered. See for example *Der Vorleser*, pp.99-100, 101-2 and 127-8.

36 Tanya Gold, 'Nazi Cows, Nazi Cats, Actors Playing Depressed Nazis. It's All Just Hitler Porn and It Disgusts Me', *The Guardian*, 23 April 2009, at: www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/apr/23/nazi-culture-film-hitler (accessed 21 April 2012).

37 See Tim Adams, 'Read 'em and Weep', *Observer Review*, 13 July 2003.

38 For useful overviews, see Robert G. Moeller, *War Stories: The Search for a Useable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2001; Bill Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past: United Germany and the Legacy of the Holocaust*, London, Routledge, 2002.

Julian Preece

Incitements to Murder? The Killing of Businessmen in Fiction and Drama of the 2000s

This chapter concerns the depiction of businessmen as murder victims in two novels, Franz-Maria Sonner's *Die Bibliothek des Attentäters* (2001, The Assassin's Library) and Thomas Weiss's *Tod eines Trüffelschweins* (2007, Death of a Truffle Pig), and the discussion of such murders in Rolf Hochhuth's play *McKinsey kommt* (2003, McKinsey is Coming). It argues with reference to Hochhuth's long public career that authors need not only be the victims of 'text crimes': they can commit such crimes themselves. All three works deal with the legacy of Baader-Meinhof terrorism and respond to economic developments in Germany prior to the world financial crisis. Hochhuth faced the threat of legal action from the Deutsche Bank and Weiss was publicly congratulated by former RAF leader Christian Klar. Yet Sonner's more outrageous distortion of his unacknowledged historical source (transforming the real Jewish victim Heinz Herbert Karry into a fictional Nazi war criminal) has so far gone unnoticed. Undercurrents of anti-Semitism are present in Weiss's novel, as they also have been in Hochhuth's oeuvre (for instance, his 1984 play *Judith*). The authors' 'text crimes' have been compounded by critics' failure to react to them.

> Frage: Was ist der Unterschied zwischen Baader-Meinhof und den Bankern?
> Antwort: Nicht alle sympathisieren mit den Bankern.
> (Question: What is the difference between Baader-Meinhof and the Bankers?
> Answer: Not everybody sympathises with the bankers.)
> (Joke in circulation in Germany during the financial crisis of 2008, 31 years after the highpoint of terrorism: the German Autumn.)

In the western world we side instinctively with writers when they are accused of crimes by the powerful, be they representatives of political power, the press, or organised religion. The oppression of writers in modern German history could be said to have begun with the Carlsbad Decrees promulgated in 1819 to shore up the already crumbling authority of the illegitimate regimes foisted on the German-speaking

lands in the post-Napoleonic settlement. Writers such as Georg Büchner and Heinrich Heine fled oppression in their native country and are today celebrated as champions of free speech and representatives of the 'better Germany'. Yet the Carlsbad Decrees were prompted by the assassination of the popular playwright August von Kotzebue by the revolutionary Karl Ludwig Sand, who acted in the belief that he was striking a blow for freedom. The opposition between writers and power is not always as straightforward as we may think, or as celebrated interventions such as that made by the novelist Emile Zola in the Dreyfus Affair, lead us to assume. Nor are the forces ranged against writers in a free society as eager to dispute with them as they once were or perhaps still should be.

In the works under discussion here, Rolf Hochhuth (b. 1931), Germany's most famous living playwright, and Thomas Weiss (b. 1964), an emerging author eager to establish himself in the literary landscape, took their cue from arguments about economics which were conducted in Germany in the wake of unification and which reached a climax in the mid-2000s. Franz-Maria Sonner (b.1953) reacted to debates about the violent pasts of left-wing politicians such as Joschka Fischer, one of a number of '1968er' to find himself in government after the formation of a Red-Green Coalition in 1998, when Sonner's novel is set. All three deal with the legacy of left-wing terrorism. Hochhuth of course has a track record when it comes to provoking accusations from the powerful. *Der Stellvertreter* (1963, The Deputy), which made his name in Germany and internationally, portrayed the indifference of the Pope to the persecution and extermination of the Jews in the Third Reich. It still cannot be performed in the Free State of Bavaria and provokes protests from the Catholic Church wherever it is staged. Hochhuth then shared with Günter Grass the distinction of being denounced by Chancellor Ludwig Erhard in an election speech in July 1965. The speech quickly entered political folklore and was described by Erhard's biographer as the biggest own goal of his career.[1] Grass's offence was to be making speeches in favour of Willy Brandt and the SPD, Hochhuth's to have published an essay entitled 'Der Klassenkampf ist nicht zu Ende' (The Class Struggle is Not Over), which made claims about inequality and poverty in the Federal Republic which did not sit easily with Erhard's understanding of the social market economy which he was credited with having created.[2] Hochhuth was supported by the entirety of the West German liberal establishment in waiting (they were set to end the Christian Democrats' long hold on power at the next elections four years later). According to Ulrike Meinhof, however, who praised Hochhuth's analysis unreservedly,

their concentration on the controversy served to deflect attention from what he had actually said.[3] The next Hochhuth scandal was generated by his second play *Soldaten* (1967, Soldiers) and was played out as much in England as in Germany. In the play, Hochhuth depicts Winston Churchill's role both in the war-time bombing of German cities and in the death of the exiled Polish resistance leader General Sikorski, whose plane crashed on 4 July 1943 shortly after taking off from Gibraltar, in circumstances which looked suspicious. Polish nationalists always suspected that the British were behind the crash. The British had reasons to eliminate Sikorski, who was as opposed to the Soviet Union, Britain's new ally, as he was to Nazi Germany. As a result of a lawsuit brought against Hochhuth by the pilot of the plane, who survived the crash, he was ordered in 1972 to pay £50,000 damages plus costs.[4] It is to avoid paying this money that Hochhuth has not visited the UK since this date.

Hochhuth's next public coup was the resignation in 1978 of the Ministerpräsident of Baden-Württemberg, Karl Hans Filbinger. Hochhuth revealed in a television programme that as a judge in the Reichsmarine, Filbinger carried on signing death sentences until the last days of the war. Filbinger was foolish enough to sue him, which brought even more unfavourable details to light.[5] The editors of a recent book of essays on Hochhuth see this as one of his greatest achievements after writing *Der Stellvertreter*: it is the only time that a West German political office holder was forced to resign because his Nazi past was revealed.[6] In *Wessis in Weimar. Szenen aus einem besetzten Land* (1993, Wessis in Weimar. Scenes from an Occupied Country) Hochhuth once again courted controversy, as David Barnett explains in this volume. It is of interest here because the sequence of scenes begins with what amounts to an explanation of the assassination on 1 April 1991 of Karsten Detlev Rohwedder, the chairman of the Treuhand, the organisation which was established by Helmut Kohl to transfer the GDR's state-owned industries into private ownership or close them down if buyers could not be found, as was far more likely to be the case. The result of the Treuhand's actions was the closure of factories and widespread unemployment in the 'new federal states' of the former communist East Germany. In the scene in question, entitled 'Der Vollstrecker' (The Enforcer), the Rohwedder character and an academic named Hildegard discuss the rights and wrongs of what the Treuhand is doing and the likelihood that Rohwedder will pay for his deeds with his own life, such is the anger and despair among those adversely affected. The scene ends with a shot fired by an unseen hand from off-stage.

When we turn to the background of *Soldaten* (1967), the much awaited second play, alarm bells should start to sound in the narrative of Hochhuth's career as a polemicist and 'writer accused'. The play is based on two books by the British writer and Nazi apologist, David Irving. Irving's 1963 account of the Allied bombing of Dresden in February 1945 is, incidentally, cited approvingly in another article by Meinhof.[7] In another work, published in 1967, Irving also brought the conspiracy theories surrounding the death of Sikorski to wider attention.[8] Like Hochhuth, Irving is no stranger to controversy and Hochhuth stuck by him during his London trial in 2000, when Irving unsuccessfully sued the American historian Deborah Lippstadt for calling him a Holocaust denier, and in 2006 when he was imprisoned in Austria, where Holocaust denial is a criminal offence. Irving's Dresden book played a significant role in the court case. It is the subject of a chapter in Richard Evans' account of the trial from his perspective as an expert historical witness. Evans demonstrated to the satisfaction of the court that Irving had falsified the number of German dead, multiplying the probable figure of up to 25,000 by as much as ten.[9] In *Soldaten* Churchill is portrayed as a tragic figure, forced to become guilty by doing wrong (bombing German civilians) in order to combat a greater wrong (Nazism). The portrayal is nuanced, but ordinary Germans are still presented as the victims.

Germans are victims too in Hochhuth's topical play from the 1980s, *Judith* (1984), which tackles the subject of assassinating the American President in order to save the Germans from obliteration in nuclear war. One of the sub-themes in *Judith* is that the atomic bomb, through which the superpowers threatened both German states with annihilation, was invented by Jewish scientists. Hochhuth taps into a discourse that sees the Germans in the 1980s as victims of the unscrupulous Americans:

> *Professor* [. . .] wir haben ja nicht nur die zwei Ozeane,
> sondern vor allem diese
> unsagbar dummen Deutschen, die unser Gift lagern
> wie Bier.
> Eine Herde von Lemmingen
> – seit sie keine Horde von Banditen mehr sind,
> unbegreifliches Volk:
> seine Dummheit heute entspricht fast
> seiner Grausamkeit unter Hitler![10]
>
> (*Professor*: [. . .] we have not merely two oceans
> but above all these

unbelievably stupid Germans, who store our poison
as if it were beer.
A herd of lemmings
– since they stopped being a bandit gang,
incomprehensible people:
their stupidity today is almost like
their cruelty under Hitler!)

Hochhuth takes this argument a stage further. Gerald, Judith's fiancé, offers the view that the people who used gas in Auschwitz should not cry 'crocodile tears' if they themselves are now subjected to a gas attack:

Judith: So dürftest du nicht einmal reden,
wenn du Jude wärst …
Gerald: Es sind aber Juden unter denen,
die hier die Planung machen
– so wie die Juden die Atombombe mitgebaut haben. (2227)

(*Judith*: You would not be permitted to talk like that
even if you were Jewish . . .
Gerald: But there are Jews among those
who are making the plans
– just as the Jews helped build the atom bomb.)

The Germans are thus now potentially the victims of the Jews. Judith confirms who invented the new neutron bomb, which can kill people while not harming property:

Teiresias: Der die erfunden hat, den kennen Sie auch?
Judith: Nein, den sah ich nie, Herrn Dr. Cohen. (2254)

(*Teiresias*: The man who invented it, do you know him too?
Judith: No, I never saw Dr Cohen.)

The Jews are now responsible both for the possible destruction of Germany in 1984 and for the invention of the neutron bomb. Judith, the heroine of German resistance, is fighting against them. Hochhuth's anti-American rebellion is a nationalist enterprise, which brings out what some critics have felt was latent in Meinhof's thinking and in the RAF itself. *Judith* has received scant critical attention, although the original German productions were widely reviewed.[11] It articulates, however, a

strain of thinking which will come to the surface once more in Thomas Weiss's *Tod eines Trüffelschweins*.

Hochhuth's plays are vehicles for his own opinions. In an interview with *manager magazin* in June 1992, a year and two months after the Rohwedder murder, he tied himself in rhetorical knots as he denied that he was calling for such assassinations in *Wessis in Weimar* by explaining what motivated them. At the same time, he regretted that attempts on Hitler's life had not been successful and that Communist leaders in the former eastern bloc states never even faced the threat of assassination.

> *mm*: Sie schildern einerseits, wie es die DDR-Bevölkerung nach zwei Diktaturen nicht geschafft hat, sich zu wehren. Gleichzeitig vermitteln Sie aber den Zuschauern die Botschaft: Erhebt euch, steckt die Häuser an, wehrt euch, und selbst politischer Mord ist vielleicht nicht das beste, aber er ist doch begründbar. In der ehemaligen DDR werden Sie ein Publikum dafür finden.
> *Hochhuth*: Nein, nein. Ich muß eindeutig darauf hinweisen, meine Hildegard propagiert nicht den politischen Mord. Sie sagt, und in der Realität gebe ich ihr recht: Wer so etwas tut wie Rohwedder, gegen eine wehrlose Bevölkerung, die im Einigungsverfahren niemals zu dieser Frage gehört worden ist, soll sich nicht wundern, wenn er erschossen wird.[12]

> (*mm*: On the one hand you describe how after two dictatorships the population of the GDR has not managed to defend itself. At the same time you convey to the audience the message that they should rise up, set fire to houses, defend themselves. Even political murder, while perhaps not the best solution, can be justified. In the former GDR you will find people eager to listen to you.
> *Hochhuth*: No, no. I have to make clear that my character Hildegard does not advocate political murder. She says, and in reality I do agree with her, that anyone who does the sort of things Rohwedder does, against a defenceless population, that was never consulted on this question during the process of unification, should not be surprised if he gets shot dead.)

Günter Grass also dealt with the Rohwedder assassination in a similar way in his great novel of reunification *Ein weites Feld* (1995, *Too far Afield*), which was widely denounced in the German press on publication for its negative portrayal of the *Wende*.[13] The presumed assassin in this novel is an apparently anonymous East Berlin cleaning lady whose husband has been thrown out of work. There is little question that Grass' narrative sympathy lies with her. Yet, like Hochhuth, Grass gives a depth to the

character of 'der Chef' (the Boss), who is aware of the consequences that the Treuhand is having in the everyday lives of millions of his new compatriots. Among leftist or liberal German writers, however, there is no agreement on Rohwedder's role in the momentous events of 1990-91. An alternative take on his murder is the basis for a bestselling detective novel by Wolfgang Schorlau. Here the killing is blamed on the secret service in the pay of big finance.[14] Far from laying waste to East German state enterprises in the name of red-blooded capitalism, Schorlau's Rohwedder has a plan to make them into workers' cooperatives. He has to be removed to stop him putting it into effect.

Nationalism is the red thread which runs through Hochhuth's work, from *Der Stellvertreter*, which deflected attention away from German guilt and onto the Catholic Church, through key works of the following decades up to *McKinsey kommt* (2003, McKinsey is Coming), which presents foreign capitalists, in particular Americans, as the villains.[15] McKinsey & Co. is an American firm of management consultants who became associated with the downsizing of German companies. Cutting the cost of personnel, or 'reducing head count' in the jargon, appeared to be their solution every time they were hired to provide advice. McKinsey became proverbial for a hard-nosed 'neoliberal' and 'Anglo-Saxon' way of doing business which put profit for the few before the interests of employees.[16] Hochhuth's subtitle describes the play as a 'Schauspiel in fünf Akten mit fünf Epilogen' (A Play in Five Acts with Five Epilogues). The first four acts depict separate scenarios on the same theme, brought together in the final act which takes the form of a court case in which the judge and lawyers are played by some of the characters who have appeared already. The case is about whether 'the right to work' should be included in the Basic Law; the court is the Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe. For Hochhuth, this is a question the nation must ask itself. At the end of the play, the European Union flag is burned, on the grounds that it is a copy of the American Stars and Stripes and Europe has followed America in making 'den Profit zu unserem einzigen Gott' (profit into our only god).[17] *McKinsey kommt* has only been performed twice. It was panned by the critics both as a piece of theatre and for its economic arguments, but it filled the Brandenburger Theater in Brandenburg an der Havel on its opening run in 2004.

In *McKinsey kommt* Hochhuth reprises several themes, as well as motifs and arguments, from his earlier *Wessis in Weimar*. The second play is also formally close to the first in that it consists of a series of loosely connected scenes. Ideas or opinions come before formal innovation,

however. *McKinsey kommt* was intended as a contribution to the increasingly polarised discussion on the appropriate economic model for the new Germany to adopt. There seemed to be just two on offer. On the one hand, there was corporate 'Rhenish capitalism', still associated with Erhard's original Economic Miracle and characterised by social partnership and a strong welfare state, but now said to be unaffordable. On the other, there was neoliberalism as allegedly practised in Anglo-Saxon countries which championed deregulation and reduced benefits for employees. Such reductions were, in theory, offset by greater all-round efficiency in wealth creation, from which the majority could ultimately profit. By the early 2000s there was no question that Britain and America were enjoying greater levels of sustained economic growth than Germany (a situation which, at the time of writing, has been dramatically reversed). When the Social Democrat Chancellor Gerhard Schröder pushed through his 'Agenda 2010' reforms after the re-election of the Red-Green Coalition in 2002, his allies on the Left feared that neoliberalism had won the argument. Here was a coalition of left-of-centre parties passing economic reforms which their right-of-centre counterparts had shied away from passing when they were in power. German voters were not convinced. The SPD lost every election contest which followed. After the loss of its heartland state of North Rhine Westphalia in May 2005, Schröder announced his intention to stage a vote of no confidence in his own government, dissolve the Bundestag one year early and hold a fresh general election. Some of his party colleagues, including his erstwhile finance minister Oskar Lafontaine, had already abandoned the SPD to make common cause with remnants of the former GDR ruling party, which soon afterwards became Die Linke (The Left). In the 2005 election, Angela Merkel's CDU campaigned for more radical neoliberal reforms than those that Schröder himself had introduced, enabling the Social Democrats to position themselves to her left and, effectively, to argue against their own measures. The result was that the SPD came within a whisker of overhauling the CDU's originally massive opinion poll lead. In the Grand Coalition of SPD (minus Schröder) and CDU led by Merkel which was eventually formed, she got the credit for pursuing basically Social Democratic policies. The political situation was stabilised, but Die Linke established itself as a fifth force in German politics. The economic analysis in both Hochhuth's *McKinsey kommt* and Thomas Weiss's *Tod eines Trüffelschweins* is broadly in line with that of this new party of GDR-revivalists. The debt crisis which overtook the West in 2008 is widely

seen across the political spectrum in Germany as a vindication of their rejection of neoliberal, Anglo-Saxon economic methods.

Before the premiere of *McKinsey kommt*, after advance publication of the script, the Deutsche Bank let it be known it was considering legal action against the playwright for incitement to murder its chairman Josef Ackermann, whose name is mentioned in the play.[18] The bank had reason to be sensitive. One of Ackermann's predecessors, Alfred Herrhausen, was blown up by the RAF on 30 November 1989. However, the bank quickly dropped the legal threat against Hochhuth. As for McKinsey & Co., they actually made a group booking for employees to see the play.[19] The premiere in February 2004 did not generate the scandal that some had anticipated. Aesthetic weaknesses in the dramatic construction and the quality of the dialogue may be one reason, but that applied also to *Wessis in Weimar*.[20] A consensus that Hochhuth's basic analysis and presentation of the facts in *McKinsey kommt* were not far wide of the mark is another possible explanation. The reviewer in the liberal *Süddeutsche Zeitung* is typical in agreeing wholeheartedly with the play's thesis, which she summarises more efficiently than any passage in the play itself:

> Beginnen wir mit ein paar Fakten. Fakten müssen sein, und das Stück ist voll davon: Die Manager von Mercedes konnten nach dem Kauf des pleite gegangenen Chrysler-Konzerns ihre Gehälter dem amerikanischen Standard anpassen und von 2,5 auf jährlich 15,5 Millionen versechsfachen. Wir wiederholen: versechsfachen. Das ist vierhundert Mal so viel, wie sie einem Arbeiter zahlen. Anderes Beispiel: Deutsche Bank. Das traditionsreiche deutsche Geldinstitut hat 2001/2002, im erfolgreichsten Jahr seit seinem Bestehen, 9,4 Milliarden Euro Reingewinn gemacht, gleichzeitig jedoch mehr als 11 000 Mitarbeiter entlassen. Der Chef, Josef Ackermann, verdient jährlich 6,95 Millionen Euro. Um die 'Effizienz' zu steigern, hat die Deutsche Bank 179 000 Stunden lang McKinsey im Haus gehabt, Mercedes 228 000 Stunden. Pro Stunde verlangt das Beratungsunternehmen 300 Euro. 'Wenn man vor hundert Jahren Gründerzeit sagte, so heute McKinsey-Zeit', konstatiert in dem Stück der Boss eines Tabak-Konzerns. Woraufhin seine Referentin 'den kleinen Unterschied' ergänzt: 'Die Fabrikanten der Gründerjahre gründeten Arbeitsplätze, McKinsey liquidiert sie'.[21]
>
> (Let us begin with a few facts. You have to have facts and the play is full of them. After the purchase of the bankrupt Chrysler company the managers of Mercedes were able to adjust their salaries to the American norm, increasing them six-fold from 2.5 to 15.5 million per annum. We

> repeat: six-fold. That is 400 times what they pay their workers. Another example: the Deutsche Bank. The historic German finance institution made a profit of 9.4 billion in 2001-2, the most successful year in its history, but at the same time made more than 11,000 workers redundant. The boss, Josef Ackermann, earns 6.95 million euros a year. In order to increase 'efficiency' the Deutsche Bank brought in McKinsey for a total of 179,000 hours. Mercedes paid them for 228,000 hours. The consultancy firm charges 300 euros per hour. The boss of a tobacco company remarks in the play: 'If a hundred years ago people spoke of the Foundation Years [after the founding of the Second Empire], today they should say McKinsey Years'. His assistant then points out the 'small difference': 'The manufacturers in the Foundation Years founded jobs, McKinsey liquidates them'.)

On the face of it, it would be difficult to disagree that this state of affairs was distasteful, indeed downright wrong, except that it has never been claimed that private companies exist in order to provide employment for the highest possible number of workers. Nor was the increase in executive salaries the cause of the job losses.

The Deutsche Bank may not have been wrong to allege incitement to murder (which is not to say that they should have gone ahead with a court case). In the play, Hochhuth returns repeatedly to the question of politically or economically justified assassination. The references are made via Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*, the RAF, and Klaus von Stauffenberg. In a conversation between a judge and his granddaughter, who has founded a new party for the unemployed, about Daimler-Chrysler first taking over and then closing the oldest train carriage works in Switzerland, with the loss of 800 jobs, the judge exclaims that the boss should have paid the ultimate price: 'Schade, die Belegschaft hat diesen Hund nicht gelyncht!' (A pity that the employees did not lynch that dog). A foreign capitalist, in this case a German in Switzerland, is the villain. Foreigners have less concern for the jobs of the local population than native capitalists would have. The granddaughter compares the situation to William Tell's assassination of the oppressive Habsburg governor:

> Was hat Geßler getan, gemessen an *dem*?
> Geßler hat den Eidgenossen, für seinen Habsburger,
> der übrigens Schweizer war, den Zehnten abkassiert –
> wer wäre heute nicht selig, er zahlte nur 10 Prozent!
> Doch dieser Deutsche nimmt Schweizern die Existenz –
> Folglich: warum nicht auch ihm das Leben nehmen
> Wie Tell dem Geßler! (19)

(What did Geßler do compared with *him*?
Geßler collected the tithe from the Swiss for his
Habsburg boss, incidentally himself a Swiss too –
Who today would not be happy to pay just 10 per cent!
This German takes from the Swiss the very means to exist –
consequently: why don't we take his life
as Tell took Geßler's?)

Tell's killing of Geßler is the founding act of the Swiss Confederation, so this is a nationalist argument. Since *McKinsey kommt* is a German play performed in Germany, the German audience is being invited to identify with the Swiss victims. At the end of the first act, in the first epilogue, the playwright Schiller is then linked up to the RAF:

Die 'FAZ' lehrt A.'s rechtlose Opfer als 'Umbau' tarnen!
"Tritt" A. nur zurück wie Geßler durch – Tell?
Schleyer, Ponto, Herrhausen *warnen.* (23)

(The 'FAZ' [*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*] teaches that A's victims who
are without rights are to be disguised as 'restructuring'!
If A. just "retired" as Geßler was made to do by Tell?
Schleyer, Ponto, Herrhausen *are warnings.*)

'A' is Josef Ackermann of the Deutsche Bank, which sanctioned the takeover of the company Mannesmann by (British) Vodafone. Hanns-Martin Schleyer, Jürgen Ponto and Alfred Herrhausen were the RAF's three most prominent victims from the world of business and finance. In the next act, two young women workers who have just lost their jobs discuss whether a bomb planted in the right place would have any effect. One of them says that in the old days, when they still had the Berlin Wall, companies behaved differently to their workers. The other replies that it had nothing to do with the Wall:

Nee, damals hatten die Geldsäcke noch Schiß,
Terroristen würden sie entführen und plattmachen.
Nur deswegen hamse damals gekuscht. (31)

(Nah, back then the money bags were shit scared
that terrorists would kidnap and gun them down.
That's the only reason they played ball back then.)

The final comparison is to the Nazis and presents Germans as their victims. In Act 4 a dismissed worker asks:

> wo ist der Unterschied, ob dich einer *uniformiert* in die Wüste schickt wie der Hitler sein Afrikakorps – oder in Zivil in die Wüste schickt wie unser Boss *uns* … hast doch neulich den Stauffenberg-Film gesehen? (57)
>
> (where is the difference between sending you into the desert wearing a uniform, like Hitler did with his Afrikakorps --- or sending you into the desert in civilian clothing, like our boss is sending us ... did you see the new Stauffenberg film?)

Hochhuth's defence is that as a playwright he is not advocating any particular course of action but *showing* how circumstances could lead others to take such steps. As he explained to *manager magazin* in 1993, if such businessmen get shot then they should not be surprised. The difference between *Wessis in Weimar* and *McKinsey kommt* is that in the former play, Hochhuth's explanation for Rohwedder's murder was provided after the event. In the latter play, in contrast, he is predicting what could happen to people with similar roles in the capitalist economy in the future.

The two novels which are the focus of my attention in the second half of this chapter both feature businessmen who are murdered for their roles in the capitalist economy. One is said to be a Nazi war criminal and the other is American and of possibly Jewish extraction. The murder in Franz Maria Sonner's *Die Bibliothek des Attentäters* (2001) occurs in 1984 and is based on a real case which took place in Frankfurt three years earlier (though Sonner does not acknowledge this source). Sonner offers motivating factors for the murderer in the politics of the 1980s. They include: NATO rearmament and the SPD-led coalition's agreement to the stationing of new atomic missiles in the FRG; the Flick corruption scandal, which involved illegal donations by the Flick conglomerate to individual politicians and political parties; the CIA campaign against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua; the presidency of Ronald Reagan; and the building of another runway at Frankfurt Airport, the famous Startbahn West. The novel is in two parts, 'Damals' and 'Heute'; the second part is three times as long as the first. *Die Bibliothek des Attentäters* is an intellectual 'krimi' which refers indirectly to Dostoyevsky (though more *Crime and Punishment* than his terrorist novel, *The Possessed*) and Russian anarchist history at the end of the nineteenth century. The novel was not reprinted but can count as a succès d'estime.[22]

'Damals' recounts how the central character (Jakob Amon) comes to shoot a leading industrialist (Karmann) dead in his sleep. Jakob's intention was to wound only, as he aimed his fire at what he thought were his victim's legs. Sonner makes it impossible for the reader to feel sympathy for Karmann. As an SS officer towards the end of the Second World War, Karmann ordered the killing of sixty civilian hostages in occupied Czechoslovakia. In the intervening forty years, he has become a leading figure in the business world and is now president of the 'Industry Conference'. He supports nuclear power and the extension of Frankfurt airport. Sonner has borrowed some biographical details from Hanns-Martin Schleyer, but neither Schleyer nor any of the RAF's other victims could be accused of a war crime. The idea that such a figure as Karmann could be officially protected in the Federal Republic in 1984 represents the point where this clever, highly literary novel begins to falsify rather than adapt the history that is its subject.

When Karmann is found dead in his bed, the retired chief of police Konrad Bärloch (based loosely on the former head of the Bundeskriminalamt, Horst Herold) works out immediately that Jakob was the murderer. The material for an article on Karmann published by the Jewish concentration camp survivor Gabor Demeter had come via Jakob's commissioning editor at the broadcasting station Hessischer Rundfunk. The retired Bärloch does not tell anyone his solution to the mystery, because he is not asked. Not all parts of the novel add up, and the denouement is not as powerful as the exposition. Jakob is finally murdered, also unintentionally. The plot becomes overcomplicated. A far bigger problem is Sonner's adaptation of his unacknowledged historical source. While there is no historical model for Karmann, the Revolutionary Cells (RZ) did claim the murder of the FDP politician Heinz-Herbert Karry, Economics Minister for the state of Hesse, on May 11, 1981. He was shot in his bed, in Frankfurt, and his attackers claimed in a communiqué that they aimed for his legs with the intent to wound, rather than kill, just as Jakob did with Karmann.[23] Karry supported the building of a new runway at Frankfurt Airport, and was an advocate of nuclear power. As the national treasurer of the FDP, he was also implicated in the Flick Affair. Karry's murderers have never been identified. The RZ did not as a rule carry out such shootings and the authenticity of the communiqué published in their name some four weeks after the murder has been questioned.

It later transpired, however, that in 1984 the murder weapon, which had been stolen from an American army base in 1970, was found in a car

belonging to Joschka Fischer. In 1998, when the second part of *Die Bibliothek des Attentäters* is set, Fischer became Foreign Minister and deputy Federal Chancellor in the Red-Green Coalition. The right-wing press used his connections to the RZ to discredit him; the story was raked over in the media once more in early 2001, when Fischer was called as a witness in the trial of former RZ member Hans-Joachim Klein. By now the case was ripe to be turned into a thriller.[24]

The problem for Sonner is that Karry was not in the SS. His past, in fact, could not have been more different, as he was half-Jewish. His father was sent to a concentration camp and he himself worked as a forced labourer under the Nazis. Sonner thus does more than simplify or adapt his source, as novelists are obliged to do; he turns it inside out. With such a high-profile and recent incident so rich in conflicted symbolic meanings, it is worth wondering why. One explanation is retrospective wishful thinking. From the point of view of 2001, a target of the Revolutionary Cells ought to have had links with the Nazis rather than with their victims. Yet picking a Jewish victim would not have been completely out of step with RZ policy. Some of their members operated out of bases in the Middle East that were run by anti-Israel Arab militants, who did not always recognize the distinction between 'Jewish' and 'Zionist'. A number worked with 'Carlos the Jackal', whose own first mission was to shoot the Jewish president of the British retailer Marks and Spencer because of his support for Israel.[25] The two Germans who notoriously selected the Jewish passengers from the hijacked Air France plane at Entebbe in 1976 were in the RZ. Moreover, Frankfurt is the likely setting for Rainer Werner Fassbinder's controversial play, *Der Müll, die Stadt und der Tod* (Garbage, the City and Death, 1975) which has regularly been accused of anti-Semitism because of the way a Jewish landlord is depicted.

Sonner is not interested in taking any of this on, however. The political questions in his novel have to be black and white. His German-Jewish politics appear in other respects impeccable, but the suspicion lingers that he is compensating for altering his source material so radically. *Die Bibliothek des Attentäters* does feature a Jewish character with a Holocaust past. Gabor Demeter, who attempts to expose leading industrialist Karmann's war record, has published a memoir of his experiences that plays a key role in the plot. Demeter himself refuses to reveal his Jewishness to newspaper editors, whom he tries to interest in the Karmann story. Were he to do so, he explains to his wife, they would take his story for that reason, and he wants them to publish it on its

merits and because they are interested in exposing a war criminal. The idea here is that a Jewish journalist can get anything about the Nazi past published, only because he is Jewish. This is at best a slur and it goes unchallenged in the novel.

The Holocaust references do not end here. Sonner uses the title of Demeter's memoir, *Mein Leben* (My Life), as the title of his last chapter. This title was also chosen by the revered literary critic and Holocaust survivor Marcel Reich-Ranicki for his autobiography published in 1999.[26] Sonner refers three times to the title of another recent representation of the Holocaust, Roberto Benigni's acclaimed but controversial film, *Life Is Beautiful* (1998). Marco Sentenza, Jakob's friend who helps Bärloch identify Brill as Jakob's accidental murderer, resolves at the end to make the best of his future, having narrowly escaped Brill's vengeance with his life. Sentenza is approaching his fortieth birthday and wants to view his problems from a sunnier perspective. After all: 'Das Leben ist schön' (Life is beautiful.). This sentence both ends *Die Bibliothek des Attentäters* and serves as its epigraph. But only at the end of the novel is it made clear that the reference is to the film: 'abends werde ich wieder Filme einlegen: Roberto Benigni, Das Leben ist schön' (215) (in the evening I'll watch some films again: Roberto Benigni, *Life Is Beautiful*). The life of Benigni's central character, an Italian Jew, appears to be beautiful until he and his young son are deported to a concentration camp by the Nazis. His non-Jewish wife insists on accompanying them. He attempts to hide the horrific reality of what has befallen them from their son by turning what is happening into a game. The film is about Holocaust denial by a victim in the midst of the Holocaust. Thus, as a fictitious writer character engaging with the subject of terrorism, Sentenza appropriates Jewish experience through his use of two connected titles: *Mein Leben* and *Das Leben ist schön*. This signals what Sonner himself has done surreptitiously in his novel, by obliterating his real Jewish sources. As the identities of both fictional murderers (Karmann's and Jakob's) are kept secret, the history is not worked through, but remains repressed. Without wanting to do so, *Die Bibliothek des Attentäter*s enacts the historical forgetting that its central character, Jakob Amon, ostensibly sought to counter by shooting Karmann. It is as if Sonner transfers Karry's Jewish identity to Demeter as a compensatory gesture for taking it away from the victim of the RZ assassination. Heinz-Herbert Karry is the novel's repressed guilty secret, which expresses itself in a series of unwitting ways.

There are a number of thematic connections between *McKinsey kommt*, *Die Bibliothek des Attentäters* and Thomas Weiss's third novel *Tod*

eines Trüffelschweins, which was published in December 2007, at the end of the thirtieth anniversary commemoration of the German Autumn. *Tod eines Trüffelschweins* is about the murder of a millionaire American businessman of Austrian (and possibly Jewish) extraction (Marc Schworz) by the chauffeur (Carl Heuser) of a German firm that his private equity company has recently acquired. Weiss bases part of the action on the real-life case of the Grohe company, manufacturers of bathroom ware, which fell into the hands of American investors, who had (perhaps not coincidentally) been advised by McKinsey. The major difference with the Grohe case, which became a cause celèbre in the election year of 2005, is that in reality nobody was killed. After Grohe was sold by a British consortium to the Texas Pacific Group for an estimated 1.5 billion euros in 2005, the new owners closed the factory in Herzberg, Brandenburg, resulting in the loss of 300 jobs. Weiss changes Grohe to Grothe, Herzberg to Nierenberg, Pacific to Atlantic, doubles the number of job losses and exaggerates the plight of those made redundant. He also post-dates the action to nearer the time of publication. His fictitious 'truffle pig' is Marc Schworz, whose investment company finances its purchase of Grothe by borrowing against the assets. Its intention is to make a high return after closing down the German factory and relocating abroad where labour is cheaper. He and his murder by Grothe employee Carl Heuser are entirely imaginary.

The real takeover attracted a great deal of media attention.[27] A television documentary on Grohe and the consequences of the case for German workers won the Deutscher Fernsehpreis in 2006.[28] There was also a bestselling paperback.[29] Weiss had no need to carry out independent research. Franz Müntefering, the chairman of the SPD, was inspired by the case to compare hedge funds and private equity companies, which tend to be foreign owned (by American or British business interests), with 'Heuschrecken' (locusts). This stimulated an already feverish debate in Germany and led to international accusations of anti-Semitism. When Müntefering made this comparison, in the run-up to the 2005 election, he was looking for votes: the Red-Green coalition was on the point of collapse. The charge of anti-Semitism, based on the use anti-Semites make of human-animal comparisons, was unfair. There was no evidence that Müntefering was aware that he was attacking anybody of Jewish origin, and he was referring to institutions rather than individuals. Weiss, however, makes up for this. The

association in his title between the murder victim and a pig is precisely what Müntefering's accusers would class as anti-Semitic.

Tod eines Trüffelschweins consists of sixty-three sections, varying in length from a few lines to a few pages, which are supposedly lifted from a range of print sources or pieced together by an impartial editor who quotes participants and witnesses. It is pseudo-documentary because the sources are either wholly fictional or fictionalised. The work is politically revisionist in several ways. It establishes a link between a fictitious politically inspired murder in 2006 and 1970s terrorism by including reports of the impending release of two RAF prisoners, Christian Klar and Brigitte Mohnhaupt, who led the bloody campaign to release their imprisoned comrades in the German Autumn in 1977. For some, Klar's anti-capitalist statements from prison were a sign that he was not fit for a presidential pardon, as they showed he had no remorse and could not distance himself from his past. For the citizens of Weiss's Nierenberg, however, Klar's analysis of the economic situation is correct. From prison Klar congratulated Weiss on the publication of the book.[30] There are other more substantive links with the German terrorist past, which are also more complicated than those that Hochhuth tries to make in *McKinsey kommt*. Schworz's murderer, Heuser, happens to have been a member of the GSG-9 commando unit which stormed the Lufthansa plane at Mogadishu in October 1977, killing three of the four Palestinian hijackers and releasing all 86 German hostages. This, the climax of the German Autumn, was hailed as a victory for republican democracy over violent extremism.

Weiss juxtaposes three historical periods: the present (2006-7), the Third Reich (1933-45), and the terrorist 'years of lead' between 1972, which saw the massacre of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics by Palestinian terrorists from a group called Black September, and 1977, when the storming of the passenger jet at Mogadishu sealed the West German government's victory over the RAF. Another echo of the past, which Weiss underlines, is that the code name for the commando operation in Mogadishu, 'Feuerzauber', was the same as that used by the Condor Legion which carried out the bombing of the Basque town of Guernica in April 1937 during the Spanish Civil War. The continuity that Weiss thereby establishes is between Hitler's Germany in 1937 and Helmut Schmidt's in 1977. This alleged continuity was central to the extreme (and terrorist) Left's critique of the Federal Republic. It is the basis of Sonner's decision to make his business victim into a former SS officer and war criminal. By 2007 the thesis had been wholly discredited.

In Weiss's world, a number of things have apparently changed in Germany since 1977. Heuser joined GSG-9 from conviction, having been revolted by the 1972 massacre of the Israeli Olympic athletes following a bungled German attempt to release them. In the years after 1977, however, Weiss has him researching the Palestinian hijackers of the Lufthansa jet and coming to understand what motivated them. Weiss explains too what motivated the Palestinians of Black September who took the Israeli athletes hostage in Munich. There are thus two reasons for Heuser's change of sides between 1977 and 2006: his personal experience of the effects of 'predatory capitalism' working for Grothe and his increased knowledge of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The connections between the murder of Marc Schworz on 14 April 2006, which was Good Friday, and the German Autumn do not end there, however. Helmut Schmidt, Federal Chancellor from 1974 to 1982, is now a commentator on economic affairs for *Die Zeit* and is quoted in the novel as a trenchant critic of Anglo-Saxon capitalism. Like Heuser, Schmidt thus appears to have switched sides in the intervening 29 years. Heuser's murder of Schworz recalls in a number of details that of Schleyer by the RAF: both were executed in woods (Schworz in Berlin's Grunewald) by shots to the back of the head from close range. Heuser then loads Schworz's body into the boot of his car, where it is found some eight hours later at a motorway service station in southern Germany. Next to the body is a communiqué which begins (in upper case): 'GEGEN DIE NEOLIBERALE GLOBALISIERUNG ZEICHEN SETZEN! EINE ANDERE WELT IST MÖGLICH!' (Make a sign against neoliberal globalisation! Another world is possible!) (18).[31] The communiqué goes on to explain how Schworz's buying up of Grothe is part of a neoliberal project which was begun by Pinochet in Chile and continued by Thatcher and Reagan in Britain and America before spreading to Germany. It ends with words which echo those which justified Schleyer's murder on 18 October 1977: 'wir haben deshalb dem ekelhaften durchwühlen des brandenburgischen bodens auf der suche nach profit durch schworz' gierigen rüssel ein ende gemacht' (We have therefore put an end to Schworz's disgusting rooting around with his greedy snout in the soil of Brandenburg in the hunt for profit) (19). The communiqué is signed, in RAF style, COMMANDO GEORG ELSER, after the lone resister who narrowly failed to blow up Hitler on the anniversary of the Beer Hall putsch in November 1939 (also a frequent point of reference for Hochhuth). Heuser is sentenced to

twenty years for the murder. Weiss gives him the last word, which he uses to compare his deed with Elser's attempt on the life of Hitler.

Weiss drops a couple of hints regarding the murder victim's possibly Jewish identity, which, as they are not picked up by any of the characters in the book, seem to be aimed directly at his readers. 'Schworz' is not an obviously Jewish name but his wife has a friend in New York called Ruth Morgenthaler, which clearly is Jewish, and the only reason for mentioning this friend seems to be her name. Schworz is said to be originally from Austria. Austrian-born New Yorkers are overwhelmingly Jewish refugees, but they were born at least thirty years before 1 May 1968, Schworz's stated date of birth. This symbolic date indicates that the hopes of the Left for international revolutionary solidarity came to nothing. Instead the world is ruled by globalised investment companies funded by private equity. Schworz's date of birth and Austrian origins thus do not match up. Another detail, which is clearly not redundant, is the date on which Texas Atlantic Group assumes ownership of Grothe: 8 May 2006, one month after Schworz's murder. This is the anniversary of the unconditional surrender at the end of the Second World War, known as the 'Day of Liberation' in East Germany and as the 'Day of Capitulation' in the West. There is no question what it signifies for Weiss. Once again, Germany has been defeated by American forces: military in 1945, financial in 2006.

Even more remarkable than Weiss's invented tale of terror is the public reaction to it, or lack of it. The anti-Semitic dimension appears not to have been noticed. Reviewers did not take issue with Weiss's premises, nor with his presentation of the 'facts' of the Gro[t]he case, any more than they showed awareness of Sonner's transparently guilty reworking of history in *Die Bibliothek des Attentäters*, where he justifies the extremist Left's assassination of a prominent Jewish German by pretending that the victim was a Nazi. Perceptions of connections between Jews and business, which can somehow still be portrayed as un-German activity, remain for some a blind spot.

I am making up for the reviewers. Thomas Weiss and Franz-Maria Sonner: *Je vous accuse!*

Notes

1 Volker Hentschel, *Ludwig Erhard. Ein Politikerleben*, Munich: Olzog, 1996, pp. 572-3.

2 *Rolf Hochhuth: Dokumente zur politischen Wirkung*, ed. and intro. by Reinhart Hoffmeister with contributions by Heinz Puknus and an essay by Rolf Hochhuth, Munich: Kindler, 1980, pp. 83-104.

3 Ibid, pp. 91-3.

4 Ibid, p. 113.

5 Ibid, pp. 243-56.

6 Sven Neufert, 'Rolf Hochhuth: "Die vereinsamte Position eines Erfolgreichen". Forschungsüberblick und Tagungsbericht', in: Ilse Nagelschmidt, Sven Neufert and Gert Ueding, eds, *Rolf Hochhuth: Theater als politische Anstalt. Tagungsband mit einer Personalbibliographie*. Weimar: Denkena, 2010, pp. 11-35 (here: p. 15).

7 David Irving, *The Destruction of Dresden*, London: Kimber, 1963; Ulrike Meinhof, 'Dresden' (1965), in: *Die Würde des Menschen ist antastbar. Aufsätze und Polemiken*, Berlin: Wagenbach, 1980, pp. 62-5, esp. p. 62.

8 David Irving, *Accident – The Death of General Sikorski*, London: Kimber, 1967.

9 Richard Evans, *Telling Lies about Hitler. The Holocaust, History and the David Irving Trial*, London/New York: Verso, 2002, pp. 157-92.

10 Rolf Hochhuth, *Judith*, in *Alle Dramen*, 2 vols, vol. 2 (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1991), pp. 2127-330 (here: p. 2300).

11 For a full list, see Nagelschmidt, Neufert and Ueding, eds, *Rolf Hochhuth* (2010), pp. 414-8.

12 Hochhuth, 'Das Bekenntnis', p.265.

13 See Oskar Negt, ed., *Der Fall Fonty. 'Ein weites Feld' von Günter Grass im Spiegel der Kritik*, Göttingen: Steidl, 1996.

14 Wolfgang Schorlau, *Die blaue Liste. Denglers erster Fall*, Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2003.

15 Hochhuth describes himself as 'ein mehr oder weniger verkrachter Deutschnationaler' (a more or less messed-up German nationalist) in: 'Das Bekenntnis: Im mm-Interview: Die kalkulierten Provokationen eines professionellen Dramatikers', in *Wessis in Weimar, Szenen aus einem besetzten Land*, Munich: dtv, 1994, pp.

263-71, here: p. 269. A sub-theme of *McKinsey kommt* is the invasion of the German language by anglicisms, as a parallel to economic surrender to Anglo-Saxon capital.

16 See Dirk Kurbjuweit*, Unser effizientes Leben. Die Diktatur der Ökonomie und ihre Folgen,* Rowohlt: Berlin, 2003. Kurbjuweit's chosen title was 'Die McKinsey-Gesellschaft', which McKinsey's lawyers prevented him from using.

17 Rolf Hochhuth*, McKinsey kommt. Molières Tartuffe. Zwei Theaterstücke.* Mit einem Essay von Gert Ueding, Munich: dtv, 2003, p. 77.

18 See 'Aufruf zum Ackermann-Attentat?', *Der Spiegel*, 21 January 2004.

19 'Recht auf Hochhuth', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 22 January 2004.

20 Critics are unanimous that *Wessis in Weimar* was not a good play. See Birgit Haas, for instance, *Theater der Wende – Wendetheater*, Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2004, pp. 79-87. This did not stop it from being very successful, as Dag Kemser points out: *Zeitstücke zur deutschen Wiedervereinigung. Form – Inhalt – Wirkung*, Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2006, pp. 137-8.

21 Christine Dössel, 'Wenn der Frustmann zweimal klingelt', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 16 February 2004.

22 Franz-Maria Sonner, *Die Bibliothek des Attentäters*, Munich: Kunstmann 2001. Reviewers in the quality press on the whole liked it. See Volker Breidecker in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung,* 10 October 2001; Jens Hohensee in *Die Zeit,* 17 January 2002; Sascha Verna in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung,* 27 April 2002. It was adapted for radio in 2004.

23 See 'Heiße Spur im Mordfall Karry', *Der Spiegel* , 22 June 1981, and 'Perle im Dreck', *Der Spiegel* , 22 August 1983.

24 See Hans Kundnani, *Utopia or Auschwitz. Germany's 1968 Generation and the Holocaust* , London: Hurst, 2009, p. 176 and p. 214. See also the chapter 'Schüsse in den Unterleib' (Shots to the Stomach) in Gerhard Wisnewski, Wolfgang Landgraeber and Ekkehard Sieker, *Das RAF-Phantom. Wozu Politik und Wirtschaft Terroristen brauchen*, Munich: Knaur, 1997, pp. 84-90.

25 See Christopher Dobson and Ronald Payne, *The Carlos Complex: A Pattern of Violence*, London: Book Club Associates, 1977, pp. 41-2.

26 Marcel Reich-Ranicki, *Mein Leben*, Berlin: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1999. See the chapter in this volume by Stuart Parkes on Martin Walser's novel *Tod eines Kritikers*, entertaining fantasies of Reich-Ranicki's death.

27 See e.g. Katrin Bischoff, 'Verspekuliert', *Berliner Zeitung*, 6 June 2005; Nils Klawitter, 'Schmeißen Sie die raus', *Der Spiegel*, 28 October 2005.

28 *Und du bist raus – Wie Investoren die Traditionsfirma Grohe auspressen*. Fernsehfilm von Hubert Seipel, Westdeutscher Rundfunk, 2006.

29 Werner G. Seifert et al., *Invasion der Heuschrecken. Intrigen – Machtkämpfe – Marktmanipulation. Wie Hedge Fonds die Deutschland AG attackieren*, Berlin: Econ Verlag, 2006. See also Daniel Schäfer, *Die Wahrheit über die Heuschrecken. Wie Finanzinvestoren die Deutschland AG umbauen*, Frankfurt/Main: FAZ-Verlag, 2006.

30 This was reported by Dieter Stolz introducing Thomas Weiss at a reading at the University of Leeds, 18 September 2009. Peter O. Chotjewitz, Andreas Baader's former friend and a RAF defence lawyer, writing in Meinhof's old magazine *Konkret*, which made Weiss's novel 'book of the month', took a conventional Marxist line that killing individuals never changes anything. He praised the novel for its acumen in other respects. Peter O. Chotjewitz, 'Thomas Weiss *Tod eines Trüffelschweins*', *Konkret*, January 2008, p. 45. See also Axel Schalk, 'Der Sicherheitschef als Terrorist', *zitty*, 8-21 November 2007, pp. 70-1.

31 'Another world is possible' is the motto of the World Social Forum, first held in Brazil in 2001, which promotes alternatives to neoliberalism.

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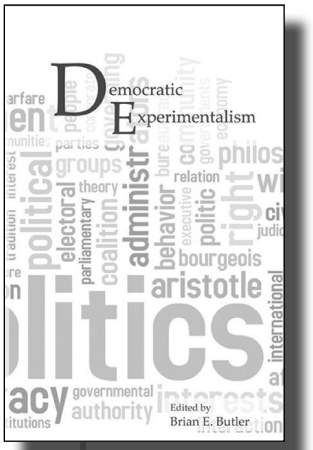
Democratic Experimentalism

Edited by
Brian E. Butler



This volume focuses on democratic experimentalism, gathering a collection of original and previously unpublished essays focusing upon its major outlines, as well as specific aspects – both promising and troublesome – of this theoretical approach. Together these essays offer conceptions of democracy and democratic governance that emphasize and highlight experimentalist aspects of pragmatic thought, particularly Deweyan pragmatism, and its relationship to instantiation in concrete social and political institutions. Issues of democratic governance, political organization and the relationship of law to democracy are analyzed.

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